THE
WORKS
OF
Mr. *WILLIAM ALLEN*,

Conſiſting of Thirteen

Diſtinct Tracts

ON

SEVERAL SUBJECTS.

WITH

A SERMON Preach'd at his Funeral by Biſhop *Kidder*;
A large INDEX of Texts of Scripture explain'd; and an Alphabetical TABLE
of the PRINCIPAL MATTERS
contain'd in the Whole.

To which is Prefix'd

A PREFACE, concerning the AUTHOR and
his Writings, by *John* Lord Biſhop of *Chicheſter*.

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THE
PREFACE.

THE Works of Mr. *William Allen* having deſervedly obtained ſuch a Reputation, as to encourage the reprinting them in one Volume, which were ſcarcely, if at all to be procured apart; it was wiſhed, that ſome farther Account might be given of him, of his Life, Converſation, and Studies; which, as far as appears by his Writings, were uncommon and extraordinary. But he having been now dead above twenty Years, there are very few, if any, of his intimate Acquaintance left to undertake it.

In the Year 1671, or 1672. I became known to him, and from that time forward, he put moſt of his Papers prepared for the Preſs into my hands; of which his Treatiſe of the *Two Covenants*, printed 1672. was the firſt. But this my Knowledge of him being of a late Date, will not afford Materials ſufficient to anſwer the aboveſaid Deſign.

He was naturally of a ſolid and ſerious Temper, and all along piouſly diſpoſed: And therefore in his younger Days he was the more eaſily prevail'd upon, by ſuch Principles as carried on them the Face of Religion, and high Pretences to it. It was this that miſled him into the dangerous Errors of Antinomianiſm, under the pretence of magnifying the Free Grace of God, and the Merits of our Bleſſed Saviour.

This is the Account he himſelf gives of it. *They*, the *Antinomians*, ſaith he, *tell us, that when a Man is once in Chriſt, or, which is the ſame, when he doth once believe, all his ſins are pardoned, both paſt, preſent, and to come* [*]. Of which, he then ſaith farther, *I do the rather here admoniſh all that fear the Lord, to take heed of this Snare; for I my ſelf having above twenty Years ago been taken in it, did ſadly experience the Evil of it* [||]. And which he never fully recover'd from, till, ſaith he, I heard Mr. *J. Goodwyn*, in whoſe Church he was a Member for about twelve Years [†].

But though he was by that means freed from the Snare of *Antinomianiſm*, yet he continued in the way of Independency for ſeveral Years after, and which he was led into by the ſame Pretences. There being two things which in that Conſtitution had a ſhew of great Sanctity, *viz.* That *Regeneration is an indiſpenſable Condition in a Member of Chriſt's Church*[*]: And that they were bound together in their Communion by a particular Covenant. But when he and ſeveral others of the ſame Congregation enquir'd farther into that Principle, they fell into another Error, *viz.* that of *Anabaptiſm.* From whence it was, ſaith Mr. *Lamb* (one of that Society) That *the Anabaptiſts inferr'd, that then Infants are not to be baptized (being as others born in Original Sin) but defer it till grown up and profeſs Faith, and give real Signs of Grace.* This, ſaith he, *prevail'd upon my ſelf, and was the reaſon why divers Eminent Men that begun at Independency, ſlipt into Anabaptiſm; as Mr.* Lawrence, *Mr.* Blackwood, *Mr.* Allen, *and many others*[†] to the Number of twenty in the Year 1653[||], amongſt whom Mr. *Allen* and Mr. *Lamb* became Paſtors.

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[*] View of Juſtification, P. 144. [||] P. 145.

[†] Mr. *Allen*'s Letters in the Appendix to Mr. *Baxter*'s Life, *Num.* 3 & 4.

But theſe two being, as [*] Mr. *Baxter* ſaith, *Men of extraordinary Sincerity and Underſtanding,* and of ſingular Charity, they did not at all approve of that Temper, both of Independency and Anabaptiſm, which Unchurches all but themſelves; and after long Diſputes amongſt themſelves, about that Matter, and other Caſes which aroſe upon it, they grew uneaſie by reaſon of the Virulence of their Temper, and ſo unſatisfied about their Church-Conſtitution, that at laſt they diſſolv'd their Congregation and came over to Parochial Communion, 1658[†].

This is the Account Mr. *Lamb* gives of himſelf and Mr. *Allen*[||], viz. *Mr.* William Allen, *an ancient Citizen and a ſtudious Man all his days, in his young time fell into the Errors of Independency; and after that into Anabaptiſm; Yet his After-Studies and great Experience return'd to the Communion of the Parochial Churches; and* 1659. *wrote his Recantation of Separation.* A Tract, it ſeems, wrote with ſuch Prudence and Temper, that Mr. *Baxter* wiſhed him to reprint it, but that not being put in Execution, the Book is now not to be had[*].

So Mr. *Lamb* of himſelf, *For my own part, I confeſs, that in my young time I was alſo overcome of the Arguments for Independency and Anabaptiſm, and for a conſiderable time I walked in thoſe ways; but my Study and Experience together returned me,* Anno 1658. *to the Communion of the Pariſh Churches*[†]; the Experience

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[*] Mr. *Lamb*'s Freſh Suit againſt Independency, *p.* 35. and Dr. *Owen*'s Catechiſm, *p.* 106.

[†] Ibid. *p.* 36.

[||] Appendix to Mr. *Baxter*'s Life, *p.* 51.

[*] Mr. *Baxter*'s Life, Part II. *p.* 180.

[†] Ibid. Part. III. *p.* 180.

[||] Freſh Suit, *p.* 43.

[*] Mr. *B*'s Life, Num. 4. *p.* 98.

[‡] Freſh Suit, *p.* 44.

rience they had of the Bitterneſs, Diſorders, and Confuſion amongſt themſelves, *This*, ſaith Mr. *Lamb*, *put me to a ſtand when I ſaw abundance of Miniſters and People ruined by Separation* †.

By this means Mr. *A.* was under a general Preparation for the great Change (which they had then no Proſpect of) that was coming on, and which happen'd in a few Years afterward, I mean the Reſtauration, and the Eſtabliſhment of the National Church.

For being now fully ſatisfied about a National Church, and having a Right Notion and Underſtanding of it, and of the neceſſity of maintaining Communion with it, he had nothing then before him, but the Conſtitution of our Church, and the Terms and Conditions therein required of Lay-Members, to take into Conſideration; which, how well he had weighed, and upon what grounds he joyned himſelf to the Church of *England*, he has given a very good account in his Writings, and particularly in a Treatiſe called *An Addreſs to the Nonconformiſts*.

To this Mr. *Baxter* (with whom he all along maintain'd a Friendly Correſpondence) brought him a Reply in Writing, and which I find printed in the *Appendix* to Mr. *Baxter*'s Life; but it is great Pity that Mr. *Allen*'s Anſwer to his Reply, was not to be met with amongſt his Papers; I ſay, not met with; for I am not willing to think the Publiſher of that Life would conceal it, if it had fallen into his hands, though it might be to the Prejudice of the Cauſe he eſpouſed.

I had the Peruſal of that Anſwer, which Mr. *Allen* brought to me, and at the Requeſt of Dr. *Conant*, I obtain'd Leave of Mr. *Allen*, that I might ſend it to him in the Country, which the Doctor having peruſ'd, return'd to me, and I to Mr. *Allen*, but it ſeems is not now to be found.

As for Mr. *Allen*'s Works, who is there that reads them but may obſerve (let the Subject he treats of be what it will) that he writes with great Clearneſs and Strength, with proper Expreſſion and unaffected Style. And even his Adverſaries (if he had any) muſt confeſs that he treats them with Candour and Modeſty, Meekneſs and Charity, making all Allowances, as conſidering that he himſelf heretofore was alſo *tempted*. And I dare ſay he writes his very Soul, when he ſaith, *I my ſelf am very ſenſible, and know that I am but a poor and weak Creature, and have had many a trembling Heart, for my ſelf as well as others, whilſt I have been writing theſe Matters of great moment, leſt I ſhould ſtrike upon any of thoſe Rocks* *.——

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† Ibid. *p.* 53.

* View of Juſtification, *p.* 184.

As to himſelf, he was modeſt and reſerved in his Temper, and very backward in ſeeking Acquaintance; but his Writings made him known, and then his Acquaintance was ſought by ſeveral of the moſt eminent Clergy in *London* and elſewhere; ſuch as the late Archbiſhop *Tillotſon*, and his Predeceſſor Archbiſhop *Sancroft*; the latter of whom gave him an opportunity of Retirement for his Health and Studies, at his Palace at *Croydon*.

About that time he finiſhed his Book *Of the State of the Church in future Ages*, which when he preſented to his Grace, and ſaying that he doubted his Lordſhip would think he wrote too much; the Archbiſhop replied No: For he had read what he wrote before, and liked it very well. And entring farther into Diſcourſe with him, he asked Mr. *Allen*, how he came to fall upon theſe Studies, when (as he underſtood) he had no other than his Mother-tongue. Mr. *Allen* told him, that when young he met with an *Engliſh* Rhetorick and Logick; and his Employment being ſuch as afforded him Time and Leiſure, requiring but two days Attendance in a Week, he ſpent his ſpare Hours in reading and ſtudy.

This Account I had from a By-ſtander.

Upon the whole, there is little to be accounted for, as to Mr. *Allen*, but the Change of his Opinion, which cannot ſignifie any thing to wiſe and impartial Readers, eſpecially if it be conſidered what the Circumſtances of the late Times and Affairs were, which were Times of great Confuſion: And when once Perſons ſet out in a wrong way, 'tis a hard matter to recover themſelves, and to find out the right. It is apparent, that from the beginning Mr. *Allen* was devoted to Religion, and *lived in all good Conſcience toward God*, (as St. *Paul* ſaith of himſelf when in an Error); being not ſwayed by Party, Intereſt, or Advantage, but by Truth or what he thought to be ſo: And when at laſt he centered in the Church of *England*, it was after he had well weighed all things relating to it; as his Works do ſhew. This Mr. *Baxter* doth acknowledge, though after his manner with ſome Tartneſs and Reflection, *viz.* † *They two* (Mr. *Allen* and Mr. *Lamb*) *both Tradeſmen, wrote againſt Separation more ſtrongly than any of the Conformiſts.* Now when a Perſon hath taken ſuch a Method (as Mr. *Allen* did) for his Satisfaction; neither the Truth, nor he that purſues it, can reaſonably ſuffer by it.

And that he was firmly perſuaded that he was in the right, he ſhewed it not only by his Writings, and his Practice, living in conſtant Communion with the Eſtabliſhed Church, but alſo by his devout and Chriſtian Behaviour at his Death *. *J. C.*

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* Of this ſee his Funeral Sermon.

† Mr. B's Life, Part III. p. 180.

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A Diſ-

A
DISCOURSE
OF THE
Nature, Ends, and Difference
OF THE
Two Covenants.

THE miſtake of the unbelieving *Jews*, about the true import of God's Promiſe to *Abraham*, and of the Law of *Moſes*, was a principal cauſe of the rejecting Chriſt and his Goſpel, and their own Salvation thereby. To rectifie which miſtake, the Apoſtle St. *Paul* uſed various Reaſonings, according to the various Errors contained in it. In which Reaſonings of his, *there being ſome things hard to be underſtood*; there are others again which probably miſtaking the Apoſtles reaſonings againſt the *Jewiſh* Notion of Juſtification by Works, ran into a contrary Extream, thinking they might be Saved by Faith, without Works; as on the contrary, the incredulous *Jews* thought they might be Saved by Works, without Faith. And if many in our days had not run into ſomewhat alike Extream, through a miſunderſtanding alſo of the Apoſtles Writings, labour and pains would not have been ſo neceſſary, as now they are, to rectifie their miſtake, and to prevent it in others. To the end therefore that the plain Truth may the better appear, touching God's Promiſe to *Abraham*, touching the Law of *Moſes*, and the Apoſtles arguings about theſe; I ſhall very briefly endeavour theſe ſeven Things.

I. *To open the Nature and Deſign of God's Promiſe to* Abraham, And to ſhew.

II. *For what end the Law was added to the Promiſe.*

III. *By what Faith and Practice, the* Iews *under the Law were ſaved.*

IV. *That the Law contained a Covenant, different from that with* Abraham.

V. *The grand miſtakes of the unbelieving* Iews, *and St.* Paul's *counter-arguings, touching both the Law and the Promiſe.*

VI. *The Miſtake of ſome pretended Chriſtians in the Apoſtles days, Touching the Doctrine of Juſtification by Faith, without Works.*

VII. *That the Doctrine of St.* Paul, *and St.* James, *about Faith and Works, in reference to Juſtification, do not differ.*

I ſhall begin with the firſt of theſe.

CHAP. I.

The Nature and Deſign of God's Promiſe to Abraham.

I Shall endeavour to open the Nature and Deſign of God's Promiſe to *Abraham*: Which *Promiſe* is alſo called the *Covenant*, Act. 3. 25. Gal. 3. 17. In doing of which, theſe eight things will come under conſideration. 1. What the Nature of this Promiſe is in general. 2. What the Deſign of it is. 3. What are the ſpecial Benefits promiſed. 4. What the Extent of it is. 5. The Security given by God for the performance of it. 6. That this Promiſe was Conditional. 7. What the Condition of it was. 8. What we are to underſtand by God's accounting *Abraham*'s Faith to him for Righteouſneſs.

Sect. 1.

Of the Nature of it in general. This Promiſe I take to be of the ſame nature with that, which in the Goſpel is called the New-Covenant. It's true indeed, they greatly differ in the Adminiſtration; the one being but general, implicite, and obſcure; and the other, more particular, expreſs, and perſpicuous. But though in this they differ, yet in their general nature, they agree in one, and are the ſame. For,

1. This Covenant, as delivered to *Abraham*, was *confirmed in Chriſt*, as well as the Goſpel afterwards, *Gal.* 3. 17. and that's a Character of the New-Covenant, *Mat.* 26. 28. 2. The Goſpel is ſaid to have been Preached to *Abraham* in the Promiſe that was made him, *Gal.* 3. 8. 3. He was juſtified by Faith; which he could not have been, but by vertue of a New-Covenant: And it was by Faith in the Promiſe made to him by God, by which he was juſtified: Which two things ſuppoſed, it neceſſarily follows, That that Promiſe was of the Nature of the New-Covenant. 4. St. *Paul* argues againſt the erroneous *Jews*, in his Epiſtles to the *Romans* and *Galatians*, the neceſſity of Evangelical Faith unto Juſtification now under the Goſpel, from *Abraham*'s being juſtified by Faith, and from God's ſetting him forth for a Pattern and Example to all after-Ages, of his juſtifying both *Jews* and *Gentiles* upon the Condition of Believing. The ſtrength of which arguing ſeems to depend upon this ſuppoſition; That the Promiſe, by the belief of which *Abraham* was then juſtified; and the Promiſe in the Goſpel, by the belief of which Men are now juſtified, do both agree, and are one in the general nature of them. And upon theſe grounds, and under this notion of the Promiſe to *Abraham*, I intend to diſcourſe of it.

But when I conſider for what reaſon he *that is leaſt in the Kingdom of God*, is ſaid to be *greater than John the Baptiſt*, (though not *Abraham* himſelf, nor any of the Prophets were greater than he) and when I conſider likewiſe, how ignorant the Apoſtles were for a time, touching the neceſſity of the Death and Reſurrection of Chriſt, notwithſtanding the many plainer Revelations thereof in the Prophets, than we find *Abraham* had; I cannot, I confeſs, think that *Abraham* had, or could have a diſtinct notion of all that was contained and implied in the Promiſe, as now it is opened and unfolded in the Writings of the New Teſtament, it does appear was wrapt up in it. And therefore, though I think I may well found a Diſcourſe of the New-Covenant, upon the Promiſe made to *Abraham*, as it is now explained in the New Teſtament, yet I would not be underſtood to ſuppoſe *Abraham*'s apprehenſion or Faith to have then been commenſurate to the Promiſe, as it is ſo explained.

Suppoſing then the Promiſe to *Abraham* to be the New Covenant it ſelf, in a more imperfect Edition of it than afterward came forth; I ſhall now a little farther conſider what it was, and what the New-Covenant is, and ever hath been, in the general nature of it, ſince it firſt commenced. *And it is a new Law or Covenant, made by way of Remedy againſt the rigour and extremity of the Law of Nature, under which Man was Created.* For the Law of Nature, the Law of God's Creation, as well as his Inſtituted Law in *Paradiſe*, being violated, and impoſſible to be kept inviolable by Man in his Lapſed ſtate, by reaſon of his moral Impotency, and the Pravity of his Nature derived from *Adam*; he muſt inevitably have ſunk and periſhed under the Condemnation of it, unleſs there had been a new Law inſtituted to ſupercede the procedure of this Law againſt him, in its natural and proper courſe. If Salvation had been attainable by Man in his Lapſed ſtate, without this remedying Law of Grace, there would have been no need of a New Covenant.

If there had been a Law given which could have given Life, verily righteouſneſs ſhould have been by the Law, Gal. 3. 21. But there was no ſuch Law given beſides this New Law. Nor could the Original Law be repealed for the relief of faln Man, it being founded in the nature of God, and the nature of Man, as he was created after God's own Image; and is no more changeable, than the nature of Good and Evil are changeable. And therefore, as I ſaid, there was a neceſſity that Man muſt have Periſhed under the Condemnation of the Law of his Creation, as the lapſed Angels did under theirs, unleſs a Law of Indemnity had been Enacted. But God, whoſe tender Mercies are over all his Works, to the end ſo great and conſiderable a part of his Creation, as Man is, might not be wholly loſt and undone to all Eternity, out of his infinite Compaſſion, Mercy, and Love, did conſtitute a New Law or Covenant for Mans Relief, (which well may be called the Covenant of *Grace*) againſt the rigour and extremity of the firſt Law.

Which new Law was in ſome degree, though but obſcurely, made known to Man not long after *Adam's* Fall, or elſe there would have been no ground for that Faith which we are aſſured was in *Abel*, *Enoch*, &c. *Heb.* 11. But it was doubtleſs ſomewhat more fully declared to *Abraham* than to any before, and at laſt compleatly eſtabliſhed and publiſhed by Jeſus Chriſt the Mediator of it, who was *given for a Covenant to the people.* And this new Law, in the laſt Edition of it under the Goſpel, is variouſly denominated; being called, the *Promiſe*, the *New Covenant*, the *Law of Faith*, the *Law of Liberty*, the *Goſpel*, the *Grace of God*, or *the Word of his Grace.* And ſo we come.

Sect. 2.

To conſider *what the deſign of God was in this New Covenant or Promiſe unto* Abraham. Next to his own Glory, it was to recover the humane Nature from its degenerate ſtate, to a ſtate of Holineſs, to that likeneſs to God in which Man was at the firſt made, and therein and thereby to a ſtate of Happineſs, both which were loſt by the Fall. Holineſs, Love, and Goodneſs, as they were once the Glory and Happineſs of Man before he loſt them, ſo are ſtill perfective of his Nature. And therefore it is impoſſible, in the nature of the thing, to recover Man to Happineſs without recovering his Nature to a conformity to God in theſe; or for Man to be perfectly Happy, whoſe Nature is not perfected in them. Sin is the Diſeaſe and Sickneſs of the Soul; and it's as poſſible for a Sick Man to enjoy the pleaſure of Health, as it is for the ſinful and corrupt Nature of Man, while ſuch, to enjoy the pleaſure, which the humane Nature did naturally enjoy, or was capable of enjoying in its Innocency and Purity. But when the Nature of Man is once recovered to perfection in Knowledge, Holineſs, Love, and Goodneſs, it will then be matter of unſpeakable delight to him, to love God, Angels and Men, and to do the will of God in every thing. It is ſo to the holy Angels: And it was ſo to our Bleſſed Saviour, who counted it as his *meat and drink*, to be *doing* the *will of his heavenly*

Father. And to what degree the Nature of Man is here in this World reſtored towards its proper perfection, to the ſame degree it is matter of pleaſure and delight to him, to act holily and righteouſly, and to be doing good; *It is joy to the Juſt to do judgment*, Prov. 21. 15. It is a pain to a Man to act contrary to the bent and inclination of his Nature, by compulſion, or fear. And therefore unleſs the corrupt Nature of Man were changed, Heaven would not be Heaven to him, in caſe he were there. Thoſe Divine and Heavenly Exerciſes which are there the unſpeakable delight of Saints and Angels, would be his Pain and Torment, as being contrary to his Nature; and the pleaſures of that ſtate, as having not what will ſatisfie the unſatiable luſt of Mans corrupt Nature, would not be ſuch to him, but add rather to his anguiſh. For, as it would be a Torment to a Man to be in extremity of Hunger and Thirſt, and to be without Meat and Drink, and all hopes of any to ſatisfie him: So will it be a grievous Torment to the corrupt Nature of Men in another World, to retain their luſts, and the violent cravings of them, and yet to be without all hope of having wherewith to ſatisfie them (which yet is like to be the condition of Men in Hell.) Here Mens unnatural Luſts are not ſuch a Torment to them, becauſe they can make proviſion to ſatisfie them, or live in hopes ſo to do; and in the mean while drown the noiſe of them, by diverſion. But in Hell it will be quite otherwiſe. And therefore it's eaſie to imagine, that the Torment which will ariſe from the corruption of Mens Natures there, will be unſpeakably great, beſides the piercing ſence of the Happineſs they have loſt, and the other intollerable pains which they muſt indure; and therefore, as whoever hath not his Nature renewed in this World, is never like to have it renewed in another; ſo without renewing of it, it is impoſſible he ſhould be happy there. *Except a Man be born again, he cannot ſee the Kingdom of God*, Joh. 3. 3. That is, he cannot enjoy it, and why? It is not only from God's Decree, or eſtabliſhed Law to the contrary that he cannot, but alſo from the utter incapacity of his Nature, as corrupt. Wherefore, all *the Veſſels of Mercy are* ſuch as God *aforehand prepares unto glory*, Rom. 9. 23. They are ſuch as are *made meet to be partakers of the inheritance of the Saints in light*, Col. 1. 12. Such as *God hath wrought for the ſelf ſame thing*, 2 Cor. 5. 5. So that, as I ſaid, there is a neceſſity in the nature of the thing, that if God would deſign the Reſtoration of the Nature of Man to Happineſs, that in order thereto he ſhould deſign a Reſtorarion of it to Holineſs, as indeed he hath. *He hath choſen us to Salvation, through Sanctification of the Spirit*, 2 Theſ. 2. 13. And therefore the end of Chriſt's great undertaking for the Redemption and Reſtoration of Man, is deſcribed, by his *ſaving his People from their ſins*: By his *redeeming them from all iniquity, and purifying to himſelf a peculiar People zealous of good Works*. By his *waſhing and ſanctifying of them, that he might preſent them to himſelf a glorious Church, not having ſpot or wrinkle, or any ſuch thing*.

That this was the deſign of God's Promiſe to *Abraham*, appears, in that at the very firſt it was propounded to him by way of Motive, to quit the Idolatry of his Fathers, and the evil Cuſtomes of his Country

(for they ſerved other Gods, *Joſh.* 24. 2.) *Get thee out of thy Country, and from thy Kindred, and from thy Father's houſe*; *and I will make of thee a great Nation, and thou ſhalt be a bleſſing, and in thee ſhall all the Families of the Earth be bleſſed*, Gen. 12. 1, 2, 3. In which, God had a farther deſign than to reform *Abraham* only: His deſign in him, and by him, was to ſet on foot the Reformation of the World, and the recovering the Nations thereof from the dregs of Idolatry into which they were ſunk. And therefore God ſaid unto him, *Thou ſhall be a Bleſſing*. And this he deſigned, not only in giving him a numerous Iſſue, and making them a great Nation, whoſe Education in the Worſhip of the true God was founded in *Abraham*, but alſo in making both him and them eminent Examples of his ſpecial favour in the ſight of the Nations, by which they might ſee how much better it was to ſerve the God of *Abraham*, than the Gods of the Nations: And thereby to invite and draw them from their Idolatry, Superſtition and Ungodlineſs, to Worſhip and Serve the true God. And God in promiſing to *Abraham*, both the Meſſias in his Seed, and alſo that he would *bleſs them that ſhould bleſs him, and curſe them that ſhould curſe him, and that his Seed ſhould poſſeſs the gate of his Enemies*; had, it ſhould ſeem, this in deſign, *viz.* to encourage and quicken them to a holy Life, *Luke* 1. 72, 73, 74, 75. *To perform the Mercy promiſed to our Fathers, and to remember his holy Covenant: The Oath which he ſware to our Father* Abraham, *that he would grant unto us*; *that we being delivered out of the hands of our Enemies, might ſerve him without fear, in holineſs and righteouſneſs before him, all the days of our life.*

But beſides all this, conſidering that the Promiſe made to *Abraham* was the New-Covenant as it was then exhibited, (as I have ſhewed before) the benefits therein promiſed had a proper tendency in them, to reſtore Man again to a likeneſs to God in the Moral perfections of his Nature. For the *great and precious Promiſes* contained in the New Covenant as ſuch, are given for this very end, *that by them we might be partakers of a Divine Nature*; the glory whereof, is knowledge, purity and charity, 2 *Pet.* 1. 4. And for God by ſuch Promiſe to make overtures unto Man of Love and Good-will, and of deſires of Reconciliation, is the direct way and method of recovering faln Man from a ſtate of enmity againſt God, to a mind reconciled to him, to think well of him, to love him, and delight in him. For *we love him, becauſe he firſt loved us*, 1 Joh. 4. 19. *And God was in Chriſt reconciling the world to himſelf*; and how? *by not imputing their treſpaſſes to them*; but being willing, upon their repentance and returning to their duty, to forgive them, 2 *Cor.* 5. 19. God uſeth the ſame way of overcoming Mans enmity againſt him, which he hath taught us to uſe to overcome Mans enmity againſt us; and that is, by *overcoming their evil with our good*, Rom. 12. 21. *David* dealing ſo with *Saul*, though a bitter Enemy, melted him into Tears, and made him cry, *Is this thy voice, my Son David*? 1 Sam. 24. 16. And, *to whom much is forgiven, the ſame Perſon loveth much*, Luke 7. 42,--47. And if God by theſe methods do once recover Mans love to him, he will quickly recover him to his loyalty and duty; of which, Love is the proper Source and Spring. *If a Man love me, he will keep* *my Words*, Joh. 14. 23. Now that God's Promiſe to *Abraham*, did contain expreſſions of wonderful grace and love, and conſequently, what is moſt apt to beget in Man a love to God again, and all the deſireable effects of it, will appear, if we conſider the ſpecial benefits comprehended in that Promiſe; which is the third thing now to be conſidered.

Sect. 3.

The ſpecial benefits contained in the Promiſe made to *Abraham*, were ſuch as theſe.

1. It contained *a Promiſe of the Meſſias*, a Promiſe of ſending Chriſt into the World, and that he ſhould come of his Seed: *In thy Seed ſhall all the Nations of the Earth be bleſſed*, Gen. 12. 3. and 18. 18. and 22. 18. which Seed is Chriſt, as is ſaid, *Gal.* 3. 16. And in this Promiſe of ſending Chriſt, were implyed the things he was ſent for, the things by which he ſhould bleſs the World, as his Death and Reſurrection, and what elſe pertained to his Mediatory Office; becauſe theſe are the things by which the Nations of the Earth became bleſſed in him, which was the thing expreſly promiſed. That ſuch things were implyed in the Promiſe, appears not only by the reaſon of the thing, but alſo from St. *Paul*'s Teſtimony, *Acts* 13. 32, 33. *We declare unto you glad tidings, how that the Promiſe which was made unto the Fathers, God hath fulfilled the ſame unto us their Children, in that he hath raiſed up Jeſus again.* I do not ſay, that *Abraham*, from a Promiſe that was but ſo generally expreſſed as that was, could apprehend in particular what the *Meſſias* ſhould both do and ſuffer, though they were wrapt up in it. He apprehended ſo much by it in general, that God would ſend the *Meſſias* into the World, and that he would ſend him upon ſuch terms, as that his coming ſhould be matter of great benefit to the World. *Abraham* had ſuch a proſpect of this, though at that diſtance, as made him rejoyce and be glad: So ſaith our Saviour himſelf, *John* 8. 56. *Your Father* Abraham *rejoyced to ſee my day; and he ſaw it, and was glad.* And the Promiſe to *Abraham*, as it was a Promiſe of ſending Chriſt to be the Saviour of the World, was expreſſive of the greateſt love. *For in this was the love of God manifeſted towards us, becauſe God ſent his only begotten Son into the world, that we might live through him. Herein is love, not that we loved God, but that he loved us, and ſent his Son to be the propitiation for our ſins*, 1 Joh. 4. 9, 10. A Propitiation for our ſins: That is, one that by his Death hath procured favour, having taken off that ſore diſpleaſure which God by his Law had declared againſt all the tranſgreſſors of it. For the wiſe and juſt God, did not think the Righteouſneſs of his Government, and the Honour and Reputation of his Law, would be ſufficiently ſaved, and his great hatred of Sin ſufficiently manifeſted, without ſome conſiderable ſatisfaction given for the diſhonour done to Him and his Law by Mans Tranſgreſſion. And yet that this might not be exacted at the hands of the Guilty, in executing the Curſe of the Law on themſelves; he was moſt graciouſly pleaſed to accept of the Sufferings of his own dear Son, inſtead of what the ſinners themſelves were to

have undergone. *He hath redeemed us from the curſe of the Law, being made a curſe for us*, Gal. 3. 13. *Chriſt ſuffered for ſins, the juſt for the unjuſt*, or in their ſtead, 1 *Pet.* 3. 18. Upon account of which undertaking of Chriſt for us, all the benefits of the Covenant do accrue to Man. Whatever is required of Man by way of condition of his acceptation with God, becomes accepted to that end, upon account of Chriſt's ſuffering. And his Interceſſion in Heaven, through which all our ſincere (though otherwiſe imperfect) performances, become acceptable to God, and rewardable by him, is made in the virtue of it. For the whole Covenant itſelf, is founded in the Blood of Chriſt, which he ſhed for the remiſſion of ſins. Therefore it is called *the New Teſtament in his Blood*, Mat. 26. 28. And his Blood, *the Blood of the Everlaſting Covenant*, Hebr. 13. 20.

2. It contained a *Promiſe of Juſtification or Remiſſion of ſin through Chriſt, unto all that ſhould ſo believe, as thereupon to repent of their former folly, and become ſincerely obedient for the future.* For that is neceſſarily implyed in the Promiſe of Bleſſedneſs to the Nations in *Abraham*'s Seed; it being impoſſible Men ſhould be Bleſſed without Remiſſion of ſin, which conſiſteth in removing the Curſe of the Law, in remitting the penalty. *Bleſſed is the Man whoſe iniquity is forgiven, and whoſe ſin is covered*, Pſal. 32. 1. St. *Paul* acquaints us that this Bleſſing of the New Covenant, was declared to *Abraham* in the Promiſe, Gal. 3. 8. *The Scripture foreſeeing that God would juſtifie the Heathen through Faith, preached the Goſpel before unto Abraham, ſaying, In thee ſhall all Nations be bleſſed.*

3. It contained in it tacitly, *a Promiſe of Divine Aſſiſtance unto Men in their endeavours to fulfil the condition of the Promiſe.* For God in promiſing Bleſſedneſs to the Nations through *Abraham*'s Seed, therein promiſed all that was abſolutely neceſſary for him to vouchſafe to make them bleſſed, and without which they could not be bleſſed. And if ſo, then he therein implicitly promiſed to aſſiſt the endeavours of Men to perform the condition of the Promiſe, without the aſſiſtance of whoſe Grace they cannot ſavingly Believe, Repent, and Obey. And ſo it ſhould ſeem the Old Teſtament-Church underſtood God's ſubduing of ſin, as well as his pardoning of ſin, to be comprized in the Promiſe to *Abraham*, Mich. 7. 19, 20. *He will ſubdue our iniquities; and thou wilt caſt all their ſins into the depths of the Sea: Thou wilt perform the truth to Jacob, and the mercy to Abraham, which thou haſt ſworn to our Fathers, from the days of old.* And Chriſt his turning Men from their iniquities, which he doth accompliſh by appointing them means, and by aſſiſting them in the uſe of them to that end, is part of the Bleſſing contained in the Promiſe made to *Abraham*, and was ſo reckoned by St. *Peter*, Act 3. 25, 26. *Ye are the Children of the Prophets, and of the Covenant which God made with our Fathers, ſaying unto* Abraham, *And in thy ſeed ſhall all the kindreds of the earth be bleſſed. Unto you firſt God having raiſed up his Son Jeſus Chriſt, ſent him to bleſs you, in turning every one of you from his iniquities.*

4. It implicitly, or ſomewhat obſcurely contained in it *a Promiſe of Eternal Life.* I ſay, implicitly; For I do not find that Eternal Life

was expreſly promiſed to *Abraham*. But yet that was expreſly promiſed him, from which the hope of Eternal Life might well be inferred: As firſt, Bleſſedneſs through his Seed, the *Meſſias*: And ſecondly, That God would be a God to him and his Seed. For Bleſſedneſs is a Happineſs that runs parallel with the duration of Man's Immortal Soul. And God's Promiſe of being a God to *Abraham*, carried in it a Promiſe of a Happineſs worthy of God to beſtow, ſuch as Everlaſting Life or Happineſs is. *And therefore he was not aſhamed to be called their God* (meaning *Abraham*, *Iſaac*, and *Jacob*) *becauſe he had prepared for them a City*; meaning that in ſo doing, he had anſwered that title of relation of being their God, and done like himſelf, *Heb.* 11. 16. And upon theſe and the like Revelations of God's mind to him, *Abraham looked for a City which hath Foundations, whoſe Builder and Maker is God, and a Heavenly Country*, Heb. 11. 10, 16. If *Abraham* did but uſe his reaſon about theſe Promiſes, as he did about reconciling God's Promiſe, that in *Iſaac* his Seed ſhould be called, with his command to Sacrifice him, (*Heb.* 11. 17, 18, 19.) he might diſcern Eternal Life in them, though but very obſcurely, in compariſon of what is now revealed in the Goſpel, by which *Life and Immortality is brought to light*, 2 Tim. 1. 10. But how obſcurely ſoever a future Happineſs was promis'd to *Abraham*, yet promiſed it was, for which we have the teſtimony of St. *Paul*, Gal. 3. 18. *If the inheritance be of the Law, it is no more of Promiſe: But God gave it to* Abraham *by Promiſe*. He was here proving againſt the Phariſaical *Jews*, and Judaizing Chriſtians, that Juſtification unto Life, was to be had by the Promiſe, and not by the Law; by Faith, and not by Works of the Law; *that the Juſt ſhould live by Faith*, as *verſ.* 12. And therefore by Inheritance here, which he ſaith God gave to *Abraham* by Promiſe, he doubtleſs means Eternal Life, which elſewhere he calls *the Promiſe of eternal Inheritance*, Heb. 9. 15.

Conſider now, how God carry'd on his deſign of reſtoring Man by the promiſe of thoſe benefits. For if expreſſions of the greateſt Grace and Love in God to Men, is the way to beget in them a love to God again, and in begetting that, to beget all the deſirable effects of Love; (which are no leſs than a ſincere conformity in Man's Nature and Life to the Divine Law) and if the giving of great and precious Promiſes, is the way of recovering Man again to a participation of the Divine Nature, (as I have ſhewed it is) then the Promiſe of God to *Abraham*, which was expreſſive of the greateſt Grace and Love, and contained in it Promiſes, than which there are not materially greater, nor more precious, was a wiſe and gracious contrivance of God, to recover Man to a likeneſs to himſelf, wherein the glory and perfection of his Nature did firſt conſiſt.

Sect. 4

The next thing to be conſidered, is, *the extent of the Promiſe of God to Abraham*. The greatneſs of God's Love and Good-will, was not expreſſed only in the greatneſs of the benefits promiſed to *Abraham*, but alſo in the extent of the Promiſe; reaching not only to the

Jewiſh People and their Proſelytes (to which another Covenant was reſtrained) but even to all Nations of the Earth, *Gen.* 12. 3. and 22. 18. Which ſhews it to be of the ſame nature with the general Promiſe in the Goſpel, though it was not ſo intelligible then, as it is ſince made by the Goſpel. But God, we ſee, *ſo loved the world, as* firſt to promiſe, and after *to give his only begotten Son, that whoſoever ſhould believe in him, ſhould not periſh, but have everlaſting life,* Joh. 3. 16. *Chriſt gave his life for the life of the world,* Joh. 6. 8. *He is the propitiation for the ſins of the whole world,* 1 Joh. 2. 2. *He gave himſelf a ranſom for all,* 1 Tim. 2. 6. *And taſted death for every man,* Heb. 2. 9.

Sect. 5.

Conſider we in the next place, *the Security given by God, for the performance of his Promiſe to Abraham and his Seed.* For becauſe men knowing how ill they have deſerved from God, having made themſelves Enemies to him, would be apt to queſtion whether there were indeed ſo much Love and Good-will in God to them as the greatneſs of his Promiſe did import; therefore God, to remove all jealouſie of this nature, and to give them the greateſt ſecurity and aſſurance he could, of the reality of his intentions, and of his heart and good-will towards them, confirmed his Promiſe by an Oath, *ſwearing by himſelf, becauſe he could ſwear by no greater.* And this he did that they to whom the Promiſe did extend, *might have ſtrong conſolation* from God, ſuch as might work in them ſtrong and vigorous affections to him, ſuch as were in *Abraham,* through which he was wrought to an entire reſignation of himſelf to God, and to his will, and by which he was denominated the Friend of God, *Heb.* 6. 17, 28. *Wherein God willing more abundantly to ſhew unto the Heirs of Promiſe the Immutability of his Counſel, confirmed it by an Oath: That by two immutable things, in which it was impoſſible for God to lye, we might have ſtrong conſolation, who have fled for refuge, to lay hold of the hope ſet before us.*

Sect. 6.

The next thing I have to ſhew, is, *That this Promiſe of God to Abraham, was Conditional.* If the Promiſe of ſending Chriſt was Abſolute, yet the actual collation of the great benefit of Remiſſion of Sin, and Eternal Life by him, was not promiſed but upon condition of Faith and Repentance, as appears by the Scriptures frequent explanation of the general Promiſe. *Abraham believed in the Lord, and it was counted unto him for righteouſneſs,* Gen. 15. 6. If *Abraham* had not believed God, he had not been juſtified notwithſtanding the Promiſe. So that this Juſtification depended as well upon his performing the condition of the Promiſe, as upon the Promiſe it ſelf. And when God ſaid to *Abraham, Walk before me, and be thou upright, and I will make a Covenant with thee,* Gen 17. 1. The Lord made *Abraham*'s upright walking before him, the condition of his keeping, as well as making Covenant with him. Beſides, it is apparent that God made Circumciſion to be the Covenant to be kept on *Abraham*'s and his Seed's part, as the condition of what God had promiſed on his part, *Gen.* 17. 4, 7, 10. *As for me, my Covenant is with thee*, &c. *Thou ſhalt keep my Covenant therefore, thou and thy Seed after thee in their generations.* And *this is the Covenant which ye ſhall keep between me and you, every Man-child among you ſhall be circumciſed.* By which is to be underſtood, not ſo much Circumciſion in the Fleſh, as in the Spirit; as I ſhall ſhew anon.

And the truth is, it would not ſuit with God's end and deſign in his Covenant, of reſtoring Man to the rectitude of his Nature (mentioned before) to do it without Man's endeavours in the uſe and exerciſe of his natural faculties, of Underſtanding and Will, as he is a rational Creature and free Agent. For God works that change in Man's nature, deſigned in his New Law or Covenant, not meerly Phyſically, but Morally alſo. 1. By propoſing great and important Truths to his Mind and Underſtanding, and in aſſiſting this natural faculty, in conſidering how his happineſs is concerned in that which is propoſed, in caſe it ſhould prove true, and in conſidering likewiſe what reaſon there is to believe that it is true, and in diſcerning the truth of it upon conſideration. And, 2. By propoſing Motives to the Will, to incline it to follow the dictates of the enlightned mind, and by aſſiſting the Will to be governed thereby. So that Man himſelf is not wholly paſſive in this change, or what goes to the making of it; but is ſo far active in it, as to denominate what he doth by God's aſſiſtance, to be his own act. So that the Man is ſaid to Believe, to Repent, to obey, when he doth believe, repent, and Obey: For ſo he is every where in Scripture ſaid to do. God doth not repent in Man, but Man repents through his grace and aſſiſtance. And therefore God's grace, and Man's endeavours in working this change are very conſiſtent. *Phil.* 2. 12, 13. *Work out your own Salvation with fear and trembling. For it is God which worketh in you both to will and to do of his good pleaſure.* If Man do but what he can do, through the aſſiſtance of God's common Providence, (in whom we Live, and Move, and have our Being) God is moſt ready, through his good Pleaſure, or out of the goodneſs of his will and pleaſure, to work in him both to will and to do ſavingly, to carry the work quite thorow. Otherwiſe, if there were nothing that Man could do in a way of common Providence towards his Salvation, why ſhould he be exhorted and perſwaded to do that, which yet will not be done to effect and quite through, without the Aſſiſtance of God's Grace and good Spirit? The Co-operation of God's grace with Man's endeavours, in this change in the nature of Man, which is neceſſary to his Salvation, is a Doctrine that lies very fair and plain in the Scriptures. And therefore Men are called upon to *make themſelves new hearts*, Ezek. 18. 31. *Make you a new Heart, and a new Spirit, for why will ye dye, O houſe of Iſrael?* And God is ſaid to make them new hearts alſo, *Ezek.* 36. 26. *A new heart alſo will I give you, and a new Spirit will I put within you.* Men are called upon *to circumciſe their own hearts*, Deut. 10. 16. And God is ſaid to circumciſe the heart, *Deut.* 30. 6. Men are required *to cleanſe themſelves from all filthineſs of the fleſh and Spirit*, 2 Cor. 7. 1. And they are alſo ſaid to be *waſhed and ſanctified by the Spirit of God*, 1 Cor. 6. 11. Men are commanded to repent, *Acts* 17. 30. And God is ſaid *to give them repentance*, 2 Tim. 2. 35. Acts 5. 31. It is by reaſon of this Co-operation of God's aſſiſtance, and Man's endeavours, that St. *Paul* expreſſeth himſelf as he doth once and again, *Gal.* 2. 20. *I am crucified with Chriſt ; nevertheleſs I live ; yet not I, but Chriſt liveth in me*, 1 Cor. 15. 10. *I laboured more abundantly than they all ; yet not I, but the grace of God which was with me* He doth not by theſe laſt words ſo deny what he had ſaid in the former, as if he had not ſpoke true, for he ſpeaks the ſame things in effect in another place, without any ſuch correcting himſelf, as here he uſeth, 1 *Cor.* 3. 9. *For we are labourers together with God.* And therefore by his ſo correcting himſelf, ſaying, Not I, but the Grace of God which was with me, he only intends to magnifie God's Grace, as having the principal ſtroke in the work. It is a phraſe of like import with that, 2 *Cor.* 3. 10. For *even that which was made glorious, had no glory in this reſpect, by reaſon of the glory that excelleth.* So Man's endeavour though it be ſomewhat in it ſelf conſidered, yet comparatively, and in reſpect of the work of God's Grace by his Spirit which excels, it is nothing. Therefore, in fine, as Men are ſaid *through the Spirit to mortifie the deeds of the Body*, Rom. 8. 13. So they may be ſaid through the ſame Spirit, to Believe, Repent, Obey ; that is, through the aſſiſtance of the Spirit, who is ſaid to help our Infirmities, *Rom.* 8. 26.

Conſidering then that there is promiſe of divine aſſiſtance to Man uſing his endeavours in doing what he may, and can do towards the performing the condition of the Covenant, we may well conclude, that there is no Man under the Goſpel doth periſh, but through his own fault and neglect. It is true, God doth ſometimes for ſpecial reaſons meet with, and convert ſinners with a high hand of Grace, whilſt they are purſuing their ſins in a full career, and uſing no endeavours at all towards their own Salvation, as he did *Saul* before he was *Paul*. But ſuch extraordinary inſtances are no Rules to us, by which to judge of God's ordinary proceedings in converting Men : Nor hath the Lord put Men in expectation, by any promiſe of his, of their being converted after that manner, and upon ſuch terms. And therefore it will in no wiſe be ſafe for any Man to expect to be converted by ſuch extraordinary workings of Grace, and to neglect to do what he can do, and what God requires he ſhould do, towards his own converſion.

There are many things which Men may, and can believe, and do, without any Supernatural Grace, and by vertue of God's common Grace. It is no Supernatural Act to believe the Being of God, and the Immortality of the Soul, or future ſtate : Or to know that we are ſinners againſt God, and conſequently that we ſtand in need of his Mercy : Nor is it a Supernatural Act for a Man to deſire the future happineſs of his own Nature or Being ; or to hear the Word of God, which directs the way to that happineſs ; no more than it is to hear any other Doctrine, that only pretends to do ſo. Nor is it a Supernatural Act to conſider the Doctrine of the Scriptures with as much ſeriouſneſs, as Men do, or may, the contents of any other Books. Nor is it a Supernatural Act to conſider how we are concerned in the Doctrine of the Scriptures, in caſe it ſhould prove true: No more is it a Supernatural Act ſeriouſly to conſider the ſtrength and force of thoſe Reaſons that tend to perſwade Men to believe that Doctrine to be true: Nor, under the natural deſires which Men have to be happy in another world, is it a Supernatural Act for them to pray to God to direct and aſſiſt them in the uſe of means, that they may be happy. Theſe I take to be no Supernatural Acts in Men. For though the depraved VVill of Man needs Special or Supernatural Grace to do theſe ſo ſeriouſly and effectually, as is needful to true Sanctification, yet in ſome ſort and meaſure they may be done by common help. And if Men would but go thus far (as they can) out of a real deſire to be happy, I ſhould make no queſtion but that the Spirit of God would yield them his aſſiſtance to carry them quite through in the Work of Converſion. And whither our Saviour doth not by the Hearers, reſembled by the good Ground, mean ſuch Men as before their Converſion have ſome ſuch Working of Heart about their future ſtate, as doth incline them to hear and conſider what with any fair probability may be ſaid about the way to be happy in that ſtate, and not to hear out of Curioſity, or for faſhion-ſake, or to carp, I ſubmit to conſideration.

It is doubtleſs then Mens Inconſideration, Careleſsneſs and Negligence in thoſe things which they do Believe, and which they can do, that undoes them. It is *becauſe ſeeing, they ſee not, and hearing, they hear not*; which is the reaſon *why more is not given, but rather that taken away from them which they had.* That is, The reaſon why God with-holds his ſpecial Grace, and many times with draws common Grace and Aſſiſtance from Men, is, becauſe though they have underſtanding and conſidering Faculties, which they could (if they would) uſe and imploy about their being happy in another World, as well as they do about their happineſs in this, yet they will not, though they are frequently called upon, and excited thereto: Whereas, thoſe that *take heed* or *conſider what they hear,* and how they are concerned in it; *to them more ſhall be given*: God will come into ſuch with Supernatural Aid, *Mark* 4. 24. And therefore God, to put Men upon a holy neceſſity of complying with his Grace, in acting diligently towards the working out their own Salvation, hath wiſely made the obtaining of the great Benefits of the Covenant, Remiſſion of Sin, and Eternal Life, Conditional; ſo that Men can have no farther aſſurance of pardon of Sin, and Salvation, than they are ſure they ſincerely endeavour to perform the condition on their part, upon which they are promiſed. Wherefore, we are greatly concerned to be awakened by ſuch Sayings as theſe; *Strive to enter in at the ſtrait gate: So run, that ye may obtain: Uſe all diligence to make your calling and election ſure: Work out your Salvation with fear and trembling: Let us therefore fear, leſt a promiſe being left us of entring into his Reſt, any of you ſhould ſeem to come ſhort of it.*

Sect. 7.

I come now in the next place to ſhew, *What the condition of the Promiſe to Abraham was.* In ſhort it was a *practical Faith.* And under this Head,

I ſhall

I ſhall endeavour, 1. To give ſome account of the nature of *Abraham*'s Faith in general. 2. To deſcribe Faith. And, 3. To ſhew reaſon, why Faith is made the condition of the Covenant.

1. The condition of the Promiſe to *Abraham*, was *Faith*, and (as I ſhall after ſhew) a *practical Faith*. For that was it upon which the great Bleſſing of the Covenant, Juſtification, was conferred upon him, with the conſequent benefits. In *Gen.* 15. 6. it is ſaid of *Abraham*, *that he believed in the Lord, and he counted it to him for righteouſneſs.* But St. *Paul* reciting this Scripture, ſaith, *Abraham believed God*, and it was counted to him for Righteouſneſs, *Rom.* 4. 3. *Gal.* 3. 6. If there be any difference between believing God, and believing in God, it ſeems to be this. To believe God, is to believe him upon his Word, to believe all that to be true, which he ſaith when he hath once ſpoken it. But to believe in God, is firſt, to believe him to be ſuch an One, of ſuch a Nature, as neither will, nor can at any time ſpeak any thing but what is true: It is to believe him to be *a God that cannot lye*. For all true Faith, as *Abraham*'s was, is founded in the Nature of God. *Abraham* did primarily believe in God, and conſequently believed his Sayings, of what nature ſoever they were. And, ſecondly, To believe in God, is to believe that he can, and will perform whatever he promiſed, how unlikely ſoever the thing in its own nature otherwiſe be. And this was the nature of *Abraham*'s Faith, as appears by St. *Paul*'s Comment upon it, *Rom.* 4. 20, 21. *He ſtaggered not at the Promiſe of God through unbelief, but was ſtrong in Faith, giving glory to God: and being fully perſwaded, that what he had promiſed, he was able alſo to perform.* He gave to God the glory of his Nature and Being, of his Truth and Faithfulneſs in his Promiſes, and of his Power and Ability to perform what he had promiſed, notwithſtanding its utmoſt improbability in Nature. And *therefore*, or for this reaſon, *his Faith was imputed to him for righteouſneſs*, as we are told in *ver.* 22. of *Rom.* 4. And ſo it ſhould ſeem it is not the believing of any one particular or ſingle Promiſe, that is counted for Righteouſneſs, otherwiſe than as it is an inſtance of Faith in God in general, in reference to whatever he doth ſay, or ſhall declare. Which may be the reaſon why Faith is ſaid to be counted to *Abraham* for Righteouſneſs, as well when he had not the *Meſſias* in the Promiſe as the immediate Object of his Faith, but ſomewhat elſe, as when he had. The Promiſe, the believing of which was counted to *Abraham* for righteouſneſs, in *Gen.* 15. 6. was a Promiſe of a numerous Iſſue, [*So ſhall thy Seed be*] *viz.* as numberleſs as the Stars. But that which produced a Belief of this particular Promiſe, would, and doubtleſs did, produce in him a belief of the promiſe of the *Meſſias* and of every other Promiſe and Word of God, and declaration of his mind, ſo far as underſtood by him, and that was an habitual belief of God's Truth, and Faithfulneſs, Wiſdom, Power and Goodneſs; his fixed belief in God. And ſo a believing God's Threatnings, ſo as to uſe means to eſcape them, is (it ſhould ſeem) counted to one for Righteouſneſs, as well as the belief of the Promiſes, as growing upon the ſame Root. Thus *Noah*'s Believing God's threatning to bring a Deluge upon the World, and his Obedience to God's Command, in the preparing an Ark for the ſaving of his Houſe, was that, or at leaſt one

inſtance of that Faith, *by which he became Heir of the Righteouſneſs which is by Faith*, Heb. 11. 7. It was this general Faith in God that made *Abraham* ſo compliant with every intimation of his will and pleaſure. By it he forſook his own Country and Kindred at God's command, to go he knew not whither, but depended on God's after-direction in that caſe, *Heb.* 11. 8. By it he was ready to offer his Son *Iſaac*, in whom the Promiſes were made: And he had ſuch a firm Belief in God's Promiſe, That in *Iſaac* his Seed ſhould be called, that he concluded that God would raiſe him from the Dead, when he had Sacrificed him, rather than fail in the leaſt of making good his Promiſe, *Heb.* 11. 17, 18, 19. He had ſuch a confidence in God; that is to ſay, in his Wiſdom, Goodneſs, Truth, and Power, as wrought him to an entire Reſignation of himſelf to God's will and pleaſure. He believed God to be ſo Good and ſo Wiſe, as not to put him upon any thing, but what ſhould be for his good in the iſſue: And ſo True and Powerful, as to promiſe nothing but, what he could, and would perform. In a word; this his Belief in God, made him believe all his Promiſes, and obey all his Precepts.

2. Come we next to ſome *deſcription* of that *Faith*, which is the condition of the Promiſe, or Covenant of Salvation: Wherein I ſhall have reſpect to the nature of Saving Faith in general, in reference to all Ages of the Church, and alſo to the Chriſtian Evangelical Faith in ſpecial. Faith, ſtrictly taken, is an aſſent unto the truth of any Propoſition, upon the credit of the Speaker. But Saving Faith is of a more comprehenſive nature, than is a meer aſſent unto the Truth of any one Propoſition. And although Saving Faith is ſometimes deſcribed by an aſſenting to the truth of one ſingle Propoſition, yet then it implies the belief of many more, and ſuch a belief as draws in the Will to act according to the import and concernment of the thing believed. As for inſtance: The Belief of this Propoſition [*That Chriſt Jeſus is the Son of God*] by which, Faith is ſometimes deſcribed, doth include in it a belief of the truth of his whole Doctrine, both concerning God's Grace, and Man's Duty, and the Will's concurrence, as to its concernment in it. For, if he be the Son of God, then he cannot lye or deceive in any thing he hath ſaid. And again, the belief of this Propoſition [*That God raiſed Chriſt from the Dead*] by which Faith is alſo deſcribed, *Rom.* 10. 9. includes in it a belief, That all that Doctrine which he taught, is undoubtedly true: For if it had not, God would never have wrought ſuch a Miracle, as to Raiſe Chriſt from the Dead, to confirm it. The belief then of ſuch ſingle Propoſitions, include a belief of the whole Doctrine of the Goſpel, which is the proper Object of the Chriſtian Faith, and for that cauſe is frequently ſtiled *Faith*, or *the Faith*, in the New Teſtament.

But if we reſpect the nature of Faith in general, as anſwering the different degrees of God's Revelation of his Will in ſeveral Ages of the World, both under the Goſpel, and before; I do not know how better to define it, than thus: Faith is ſuch a hearty belief of God's Declaration, concerning his own Grace, and Man's Duty, as doth effectually cauſe a Man to expect from God, and to act in a way of ſincere Obedience, according to the Tenour and Import of ſuch a Declaration. Or, if you will take in the Belief of God's Threatnings againſt ſinners into the definition; then it will be thus: Faith is ſuch a hearty belief of God's Declaration concerning his own Grace and Diſpleaſure, and Man's Duty, as doth effectually cauſe a Man to expect from God, and to act in a way of ſincere Obedience, according to the Tenour and Import of ſuch a Declaration. Faith thus defined, we have already ſeen exemplified in *Abraham*, who is the great Exemplar of Believing, and the Father of Believers. And that it was his belief of God's Promiſe, or Declaration of Grace and Favour to him, as it is practical in producing Repentance, Self-denial, and ſincear Obedience, by which he was juſtified and made happy, appears farther, not only in that it's ſaid by St. *James*, That his Faith wrought with his Works, and was made perfect by them, and that he was juſtified by Works, as well as by Faith, (of which more anon) but alſo in that it's ſaid, that *he received the ſign of Circumciſion* (which was the Condition upon which God Covenanted with him to be his God, and upon the ſame terms to be the God of his Seed) *a Seal of the Righteouſneſs of the Faith which he had, while he was yet uncircumciſed.* For ſuppoſing (which is not denied) Circumciſion to be an outward Sign of inward Grace, of the Circumciſion of the Heart, conſiſting in Mortification, or a Penitential change of the Heart, which is the effect of Faith, his Circumciſion, as ſuch, was a Seal of confirmation to *Abraham*, that it was upon his former ſo believing God upon his Promiſe, as thereby to be induced to leave the evil Cuſtoms of his Country, and his Country it ſelf, with his Kindred, and his Father's Houſe; that God would be his God indeed: In which Promiſe was implicitly promiſed, all that would make him Eternally Happy. And God's farther deſign of giving to *Abraham* this Covenant of Circumiſion, as a Seal to aſſure him the enjoyment of the benefit wrapt up in that Promiſe upon the terms aforeſaid, was, that he might be the Father of all them that Believe, whether literally Circumciſed, or not; that is, that he might be a great Example and Pattern to all others, of obtaining the ſame benefits, in the ſame way; and ſo might be a means of begetting others to Believe in God, and to Obey him, as he had done; to be a great Inſtrument to propagate the kind of New Creatures, of Men renewed to God, to the end they might be Bleſſed, as he was. This, or ſomewhat to this effect, is doubtleſs the meaning of *Rom.* 4. 11, 12. *And he received the ſign of Circumciſion, a Seal of the Rightouſneſs of the Faith which he had, being yet uncircumciſed: That he might be the Father of all them that Believe, though they be not circumciſed; that Rightouſneſs might be imputed to them alſo: And the Father of Circumciſion to them who are not of the Circumciſion only, but alſo walk in the ſteps of that Faith of our Father Abraham, which he had, being yet uncircumciſed*; and it is not unlikely, but that as Heart-Circumciſion, under the figure of Literal-Circumciſion, was, together with Faith, made the condition of the Covenant then; ſo Spiritual Baptiſm, which is a Death unto ſin, and a living unto God, is under the Figure of Water-Baptiſm, joyned with Believing, as the condition of the Promiſe of Salvation, now. *Mark*, 16. 16. *He that believeth, and is baptized, ſhall be ſaved.* According to which St. *Peter* having ſpoken of *Noah*'s Ark, ſaith, *The like figure whereunto Baptiſm now ſaveth us; not the putting away of the filth of the fleſh, bnt the* *anſwer of a good conſcience towards God*, 1 *Pet.* 3. 21. Now, as it was in *Abraham*, ſuch a belief of God's Declaration of Grace and Favour, as did effectually induce him to Love and Obey God, by which he was Juſtified, ſo (I ſhall ſhew afterwards) it was the very ſame kind of Faith, working after the ſame manner, by which the Saints, under the Law of *Moſes*, were Saved.

But Faith, as Evangelical and Chriſtian, is ſuch a hearty aſſent and conſent unto God's Declaration in the Goſpel by his Son, concerning Chriſt himſelf, and his Grace and Favour towards Men by him, and concerning their own Duty, as causeth a Man to expect from God, and to act in a way of duty, according to the Tenour of ſuch a Declaration, and his own concerns in it. And Faith, thus defined, is fully agreeable to the Tenour of the Goſpel: *Mark* 16. 15, 16. *Go ye into all the world, and Preach the Goſpel to every Creature: He that Believeth, and is Baptized, ſhall be ſaved.* He that believeth What? Why, he that believeth that Goſpel which was to be Preached to every Creature. Which Goſpel contains a Declaration of God's Grace, and Man's Duty, and of his Wrath againſt all Ungodlineſs and Unrighteouſneſs of Men. For, 1. It declares from God that he hath given his Son Jeſus Chriſt to be the Saviour of the World, by being a Propitiation for the ſin of it, in becoming a Sacrifice to expiate ſin. 2. It declares, That God upon account of his Son's giving himſelf a Ranſom for all, hath made, and doth eſtabliſh a New Covenant with the World, to Pardon, and Eternally to Save as many as ſhall Believe in his Son, and Repent of their ſinfulneſs, in changing their Minds, and reforming their Lives, and becoming New Men, in yielding ſincere Obedience to the Precepts of the Goſpel. 3. It declares, That *thoſe that believe not, ſhall be damned*; and ſuch as repent not, ſhall periſh; and that the unrighteous ſhall not inherit the Kingdom of God. This ſummarily is that which the Goſpel declares concerning God's Grace and Diſpleaſure, and Man's Duty.

Now it is the practical belief of all this, that is the ſaving Faith. It is not the bare belief that God hath given his Son to be the Saviour of the World, and a Propitiation for the ſin of it: Nor is it a bare belief that he will for Chriſt's ſake pardon and ſave as many as truly Repent and amend their lives, and become New Creatures; unleſs they ſo believe all this, as ſeriouſly and heartily to Repent themſelves of their former folly, and to return to their duty in new Evangelical Obedience. For otherwiſe, for a Man barely to believe all this, and not act according to his own concerns in it, will be ſo far from being a believing to the ſaving of the Soul, as that it will rather plunge him the deeper in Deſtruction, for living and acting contrary to his own light and belief, as *holding the truth in unrighteouſneſs*; *the wrath of God being revealed from heaven againſt all ſuch*, Rom. 1. 18.

A Man of this practical Faith which I have deſcribed, eyes as well the condition upon which the ſaving Benefits are promiſed through Chriſt, as the Promiſe it ſelf of thoſe benefits; and expects the enjoyment of thoſe benefits upon God's Promiſe and Chriſt's Purchaſe, no otherwiſe, than as he, with the aſſiſtance of God's Grace, is careful to perform the Condition. Which belief of his, makes him as careful to perform the Condition in diſcharge of his own duty therein, as ever he hopes to enjoy the promiſed Pardon and Salvation by Chriſt, and to eſcape the Damnation threatned againſt thoſe who perform not the condition. So that a Man by this practical Faith, belives one part of God's Declaration in the Goſpel, as well as the other; and his own duty to be as well neceſſary to his Juſtification, as the condition appointed by God, as the Grace of God, through Chriſt, it ſelf, is upon another account: And by this belief, he is effectually moved, as well to act in a way of duty to God, as to expect mercy from him; conſidering how his Happineſs is concerned in both, when he hath the whole of God's Declaration in all the parts taken together, in proſpect, as the Object of his Faith.

When he hears, that *God ſo loved the World, that he gave his only begotten Son, that whoſoever believes in him, ſhould not periſh, but have everlaſting life.* When he hears, that *God hath ſet forth Chriſt to be a Propitiation through Faith in his Blood:* And when he hears again, that *God was in Chriſt reconciling the World unto himſelf, not imputing their treſpaſſes unto them*; he believes all this to be true, as coming from God that cannot lye; and accordingly, is incouraged to hope in God's Mercy, and is comforted thereby. But then when he hears again, that *except we repent, we ſhall all periſh*; that *except a man be born again, he cannot ſee the Kingdom of God:* That *without holineſs, no man ſhall ſee the Lord*; and that *the pure in heart ſhall ſee God:* That *not every one that ſaith Lord, Lord, ſhall enter into the Kingdom of Heaven, but he that doth the will of the Father which is in Heaven:* That *the Lord Jeſus ſhall be revealed from Heaven, with his mighty Angles in flaming fire, to render vengeance to all thoſe that know not God, and which obey not the Goſpel of our Lord Jeſus Chriſt;* But that *he is the Author of eternal Salvation to all thoſe that obey him.* I ſay, when he hears all this, he as verily believes this part of God's Declaration in the Goſpel, to be the faithful and true Sayings of God, as he acounted the other to be. And accordingly, doth as ſeriouſly, and ſincerely ſet upon the Work of Repentance, and as carefully uſeth God's appointed means for the changing of his Heart, and renewing of his Nature, for *the purifying of himſelf, as God is pure*; and doth as carefully obey all the Precepts of the Goſpel; as he hopes upon the account of Chriſt's Sufferings, and God's Promiſe, to be Pardoned and Saved; as beliving that thoſe Benefits are neither promiſed, nor can be obtained, but in this way of performing the Condition. And I doubt not to ſay, that this practical Faith, as it reſpects God's Declaration, touching Man's duty, in conjunction with his own Grace in Chriſt, is, where the Goſpel comes, the only ſaving juſtifying Faith.

3. Come we now to ſhew Reaſon, why Faith is made the Condition of the Promiſe.

1. *It is of Faith, that it might be of Grace*, ſaith the Apoſtle, *Rom.* 4. 16. It is that the Grace of God to miſerable Men, might the more ſhew it ſelf. For ſo it doth, not only in promiſing unſpeakably great things through Chriſt to Man, who is not only undeſerving, but illdeſerving alſo; but alſo, in that theſe are promiſed upon ſuch a poſſible, practical, eaſie Condition as Faith is, conſidering the means and aſſiſtance promiſed by God to work it: And conſidering alſo, that the Promiſe is made

to the truth, unfeignedneſs and ſincerity, and not to perfection of Faith, Repentance, and new Obedience, in their utmoſt degree. So that Chriſt might well ſay, *my Yoke is eaſie, and my Burden light,* Matth. 11. 30. Whereas the old way of promiſing the Inheritance on the Law-terms, would have been to have promiſed it upon impoſſible conditions, as the caſe now is with fallen Man. And if God ſhould have promiſed never ſo great things to Man, in his impotent and miſerable ſtate, upon an impoſſible condition, he would have been ſo far from manifeſting abundance of Grace, Compaſſion, and Love to him in that condition, as that he would rather have ſeemed to inſult over him in it. And therefore, if the Promiſe ſhould have run upon the Law-terms, and not of Faith, it would utterly have fruſtrated God's deſign of manifeſting his Grace to Man, and of recovering Man's Love and Loyalty to him thereby. *Rom.* 4. 14. *If they which are of the Law be Heirs, Faith is made void, and the Promiſe made of none effect. But it is of Faith, that it might be by Grace, to the end the Promiſe might be ſure to all the Seed, not to that only which is of the Law, but to that alſo which is of the Faith of Abraham,* ver. 16.

2. This may be another reaſon, why ſuch a Faith, as I have deſcribed, is made the condition of the Covenant of Salvation, *viz.* Becauſe it beſt anſwers God's deſign in this Covenant, of renewing the Nature of Man in Holineſs and Righteouſneſs, and by that means reſtoring it to Happineſs. For, by Faith Men are born of God, or made the Children of God. *Gal.* 3. 26. *Ye are all the Children of God by Faith in Chriſt Jeſus.* Joh. 1. 12, 13. *As many as received him, to them gave he power to become the ſons of God, even to thoſe that believe on his Name. Which are born, not of blood, nor of the will of the fleſh, nor of the will of man, but of God.* Now, to be born of God, or, which is the ſame, to be made the Child of God, is to have ones Nature reſtored to the likeneſs of God, in which Man was firſt made, and is the ſame thing with that which is called *Regeneration,* and a being *born again,* and *a new Creature.* Which new Creature, or the Nature of Man renewed by Faith, is alſo called the *new Man, which after God, is created in righteouſneſs and true holineſs,* Epheſ. 4. 24. To be born again, is to have the Faculties of Mans Nature reſtored to a rectitude in their motions and operations, in reference both to God and Man, to be reſtored to their proper moral uſe for which they were made. It is, in a word, that which is called a being *made partakers of a Divine Nature.* For thoſe which are begotten of God, are begotten in, or to his likeneſs. Men can adopt thoſe which are not their natural Children to inherit their Eſtates, but they cannot adopt them to a participation of their Moral Endowments. But God adopts his Children to a participation with him in the Inheritance, by adopting them to a participation of the Moral Perfections of his Nature; that is, to a conſimilitude to him in them.

And this we ſay is done by Faith; that is, by Faith in God, and by Faith in his Word. For, in order of Nature, God is firſt believed to be a God of Truth, before his Word is believed to be the Word of Truth. And the creditableneſs of his Word depends upon the knowledge or belief of the fidelity of his Nature. And this Truth of God, and of his Word, is the immediate Object of Faith. By Faith, a Man believes that to be true, which God reveals or declares as his Mind and Will, let the Import of it be what it will. But then, this Faith operates upon the Will and Affections, according to the Tenour and Import of that which is Revealed. If it be matter of ſad import, it works a hatred to him that threatens it, and a fear of the thing threatned, if it be apprehended to proceed from an enemy. And this is the effect of the Faith of Devils, who believe, and hate God, who believe and tremble, *Jam.* 2. 19. But if that which is Revealed by God, and Believed by Man, betoken unſpeakable love and good-will in God to Man, and matter of the greateſt benefit to him, as a proof of ſuch love, then it worketh love to him that expreſſeth ſuch love, (*for Faith worketh by Love*, Gal. 5. 6.) and a longing deſire after the promiſed benefit. And as the Soul grows more and more in love with God, becauſe of his love; in love with his Bleſſed Nature and Divine Perfections; ſuch as are his Love and Goodneſs, Truth and Faithfulneſs, Purity and Patience, Mercifulneſs, and readineſs to Forgive, which render him altogether lovely; ſo it contracts a likeneſs to God in theſe upon the Soul, and ſo changes and renews the Moral habit and conſtitution of the Soul, and conſequently the whole Life. There is an aptneſs and promptneſs in Men to imitate that in others (and ſo in God) for which they love them. And frequent imitating Acts, beget Habits, Cuſtom changing Nature. And hence it is, that through Faith we are made partakers of a Divine Nature. *We all with open face, beholding as in a Glaſs the glory of the Lord, are changed into the ſame Image, from glory to glory, as by the Spirit of the Lord,* 2. Cor. 3. 18. This beholding the glory of the Lord, is by Faith, (*For we walk by Faith, and not by ſight,* 2. Cor. 5. 7. and by it *Moſes ſaw him who is inviſible,* Heb. 11. 27.) And the *medium* by which this Proſpect is taken, is the Goſpel, by which the Lord in his lovely Perfections is now openly revealed: And Faith being from time to time buſied in beholding of, and converſing with theſe Perfections, it transforms the Soul into the ſame Image or likeneſs, *from glory to glory,* (that is gradually) *as by the Spirit of the Lord*; that is, through the co-operation of God's Spirit with Man's Faith. *To comprehend the breadth, length, depth, and heighth, and to know the love of Chriſt which paſſeth knowledge,* is the way to be *filled with all the fulneſs of God,* by tranſcribing all his imitable Perfections upon the Soul, *Epheſ.* 3. 18, 19.

And it is by virtue of their Relation to Chriſt, and being thus begotten and born of God, and made partakers of a new Nature conformable to God's, that Men can with confidence call God Father: This bleſſed effect of God's Spirit, is the Spirit of Adoption, by which they cry, *Abba*, Father. And it is this new Nature, that is the Spring and Fountain of a good Life, of all pious and virtuous Actions. As it is ſaid of God, *Thou art good, and doſt good*; ſo it is true of all thoſe that are born of him. *A good Man, out of the good treaſure of his heart,* (thus renewed) *bringeth forth good fruit: The Tree being good, the Fruit will be good.* And as this new Creature groweth up to ſtrength and maturity, ſo doing of good, and acting worthily, will become natural and pleaſant to him in whom it is. To ſuch an one *the Commandments of God* *are not grievous,* but he will be able in ſome good meaſure to ſay *I delight to do thy will, O God, yea thy Law is in my heart.* And for ſin, it being contrary to this New Nature, there is a kind of Moral Impotency in him in whom it is, to commit ſin: *He cannot ſin, becauſe he is born of God,* 1 Joh. 3. 9. Or if ſuch an one be overtaken in a fault, it will work a diſturbance in the Soul, juſt as that will in the Stomach, which a Man hath eaten, againſt which he hath an antipathy in Nature. But as for ſuch as perform Religious Duties, and do things materially good, only by the ſtrength of extrinſecal Motives, and not from an inward Principle of this New Nature, or love to the things themſelves; to ſuch, thoſe Actions, being unnatural, become grievous and burdenſome, and will be continued in no longer, than thoſe Motives continue in their ſtrength.

Sect. 8.

The laſt thing I propoſed to conſider about God's Promiſe to *Abraham*, is, *What we are to underſtand by God's counting Abraham's* Faith *to him for Righteouſneſs.* And I take it to ſignifie thus much: That God in a way of ſpecial Grace, or by virtue of a New Law of Grace and Favour which was eſtabliſhed by God in Chriſt, (*Gal.* 3. 17.) that is, in reference to what Chriſt was to do and ſuffer in time then to come, did reckon his Practical Faith to him for Righteouſneſs; that is, that which in the eye of the New Law ſhould paſs in his eſtimation for Righteouſneſs, ſubordinate to Chriſt's Righteouſneſs, which procured this Grant, or Law. For otherwiſe, Faith, neither as it is the Condition of the Promiſe of Remiſſion of Sin through Chriſt, nor as it works Repentance for ſins paſt, or ſincere Obedience for time to come, is Righteouſneſs in the Eye of the Original Law. For that accounts no Man that hath, though but once, tranſgreſſed it, to be Righteous, either upon the account of anothers ſuffering for his ſin, or his own Repentance or ſincere imperfect Obedience; but Curſeth every Man that from firſt to laſt continueth not in all things which are contained in that Law. But it is, as I ſaid, an Act of God's ſpecial Favour, and by virtue of his New Law of Grace, and as it is eſtabliſhed in Chriſt; that ſuch a Faith as I have deſcribed, comes to be reckoned, or imputed to a Man for Righteouſneſs, and through God's imputing it for Righteouſneſs to ſtand a Man in the ſame, if not in better ſtead, as to his Eternal Concerns, as a perfect fulfilling of the Original Law from firſt to laſt, would have done; Chriſt's Righteouſneſs being preſuppoſed the only Meritorious Cauſe of this Grant or Covenant.

And thus indeed the Faith which I have deſcribed, is a Man's Righteouſneſs in the Eye of this New Law, becauſe it is ſummarily all that is required *of him himſelf* to make him capable of the Benefits promiſed by it; which, as it is now revealed, is the Goſpel. Juſtification is a Law-term: And no Man ſhall be Juſtified in Judgment, or upon Tryal, but he that is Juſt in the Eye of this New Law of Grace, as every one that rightly Believes, Repents and ſincerely Obeys, is; becauſe that is all that it requires of a Man himſelf to his Juſtification and Salvation.

And yet every Believer's Juſtification will be all of Grace, becauſe the Law by which they are Juſtified, is wholly of Grace, is wholly a Law of Grace, and was Enacted in meer Grace and Favour to undone Man, that was utterly undone by the Fall.

There are two things which I conceive do conſtitute and make up the Righteouſneſs of the Law of Grace; (preſuppoſing all to be procured by the Purchaſe which Chriſt hath made) firſt, The Righteouſneſs which conſiſteth in the *forgiveneſs of ſins*; and ſecondly, The Righteouſneſs of *ſincere Obedience*. And in reference to both theſe, Faith is imputed for Righteouſneſs, by virtue of the Law of Grace.

Firſt, Faith, as practical, is imputed to a Man for Righteouſneſs, as it is That, and all That which is required of him himſelf by the Law of Grace, to entitle him to the Righteouſneſs which conſiſteth in the Remiſſion of ſins through Chriſt. Now, that remiſſion of Sins is part of the Righteouſneſs which is by Faith, is evident from *Rom.* 4. 5, 6, 7, 8. Where the Apoſtle, to prove that a Man's Faith in God who juſtifyeth the ungodly, is counted to him for Righteouſneſs, he citeth a paſſage out of *Pſalm* the 32d, *Even as David alſo* (ſaith he) *deſcribeth the bleſſedneſs of the man to whom God imputeth Righteouſneſs without Works, ſaying, Bleſſed are they whoſe iniquities are forgiven, and whoſe ſins are covered. Bleſſed is the man, to whom the Lord will not impute ſin.* The Righteouſneſs imputed in this ſenſe, doth conſiſt in the non-imputation of ſin. Not to impute ſin, is not to reckon a Man not to have ſinned; but it is to deal with him, not according to the demerit of his ſin, it is to pardon him for Chriſt's ſake upon his penitential Faith, and not to puniſh him for his ſin; and this by vertue of a New Law or Act of Indemnity, or Covenant of Grace. For although pardon of ſin is obtained for Man by Chriſt's Sufferings for ſin, (*In whom we have redemption through his blood, the forgiveneſs of ſins*, Epheſ. 1. 7. and though God, *for Chriſt's ſake doth forgive us*, Epheſ. 4. 32.) yet the actual collation of this great Benefit, is not promiſed, but upon condition of Man's Faith. *Him hath God ſet forth to be a Propitiation*; but it is *through Faith in his blood*, Rom. 3. 25. *By him all that believe are juſtified from all things, from which ye could not be juſtified by the Law of Moſes*, Acts 13. 39. and 10. 43. Although Chriſt is the Propitiation for the ſins of the whole World, (1 *Joh.* 2. 2.) yet that ſaying of Chriſt muſt and will take place; *If ye believe not that I am he, ye ſhall dye in your ſins*, Joh. 8. 24. And that alſo, *Mark* 16. 16. *He that believeth not, ſhall be damned.* So that Faith is imputed for Righteouſneſs, partly as it is the Condition upon which Pardon of ſin is granted.

Secondly, That Faith is imputed for Righteouſneſs, which is practical, or productive of ſincere Obedience, without which property it is not a fulfilling of the Law of Grace as a Condition of the promiſed Benefits; and conſequently, cannot juſtifie a Man in the Eye of that Law. For,

1ſt, Repentance, and likewiſe forgiving Men their Injuries (for inſtance) are ſuch Acts of Obedience, as without which a Man cannot be Pardoned; and if not Pardoned, then not Juſtified. And therefore, Faith is not imputed for Righteouſneſs, unleſs it be productive of Obedience.

2*dly*, No *Faith is available* to Juſtification, but ſuch as *worketh by Love*, Gal. 5. 6. Which to ſay, is all one as to ſay, no Faith is imputed for Righteouſneſs, but ſuch as worketh by *keeping the Commandments of God, and fulfilling the Law*; for that is the interpretation of Love, both to God and Men, 1 *Joh.* 5. 3. *Rom.* 13. 10.

3*dly*, *Abraham* who was ſet forth by God for a Pattern of his juſtifying Men by Faith, was Juſtified by ſuch Works as were the fruits of his Faith; and not only by his Faith, which was the Root of them: And therefore his Faith as practical, was imputed to him for Righteouſneſs: And ſuch muſt be the Faith of all others that ſhall obtain Juſtification upon their Believing as he did, *Jam.* 2. 21, 22, 23. *Was not Abraham our Father juſtified by Works, when he had offered Iſaac his Son upon the Altar? Seeſt thou how Faith wrought with his Works; and by Works was Faith made perfect. And the Scripture was fulfilled, which ſaith, Abraham Believed God, and it was imputed to him for Righteouſneſs.* Where note theſe four things. 1. That *Abraham's* Faith wrought with his Works about the ſame End, as a Condition of obtaining it; to wit, his Juſtification. 2. That by his Works his Faith was made perfect; to wit, in its aptitude by God's Inſtitution, to juſtifie him; without which, it would not have reached that End. 3. Note, further, That it was his Faith, as it wrought with his Works, and as it was compleated and made perfect by them, that was imputed to him for Righteouſneſs. 4. Note, That in the Imputation of his Faith for Righteouſneſs, as it was thus accompanied with, and perfected by Works, was the Scripture fulfilled, which ſaith, *Abraham Believed God, and it was imputed to him for Righteouſneſs.* And if ſo, then the Juſtification by Works, together with Faith, of which St. *James* ſpeaks here, is a Juſtification before God, and not before Men only, and to a Man's own Conſcience: For of ſuch a Juſtification doth the Scripture in *Gen* 15. 6. ſpeak, which is here cited by St. *James*.

Nor doth this, that Faith accompanied with Obedience is imputed for Righteouſneſs, at all derogate from the Obedience and Sufferings of Chriſt, in reference to the Ends for which they ſerve. Becauſe the whole Covenant, and all the parts and terms of it, both promiſes of Benefits, and the Condition on which they are promiſed, are all founded in Chriſt his undertaking for us, and all the Benefits of it accrue to us upon our Believing and Obeying, upon his account, and for his ſake. *We are in him, who of God is made unto us Wiſdom, Righteouſneſs, Sanctification, and Redemption,* 1 Cor. 1. 30. *For which cauſe alſo he is called the Lord our Righteouſneſs.* Not as if his Perſonal Obedience to the Law, was ſo formally imputed to us, as that we ſhould be reckoned to have kept the Law in his keeping of it, (which hath been the Opinion of ſome) for if that had been ſo, there would have been no more need that Chriſt ſhould have Suffered for us, than there was that he ſhould have Suffered for himſelf, who had no ſin; for neither ſhould we, if we had perfectly kept the Law in him, or in his keeping of it.

CHAP.

CHAP. II.

For what Ends the Law was added to the Promiſe.

I Now come to ſhew, in the next place, *for what end the Law of Moſes was added to the Promiſe.* And before I do this in particular, I ſhall note only in general, That it was not added to croſs or confront the Promiſe, or God's Deſign in it, but to be ſubſervient to it, *Gal.* 3. 21. *Is the Law then againſt the Promiſes? God forbid.* For it is not to be thought that God would prevaricate in his Deſign, ſo that when he had once made a New Law of Grace for the Saving of faln Man, he would yet afterwards give any Law, but what ſhould one way or other ſubſerve to the ſame End, if Men do not deprive themſelves of the intended Benefit, by perverting it. And therefore, to be ſure, God did not intend to revive the Old Covenant of Works made with *Adam in Paradiſe,* in the after promulgation of the Law of Nature (which we call the Moral Law) already broken. He did not therein come to demand his full Debt of Innocency in Mans Broken and Bankrupt Condition, or to let him know, that he would, without any other Condition than perfect Innocency, *caſt him into Priſon, until he had paid the utmoſt farthing.* For if he had, then the Law indeed would have been againſt the Promiſe, which declares quite otherwiſe. It is true, the Law of Nature, as it is a perfect Rule of natural Righteouſneſs, founded in God's Nature and Man's Nature, doth of it ſelf require perfect Innocency, and can require no leſs, being ſuited to the Nature of Man in its perfect State: But when God brings this Law forth, and ſets it before Men that are now faln from that ſtate, as he doth in the promulgation of it, it is to let them know indeed what they once were, and from whence they are fallen, and how unhappy their Condition now is, according to the Tenour and Terms of that Law; and that it would have continued ſo for ever, if God had not made a New Law of Grace, to over-rule that Law; and to let all know that they ſhall ſtill remain in that Condition, that wilfully exclude themſelves from the benefit of the Law of Grace, by not performing the Condition of it: But not to let them know, they ſhould have no better terms from him than that Law affords them, nor to make their perfect keeping of it the condition of their Juſtification. But the Law of *Moſes,* entirely taken in all its parts, was rather given as an Appendix to the Promiſe, both as a Rule of the material part of that Obedience, which God would now require of the *Iſraelites* in conjunction with their Faith in the Promiſe, and as a Motive to that Obedience: This in general.

The Queſtion is put, *Gal.* 3. 19. *Wherefore then ſerveth the Law?* And the Anſwer there is, That *it was added becauſe of tranſgreſſion, until the Seed*

Seed ſhould come. And it was added becauſe of tranſgreſſion in more reſpects than one.

1. It was added to diſcover Sin, to make that known to be Sin, which was ſo of it ſelf, and in its own nature, before the promulgation of the Law. For by reaſon of that grievous Wound which Man got in his Underſtanding by the Fall, and by reaſon alſo of a progreſſive Degeneration in Mankind, the natural Senſe of Moral Good and Evil, was to a great degree worn out of the minds of Men. For the repairing of which decay, a promulgate Law (the Ten Commandments) anſwerable to the Law of pure Nature in the Spirituality of it, was ſet on foot in the World. And by this Law came Sin and Duty to be more clearly known than they were before. *Rom.* 3. 20. *By the Law is the knowledge of Sin.* Rom. 7. 7. *I had not known Sin, but by the Law: For I had not known Luſt, except the Law had ſaid, Thou ſhalt not Covet.*

2. The Law was added, not only barely to make known that to be Sin, which was ſo of it ſelf before, but to ſet it out in its Colours, to make it known in the horrid nature and conſequence of it, that Men might be the more afraid to have to do with it, *The Law entred, that the offence might abound:* That is, that by that means it might be rendred the more Criminous and Demeritorious: That *Sin by the Commandment, might become exceeding ſinful*, Rom. 5. 20. and 7. 13.

3. The Law as it diſcovered Sin, and made it more criminous, and the People the more ſenſible of guilt, and more apprehenſive of their obnoxiouſneſs to puniſhment, was given to ſet off ſo much the more, the Glory, Beauty, and Deſirableneſs of God's Grace in the Promiſe of Pardon and Salvation, *Rom.* 5. 20. *The Law entered that the offence might abound: But where Sin abounded, Grace did much more abound.* By how much the more Sin appeared Sin, and was enhanced, and aggravated, and rendred manifeſtly miſchievous by a Promulgate Law; by ſo much the more Grace appear'd to be Grace, in all its Glory, that brought Deliverance from it. *Rom.* 5. 21. *That like as Sin hath reigned unto death,* (viz. *by the Law*, that being the ſtrength of Sin, 1 *Cor.* 15. 56.) *Even ſo Grace might reign through Righteouſneſs unto eternal life, through Jeſus Chriſt our Lord.* After Chriſt came, the Reſt which he gave, was ſo much the more ſweet to thoſe *Jews* who received him, by how much they had been weary and heavy-laden under a Spirit of Bondage before.

4. *The Law* (ſaith St. *Paul*) *was our Schoolmaſter, to bring us unto Chriſt, that we might be juſtified by Faith*, Gal. 3. 24. That is, It was a lower ſort of Inſtitution, accommodated to the weak and more imperfect ſtate of the Church, until afterward it ſhould deliver them over to a more perfect Inſtitution under Chriſt. Parents firſt teach their Children to Speak, and after put them to School to learn Letters, Syllables, Words, and Sentences; the uſe and deſign of all which they do not underſtand while they are Children, as they do when they come to be Men. In proportion to this hath God dealt with his Church in the World, beginning with a lower and more imperfect ſort of Inſtruction, Precepts, and Promiſes, and ſo proceeding to thoſe that are higher and more perfect, and ſo by certain gradations, to lead on, and build up his

Church to a more perfect Spiritual and compleat ſtate of Faith and Holineſs; *To all the riches of fulneſs of underſtanding of the Myſtery of God, of the Father, and of Chriſt*, Col. 2. 2. And thus the Law, as Schoolmaſter, had a double end and uſe: The one reſpecting the time then preſent: The other that which was then future and to come.

The then preſent uſe of it was twofold alſo.

1. To reclaim and reſtrain them from the Superſtitious Cuſtoms of the Heathen, to which they were addicted; in which reſpect alſo it *was added becauſe of tranſgreſſion.* The Heathen-Worſhip, ſtood in divers Superſtitious Rites or Ceremonies: And becauſe the *Iſraelites* were addicted to a bodily Worſhip like theirs, (for they ſaid, *Let us make us Gods to go before us*, Exod. 32. 1.) and were in danger thereby of being drawn to Worſhip their Gods, therefore to prevent this (as Parents put their Children to School, partly to keep them out of harms way) the Lord by way of condeſcention to their childiſh humour, did ordain a Worſhip conſiſting much in bodily Exerciſe, and Inſtituted divers Laws, *which ſtood in Meats and Drinks, and divers Waſhings, and carnal Ordinances, until the time of Reformation*; till he ſhould, by ſending his Son, appoint more excellent Laws for Reforming both them and the reſt of the World. *Lev.* 18. 3, 4, 5. *After the doings of the Land of Egypt wherein ye dwelt ſhall ye not do; and after the doings of the Land of Canaan whither I bring you ſhall ye not do; neither ſhall ye walk in their Ordinances. Ye ſhall therefore keep my Statutes and my Judgments: Which if a Man do, he ſhall live in them*, Ezek. 20. 6, 11.

2. The Lord did Inſtitute divers Temporary Laws for tryal and exerciſe of their Obedience in thoſe leſſer things for a time, as being ſuch as they were as yet beſt capable to receive, thereby to lead them on to higher inſtances of Obedience afterward. Thoſe many Ceremonies which they were obliged to obſerve, were not things of any natural or intrinſick Goodneſs, but only made uſe of by God for a preſent turn, which when that was ſerved, they (as to practiſe) were of no value, but became *beggerly Elements.* But yet while they continued commanded of God, their Obedience in the uſe of them, was Rewardable, as well as their Obedience to any other Laws.

The other end and uſe of the Law, as it was a Schoolmaſter, reſpected the time then to come. For the High Prieſthood, and Sacrifices of the Law, as they were Types of what Chriſt ſhould be, do, and ſuffer, as Mediator, were of great uſe to the *Jews* after Chriſt had Suffered, and was Riſen again, and Aſcended into Heaven, to facilitate both the knowledge and belief of the Myſtery of Redemption by Chriſt.

1. To facilitate the knowledge thereof, and to beget in them a right *Notion* of thoſe things in Chriſt, by which forgiveneſs of ſins, and acceptance with God, is obtained on our behalf. For thoſe who had long ſeen and known the effect of Legal Sacrifices, as how they did procure Legal Impunity for Offences commited, God accepting the Life of a Beaſt that had not ſinned, inſtead of the life of a Man that had, might ſoon come to underſtand, by parity of reaſon, that God would much more accept of his own Sons offering himſelf in Sacrifice for us, ſo as to excuſe us from ſuffering Eternal Puniſhment for our ſin. *For if the blood*

of Bulls, and of Goats, and the aſhes of an Heifer ſprinkling the unclean, ſanctifieth to the purifying of the fleſh; how much more ſhall the Blood of Chriſt, who through the eternal Spirit offered himſelf without ſpot to God, purge your Conſcience from dead works, to ſerve the living God? Heb. 9. 13, 14. And ſo the High Prieſt's entering into the Holy of Holies in the behalf of the People with the Blood of the Sacrifice, and burning Incenſe there, doth greatly aſſiſt the mind in underſtanding the nature of Chriſt's Interceſſion for us in Heaven, in virtue of his Bloodſhed for us on Earth, *Heb.* 9.

2. The Law, in the Typical nature of it, was of great uſe to the *Jews*, to facilitate and ſtrengthen their Belief in Chriſt; and ſo were the Predictions of the Prophets in conjunction with it: For theſe and the accompliſhment of them in Chriſt, did ſo anſwer each other, as in Water, Face anſwereth to Face, that thoſe who believed the Law and the Prophets, had a great advantage by means thereof, to believe in Chriſt. And therefore our bleſſed Saviour, when he would ſatisfie his Diſciples touching himſelf, that he was indeed the Chriſt, and of the neceſſity of his Death, (which Death occaſioned at firſt a ſtaggering in their Faith) *beginning at Moſes, and all the Prophets, he expounded to them in all the Scriptures, the things concerning himſelf,* Luke 24. 27. And St. *Paul*, when he laboured the Converſion of the *Jews* at *Rome*, to Chriſtianity, as the chiefeſt way to effect it; *he expounded to them, and teſtified the Kingdom of God, perſwading them concerning Jeſus, both out of the Law of Moſes, and of the Prophets, from morning to evening,* Acts 28. 23. *Had ye believed Moſes* (Saith our Saviour to them) *ye would have believed me; for he wrote of me: But if ye believe not his Writings, how ſhall ye believe my Words?* Joh. 5. 46, 47. And thus in both the forementioned reſpects, the Law was a Schoolmaſter indeed, to bring them to Chriſt, that they might be Juſtified by Faith.

5. The Law was given to the Jewiſh Nation, not only for their behoof and benefit, but alſo for a general Good to the World: That the Nations round about, hearing of ſuch excellent Laws, and percieving how happy and proſperous thoſe People were, ſo long as they obſerved them; might thereby be invited to quit their Idol Gods, and to *take hold of the Covenant, and to join themſelves to the people of the God of Abraham*, even as it came to paſs in ſuch as were Proſelited. And upon this account it ſeems to be, that the Pſalmiſt prayed thus: *God be merciful unto us, and bleſs us, and cauſe thy Face to ſhine upon us: That thy way may be known on Earth, thy ſaving health unto all Nations,* Pſal. 67. 1, 2. and concludes *ver.* 7. That if God ſhould ſo do, his fear would be propagated through the World: *God ſhall bleſs us, and all the ends of the Earth ſhall fear him,* Deut. 4. 6, 7, 8. *Keep therefore and do them, for this is your Wiſdom, and your Underſtanding in the ſight of the Nations, who ſhall hear all theſe Statutes, and ſay, ſurely this great Nation is a Wiſe and an Underſtanding People. For what Nation is there ſo great, that hath God ſo nigh unto them, as the Lord our God is in all things that we call upon him for? And what Nation is there ſo great, that hath Statutes and Judgments ſo Righteous, as all this Law which I ſet before you this day?* To them were *committed the Oracles of God,* Rom. 3. 2. They were committed in truſt to them as Feoffees for the World, to communicate the

knowledge of God and of his Laws to the Nations; to carry on further the Reformation of the World, begun in their Father *Abraham*, and which was promiſed to be more compleatly effected by the *Meſſias*, in that all Nations of the Earth ſhould be Bleſſed in him. And as God's Judgments on the *Jews* for breaking his Laws, was Admonitory to the Nations about them, *Deut.* 29. 24,--28. ſo his famous Deliverances wrought for them upon their Repentance for breaking his Laws, made God known abroad to be a great favourer of ſuch as repent of their worſhipping and ſerving other Gods, and ſuch a one as could and would Save, Deliver and Bleſs them, that turned to him, to ſerve him only. Which ſeems to be his meaning, when he ſaith, he *will be ſanctified before the Heathen, when he ſhould gather them from among the people where they were Captives*, and that *the Heathen ſhould know that he was the the Lord*, Ezek. 20. 41. and 36, 23. And by this means he brought them to fear and worſhip the God of *Iſrael.* Pſal. 102. 13, 15. *Thou ſhalt ariſe and have mercy upon Zion; So the Heathen ſhall fear the Name of the Lord; and all the Kings of the Earth thy glory. When the Lord turned again the Captivity of Sion, they ſaid among the Heathen, The Lord hath done great things for them*, Pſal. 126. 1, 2.

6. The whole Law was given to be a Political Inſtrument of Governing the *Iſraelites*, (according to that ſtate of their minority) as a peculiar Republick, of which God himſelf was the Soveraign Legiſlator. But of this more afterward.

CHAP. III.

Shewing by what Faith and Practice the Jews under the Law were Saved.

I Come now to ſhew *by what Faith and Practice the Jews under the Law were Saved.*

And doubtleſs whatever it was, it became available to that end, upon the account of what Chriſt was to ſuffer, when he ſhould come. For, as I ſhewed before, that God's Covenant with *Abraham* and his Seed, (by virtue of which the Faithful then were ſaved) was *confirmed in Chriſt*; was eſtabliſhed with them in reference to what he was to do, and ſuffer, as Mediator afterwards, *Gal.* 3. 17. And *by means of his Death, there was Redemption for the tranſgreſſions that were under the firſt Teſtament*, Heb. 9. 15. And the Sacrifices and Prieſthood, were *a Figure for the time then preſent*, of what Chriſt ſhould afterwards do, and ſuffer, and for what end.

But when I ſay ſo, I do not ſay that all that were Saved, did underſtand ſo much. For we ſee the Apoſtles of Chriſt, though they did believe him to be the *Meſſias*, which the *Jews* expected, yet they did not underſtand or expect that he ſhould ſuffer Death as a Sacrifice, till he told them ſo: Nay, the thing was ſo far from their thoughts, as that they did not underſtand him, when he plainly foretold them of his Death, *Luke* 18. 32. And if the Doctrine touching the reſemblance that is between the Prieſthood of *Melchizedech*, and the Prieſthood of Chriſt, was not in the Apoſtles ſenſe, *Meat* which *Babes* in Chriſtianity could well digeſt in their Underſtandings, but was *Meat for ſtrong Men*, Heb. 5. 10.--14. we may well gueſs by that, how little the *Jews* underſtood the Typical and Spiritual ſenſe of thoſe Types about which they were frequently converſant; and therefore it's ſaid, that the leaſt in the Kingdom of Heaven, is greater than *John* the *Baptiſt*, though he was ſo great, that there was none greater before him. Hence we may ſee, that one reaſon why thoſe *Jews* were all their life-time under a Spirit of Bondage to fear, was the great Obſcurity of the Declaration of God's purpoſe of Grace to the World through Chriſt, and the Way and Method of Salvation by him. *Moſes was but a ſervant for a Teſtimony of thoſe things, which were [after] to be ſpoken*, and ſo declared afterwards, as that the Typical meaning of them might be underſtood, *Heb.* 3. 5. In the mean while, as touching thoſe things, *they were ſhut up unto the Faith which ſhould [afterwards] be revealed*, Gal. 3. 23. It is ſaid of the Prophets, whereof *Moſes* was one, *that not unto themſelves, but unto us they did miniſter the things which are now reported unto us, by them that have preached the Goſpel to us*, 1 Pet. 1. 12. Add we to all this, *Heb.* 9. 8. where having ſpoken in *ver.* 7. of the High Prieſts entering alone into the Holy of Holies with the Blood of the Sacrifice in behalf of the People once every Year, he ſaith, *The Holy Ghoſt this ſignifying, that the way into the Holieſt of all, was not yet made manifeſt, while as the firſt Tabernacle was yet ſtanding.* By the Holieſt of all, here, is meant Heaven, ſignified of old by the Holy of Holies, as appears, *ver.* 12, 24. And the plain meaning ſeems to be this, That the peoples entring into Heaven by the Sacrifice, and Blood, and Interceſſion of Chriſt, was not made manifeſt, while the Tabernacle-worſhip continued. For Chriſt is our Way into Heaven, (to the place *within the Veil*) by his Blood ſhed as a Sacrifice, *Heb.* 10. 19, 20. *Having therefore, Brethren, boldneſs to enter into the Holieſt by the Blood of Jeſus, by a new and living way, which he hath conſecrated for us through the Veil, that is to ſay, his Fleſh.* But this Way, he tells us, was not made manifeſt, while the firſt Tabernacle was ſtanding.

But as obſcure as this way was, as to what was to be done and ſuffered in particular by the *Meſſias*, yet they had ſome general grounds of Faith and Hope; That upon their Faith, Repentance, and ſedulous Endeavours to walk in all the Commandments and Ordinances of the Lord, they ſhould obtain remiſſion of their ſins, and a future Happineſs in another World. Among which gounds theſe were not the leaſt:

1. They had the knowledge of the Promiſe of Bleſſedneſs to all Nations in *Abraham*'s Seed, and of the Promiſe of thoſe other Benefits which were promiſed to *Abraham* and his Seed.

2. They had an addition of ſeveral other Predictions concerning the *Meſſias*, both by *Moſes* and other Prophets, that perhaps were

ſomewhat more expreſs, ſuch as in *Deut.* 18. 16. *Iſa.* 53. *Dan.* 9. and others. Theſe Promiſes and Predictions, put them in great expectations of Special Benefits by the *Meſſias*, and wrought in them a longing after his Day. Upon which account, our Saviour ſaid to his Diſciples: *Bleſſed are your Eyes, for they ſee; and your Ears, for they hear. For I ſay unto you, that many Prophets and Kings, and Righteous Men, have deſired to ſee thoſe things which ye ſee, and have not ſeen them; and to hear thoſe things which ye hear, and have not heard them*, Mat. 13. 16, 17. Luke 10. 23, 24.

3. They had large ſignifications from God of his ſpecial Favour to them above all people, as in chuſing them to be his peculiar People, and in declaring himſelf to be their God; in giving viſible ſigns of his Preſence among them, and excellent Laws and Promiſes to them, and ſending his Prophets amongſt them, and working many Wonders for them, and caſting out the Nations before them, to make room for them, and the like, *Deut.* 7. 6, 7, 8. and 26. 18, 19. *Pſal.* 147. 19, 20. *Rom.* 9. 4, 5.

4. They had expreſs Declaration from God of the Goodneſs of his Nature, and of his Compaſſion towards Sinners, and of his readineſs to Pardon ſuch as ſhould Repent and return to their Duty, in loving him, and keeping his Commandments. As for inſtance, *Exod.* 34. 6, 7. *The Lord paſſed before him, and proclaimed, The Lord, The Lord God, merciful and gracious, long-ſuffering, and abundant in goodneſs and truth, keeping mercy for thouſands, forgiving iniquity, tranſgreſſion and ſin.* And when he delivered them his Law, with the greateſt terrour and aſtoniſhment to them; yet even then he aſſured them, That he would ſhew Mercy to Thouſands *of them that love him, and keep his Commandments*; as in the Second Commandment. And in caſe of their miſcarriage to the drawing down of God's Judgments upon them, he beſpeaks them thus: *When thou art in tribulation, and all theſe things are come upon thee, even in the latter days, if thou turn to the Lord thy God, and ſhalt be obedient to his Voice, (for the Lord thy God is a merciful God) he will not forſake thee, nor forget the Covenant of thy Fathers*, Deut. 4. 31. and 30. 1, 2, 3. Levit. 26. 39, &c.

From all which grounds, the Faithful among them, had ſuch a hope and confidence of pardon of Sin, and of a future Happineſs in another Life, upon their Repentance and ſincere Obedience, as did effectually induce them to have good thoughts of God, to love him, and to endeavour to pleaſe him, by having reſpect unto all his Commandments. This made him ſay, *Pſal.* 130. 4. *There is forgiveneſs with thee, that thou mayeſt be feared.* And under *this hope* and confidence, *the twelve Tribes did inſtantly ſerve God day and night*, and grounded this Hope of theirs upon *the Promiſe made of God unto their Fathers*, as St. *Paul* tells us, *Acts* 26. 6, 7.

And indeed, it was the unanimous Faith of the moſt eminent among them from Age to Age, that God had both made, and would keep a Covenant to ſhew Mercy to thoſe that love him, and keep his Commandments, or that walk before him with all their Heart: For that they looked upon as the Condition of God's Promiſe of ſhewing Mercy. This we may ſee in *Moſes*, *David*, *Solomon*, and in *Daniel*, and

Nehemiah, Deut. 7. 9. *Know therefore that the Lord thy God, he is God, the faithful God, which keepeth Covenant and Mercy with them that love him, and keep his Commandments.* So *David*, Pſalm 103. 17, 18. *The mercy of the Lord is from everlaſting to everlaſting to ſuch as keep his Covenant, and to thoſe that remember his Commandments to do them.* And thus *Solomon*, 1 Kings 8. 23. *And he ſaid, Lord God of Iſrael, there is no God like thee, who keepeſt Covenant and Mercy with thy ſervants, that walk before thee with all their heart.* So *Daniel*, in his 9th Chap. 4th ver. *O Lord, the great and dreadful God, keeping the Covenant and Mercy, to them that love him, and to them that keep his Commandments.* And *Nehemiah* likewiſe, Chap. 1. 5. *I beſeech thee, O Lord God of Heaven, the great and terrible God, that keepeth Covenant and Mercy for them that love him, and obſerve his Commandments.* This we ſee was the ſerious and conſtant Profeſſion of the Faith of the Servants of God in thoſe Times. And in this Faith and Practice doubtleſs it was, that they lived, and died, and were ſaved.

CHAP. IV.

That the Law contained a Covenant different from that with Abraham.

IN the next place, I am to ſhew, *That the Law of* Moſes *did contain a Covenant diſtinct, and of a different nature from the Covenant which God made with* Abraham *and his Spiritual Seed.*

Beſides the general Promiſe which God made to *Abraham*, reſpecting the *Gentiles*, as well as the *Jews*, (*In thee all Nations of the Earth ſhall be bleſſed*) he made a Special Covenant with him, as a Reward of his ſignal Faithfulneſs, to give unto his Natural Seed the Land of *Canaan*: Nehem. 9. 8. *Thou foundeſt his heart faithful before thee, and madeſt a Covenant with him, to give the Land of the Canaanites —— to his Seed.* In order to the fulfilling of which Promiſe, after he had brought them out of *Egypt*, he united them under himſelf, as Head, in one Political Body, by a Political Covenant, *Exod.* 19. *&c.* which is the Covenant I am now to diſcourſe of. In which diſcourſe I would, 1. Shew in what reſpect the Law of *Moſes* is ſaid to contain a Covenant of a different nature from the Covenant of Grace made with *Abraham*. 2. Prove that it did contain ſuch a different Covenant. 3. For farther illuſtration, conſider it in its parts, and their relation one to another. 4. And in what reſpect this Covenant is called the firſt Covenant, when as the Covenant of Grace was made before it.

1. In what reſpect the Law of *Moſes* is ſaid to contain a Covenant of a different nature from the Covenant of Grace made with *Abraham*. The Law of *Moſes* comes under a twofold conſideration. 1. As in conjunction with the Promiſe to *Abraham*, to which it was annexed,

it made up one entire Law, by which the *Iſraelites* were to be governed and directed in the way to Eternal Life: And in this conjunction, the Promiſe was the Life and Soul as it were of the Body of the *Moſaic* Law, properly taken. And in this ſenſe, as the word Law ſignifies the *Pentateuch*, or five Books of *Moſes*, (which contain the Promiſe, as well as the Law) it is ſometimes uſed in the New Teſtament, *Gal.* 4. 21, 22. 1 *Cor.* 14. 34. *Luke* 16. And in this ſenſe doubtleſs we are to underſtand the Law upon which *David* beſtowed ſo many glorious *Encomiums* as he did, ſaying, *The Law of the Lord is perfect, converting the Soul*, &c. Pſal. 19. 2. We are to conſider the Law of *Moſes*, as given at *Sinai*, in a ſtricter ſenſe, as it was an *Inſtrument* or *Rule* of Government in the Commonwealth of *Iſrael*. The Law, in the former ſenſe of it, promiſed Eternal Life (though but obſcurely) to thoſe that did believe its Promiſes, and ſincerely obey its Precepts. In the latter ſenſe, it promiſed only temporal Bleſſings to thoſe that ſtrictly obſerved it in all the parts of it; and threatned thoſe with temporal Calamities that did not. The ſame Laws materially of this Political Covenant, related to both the Covenants. As Eternal Life was promiſed in the Covenant of Grace, upon condition of ſincere Obedience to thoſe Laws, as an effect of Faith in the Promiſe; ſo thoſe Laws, in conjunction with the Promiſe, were, as I may ſo ſay, Evangelical. But as temporal Benefits only were promiſed in that Covenant upon condition of ſtrict Obedience to thoſe Laws; and as thoſe Laws were enjoyned under temporal Penalties, as they were Commonwealth-Laws; ſo that Covenant, containing thoſe Laws, was Political, and in this Political reſpect, it was another Covenant. If the Law of God, and the Law of Man command or forbid things materially the ſame; yet if the one command or forbid them under pain of Damnation, and the other only under temporal Penalties; theſe Laws are not formally the ſame. The Commonwealth of *Iſrael* had no Commonwealth-Laws, but what God himſelf gave them, the which Laws they alſo Covenanted with him to obſerve; by which Covenant they were united under him as Head of that Political Body. And therefore, when they would needs chooſe them a King like other Nations, God told *Samuel*, ſaying, *They have not rejected thee, but they have rejected me, that I ſhould not Reign over them*, 1 Sam. 8. 7. *Ye ſaid unto me* (ſaid Samuel) *nay, but a King ſhall Reign over us, when the Lord your God was your King*, 1 Sam. 12. 12. I conclude then, that as the Law of *Moſes* did ſerve to this Political end; ſo it was a diſtinct Covenant, and different from the Covenant of Grace.

2. Let us ſee how this may be proved to be a Covenant ſo diſtinct and different, as I have ſaid, from the Covenant of Grace declared to *Abraham*. And to this purpoſe, theſe things are conſiderable.

Firſt, They are called the *two Covenants*, by St. *Paul*, *Gal.* 4. 24. And if they are Two, then there is a real difference between them, elſe they would be but one and the ſame.

Secondly, They bear diſtinct denominations; the one is called the *firſt* and the *Old Covenant*; and the other, the *ſecond* and the *New*, Heb. Chap. 8. and 9.

Thirdly, There were ſome ſins pardonable by one of theſe Covenants, which were not ſo by the other; and that ſhews that they were quite of a different nature. The Murder and Adultery which *David* was guilty of, was not pardonable, according to the terms of the Political Covenant, if there had been any Superiour Power on Earth to have executed that Commonwealth-Law; and yet, according to the terms of the Covenant of Grace, they were pardonable upon Repentance, and upon thoſe terms were pardoned unto him. The like might be ſaid perhaps of *Manaſſeh.*

The unbelief of *Moſes* and *Aaron*, in not *Sanctifying God in the eyes of the Children of Iſrael*, was, according to the terms of the Covenant of Grace, pardoned as to the Eternal Penalty, but yet was not wholly pardoned, according to the terms of the Political Covenant, as to temporal Puniſhment. For the Lord told them, that for that cauſe *they ſhould not bring the Children of Iſrael into the Land of Canaan*, Numb. 20. 12. And in reference to this caſe, the Pſalmiſt ſaith, *Thou waſt a God that forgaveſt them, though thou tookeſt vengeance of their inventions*, Pſal. 99. 8.

Fourthly, The Covenant of Grace never ceaſeth, but it is of perpetual duration throughout all Generations; and therefore is called the *Everlaſting Covenant*, Heb. 13. 20. But this *Moſaical* Political Covenant is *vaniſhed* long ſince, *Heb.* 8. 13. by which alſo it appears to be a Covenant eſſentially different from the other.

3. For a farther illuſtration of the nature of this Covenant, we will conſider it in its parts, and in the relation which thoſe parts bear one towards another. And in general, it did conſiſt of two parts. 1. Of Laws; and, 2. Of the Sanction of thoſe Laws. The Laws likewiſe were of two ſorts: 1. Laws of Duty. 2. Laws of Indemnity.

1. Laws of Duty. And in them we may conſider, 1. What thoſe Laws were. 2. What manner of Obedience to thoſe Laws it was, which would free Men from the Penalties of them, and entitle them to the promiſes of Reward annexed to them.

Firſt, The Laws of Duty, of which this Covenant did in great part conſiſt, were thoſe which paſs under the various denomination of Moral, Ritual, or Ceremonial, and Judicial. Some of which Laws, (*viz.* the Decalogue eſpecially and almoſt wholly) for the matter of them, were natural; that is, ſuch as were founded in the Nature of Man, forbidding things which of themſelves were Evil, and commanding things which in their own nature were Good, and might be diſcerned to be ſo, by Man in his pure Naturals, and in great part ſince the Degeneration of his nature, whether they had been expreſly forbidden, or commanded, or no. But theſe Laws became part of the Political Covenant, only as they were expreſly and externally declared to the *Jews* by a Promulgate Law. For if this had not been ſo, the *Gentiles* could not have been ſaid to be *without the Law*, as they were, *Rom.* 2. 14, 11. 1 *Cor.* 9. 21. For they had the force and *effect of the Law in their hearts*, and were in that reſpect *a Law unto themſelves*, Rom. 2. 14, 15. But becauſe the Decalogue, as well as the other Laws, was delivered to the *Jews* only, and to none elſe, from Mount *Sinai*, therefore they only (and Proſelytes that joyned with them) were ſaid to be under the

Law, and all the reſt *without Law.* And therefore is the giving of the Law reckoned to the *Jews* among their peculiar Privileges, *Rom.* 9. 4. *Pſal.* 147. 19, 20. And in this ſenſe only, as the Decalogue was a part of the Political Law, can the *Miniſtration ingraven in Stones* be ſaid to be *done away,* as it is, 2 Cor. 3. 7, to *ver.* 11. For ſo much of it as was a Copy of the Law of Nature, or is by Chriſt incorporated into his Laws, remains in force to all Men.

The other Laws of which this Covenant did conſiſt, were Arbitrary; the force of which did wholly depend upon Divine Inſtitution: And ſuch were the Laws Ceremonial; and a great part of thoſe we call Judicial.

Secondly, That Obedience which would be ſufficient to ſecure a Man from the penalty of the Political Law, and to entitle him to the promiſed Reward annexed thereto, was no leſs than a ſtrict Obedience to it in all the parts of it. For it is written, *Curſed be he that confirmeth not all the words of this Law to do them:* And *all the people ſhall ſay, Amen,* Deut. 27. 26. And this extended to Heart-obedience, and Heart-ſinning, as well as to the outward Act, commanding *Love* to God, forbidding to *Covet,* as under the Heart-ſearching Political Soveraign, who reſerved to himſelf the final Judgment and Execution, even in temporal reſpects, in many caſes.

2. Laws of Indemnity (of which alſo this Covenant did conſiſt) were partly thoſe which ordained Sacrifice and Offerings for the Expiation of many Sins made pardonable by thoſe Laws, ſo far as to exempt the delinquent Perſon from the temporal Penalty threatned for breach of thoſe other Laws, which for diſtinction ſake, I call Laws of Duty; for otherwiſe, theſe alſo were Laws of Duty, as well as of Privilege. There were other Laws of Indemnity likewiſe for the purification of Perſons legally unclean; which being obſerved, the Perſons unclean became delivered from the penalties they ſuffered while their uncleanneſs was upon them; ſuch as was their Separation from the Congregation.

Conſider we next the Sanction of theſe Laws; and that did conſiſt in Promiſes annexed to the obſerving of them, and in a Curſe denounced againſt the tranſgreſſors of them. And for our better underſtanding the nature of the Promiſes of this Covenant, we will conſider them Negatively, and Affirmatively.

1. Negatively; The Promiſes of this Political-Covenant, as ſuch, were not Promiſes of Eternal Life; And when I ſay ſo, I do not deny but that, firſt, the *Jews* in *Moſes's* time, and before, had Promiſes of Eternal Life implyed in the Covenant made with *Abraham* and his Seed. And accordingly, the faithful ones among them, ſought after the *Heavenly Country,* and *looked for a City which hath foundations, whoſe builder and maker is God,* Heb. 11. 10, 14, 16. Nor ſecondly, will I deny but that there are ſome paſſages in the Law of *Moſes,* if you take the Law of *Moſes* in a large ſenſe, which look ſomewhat like a renewal of the antient Covenant with *Abraham* to his Seed. As when, for inſtance, God made a conditional Promiſe to the *Iſraelites* in *Moſes's* time, to *be their God, and that they ſhould be his People,* as in *Levit.* 26. 12. *Deut.*

29. 13. Which form of words is interpreted ſometimes to imply a future Happineſs in another World, *Heb.* 11. 16. *Matth.* 21. 31, 32. And I do not deny, but the *Jews* had by *Moſes*, as expreſs a Promiſe of the *Meſſias*, as *Abraham* had, *Deut.* 18. 15. —— 19. But St. *Paul* doth not ſpeak of the Law in this large ſenſe, when he oppoſeth the Law and the Promiſe, the Law and Faith, one to another. But if we underſtand by the Law of *Moſes*, the Law as Political, the Law of the Commonwealth; ſo the Promiſes of it were not Promiſes of Eternal Life; For Promiſes of this nature did pertain to another Covenant, to wit, that made with *Abraham*, and his Spiritual Seed as ſuch.

Firſt; Therefore St. *Paul* doth downrightly deny that the Promiſe of the Inheritance, (which in *Heb.* 9. 15. is called *the Eternal Inheritance*) was by the Law, which yet it would have been, if by Law he had meant the Law in that large ſenſe, in which the Law and Promiſe to *Abraham* are conjoyned; and not in that ſtrict ſenſe, by which he means the Political Law diſtinctly. And if the Inheritance had been promiſed upon the ſame terms as temporal Bleſſings were in the temporal Covenant, the Inheritance might have been obtained by the Law, as well as temporal Bleſſings were. *Rom.* 4. 13. *For the Promiſe that he ſhould be Heir of the World, was not through the Law, but through the Righteouſneſs of Faith.*

Secondly, St. *Paul* evinceth the badneſs of that Opinion, to think that Eternal Life was promiſed upon the Law-terms, from the abſurd conſequence of it; ſhewing that if it were, that then it would make void the Promiſe of God to *Abraham*, and the way of ſaving Men by Faith in that Promiſe, of none effect: *Gal.* 3. 18. *For if the inheritance be of the Law, it is no more of Promiſe: But God gave it to Abraham by Promiſe.* Rom. 4. 14. *For if they which are of the Law be Heirs, Faith is made void, and the Promiſe made of none effect.* It was altogether unreaſonable to think that the Inheritance ſhould be promiſed upon ſuch diſtant and inconſiſtent terms, as are Faith in the Promiſe, and by Works of the Law.

Thirdly, *The Law*, ſaith the Apoſtle, *is not of Faith, but the man that doth them, ſhall live in them*, Gal. 3. 12. meaning, that what the Law promiſed, it did not promiſe it upon condition of Believing, but upon condition of Doing. And Eternal Life is not ſince the Fall promiſed upon condition of Doing, without Faith, but upon condition of Believing; *For the Juſt ſhall live by Faith*, Verſ. 11. And therefore Eternal Life is promiſed by the Law.

Fourthly, Wherefore elſe are the Promiſes of that *better Covenant*, Heb. 8. 6. ſaid to *be better Promiſes?* But becauſe they are Promiſes of better things than were promiſed in the firſt Covenant; which yet they could not be, if Eternal Life had been promiſed in that Covenant, becauſe that is the beſt of all Promiſes.

To ſay they are better only in reſpect of Adminiſtration, and clearneſs of Revelation, will not ſatisfie ſuch as ſhall well conſider, That if the betterneſs of the Covenant and Promiſes lay only in that, the difference would not be ſo great as to denominate them two Covenants, and two ſo vaſtly diſtant as the Scripture repreſents them to be. The difference then would be but only gradual, as that is, which is found in the ſame Covenant of Grace, in the ſeveral Editions of it, to *Adam*, to *Abraham*, to *David*, and now to all Nations ſince Chriſt's coming; and not Eſſential, as that between the two Covenants ſeems to be, as it is repreſented in *Gal.* 4. 24. Beſides, St. *Paul* repreſents the Adminiſtration of the two Covenants, to differ as much, as Righteouſneſs and Condemnation, Life and Death differ, which ſure is more than a gradual difference. The one is *the Miniſtration of Death and Condemnation*; the other, *the Miniſtration of Righteouſneſs and Life*, 2 Cor. 3. 6, 7, 8, 9. *The Law made nothing perfect, but the bringing in of a better hope did*, Heb. 7. 19. By which it appears again, that the hope of the Goſpel in which the things hoped for upon the Promiſes of the Goſpel (are not the leaſt) is better than what the Law promiſed the obſervers of it. *This is the Promiſe which he hath promiſed us, even Eternal Life*, John 2. 25.

2. And Affirmatively; It was then a long and proſperous Life in the Land of *Canaan* that was promiſed in the firſt Covenant. *Deut.* 28. 11. *The Lord ſhall make thee plenteous in Goods, in the fruit of thy Body, and in the fruit of thy Cattel, and in the fruit of thy Ground, in the Land which the Lord ſware unto thy Fathers to give thee.* Deut. 11. 21. *That your days may be multiplied, and the days of your Children, as the days of Heaven upon Earth.*

A great variety of outward Bleſſings is promiſed, as the Reward of keeping that Covenant. And therefore Wiſdom under that Diſpenſation is deſcribed, as having *length of days in her right hand, and in her left hand Riches and Honour*; *whoſe ways are ways of pleaſantneſs, and all her paths peace*, Prov. 3. 17. And as this Covenant was National, ſo there were Promiſes of National Bleſſings; ſuch as was the *ſetting them on high above all the Nations of the Earth*; making them *the Head and not the Tail*. The giving them *victory over enemies*; *multiplying the Nation*, and beſtowing on it Health, Peace, and Plenty, *Deut.* 28. *Lev.* 26.

When it is ſaid once by *Moſes*, thrice by *Ezekiel*, and twice by St. *Paul*, that *the Man that doth them, ſhall live in them*, (Lev. 18. 5. Ezek. 20. 11, 13, 21. Rom. 10. 5. Gal. 3. 12.) thereby Epitomizing the firſt Covenant; I conceive that by *Living*, is meant a long and proſperous Life in this World. As on the contrary, the condition of one greatly afflicted, is in Scripture-Dialect, a kind of Death, and ſuch an one ſaid to *be free among the Dead*, Pſal. 88. 5. And that which inclines me ſo to think, is not only the reaſons already given to prove that no other Life was promiſed in the firſt Covenant, but alſo the congruity of this ſenſe with other paſſages in the Writings of *Moſes*. As *Deut.* 30. 15. *See, I have ſet before you this day, Life and Good, Death and Evil.* If you would know what is meant by Life here, the next Verſe will inform you: *That thou mayeſt live and multiply, and the Lord thy God ſhall bleſs thee in the Land whither thou goeſt to poſſeſs it.* The contrary whereunto is the Death he had ſet before them, ſaying, *I denounce unto you this day, that ye ſhall ſurely periſh, and that ye ſhall not prolong your days upon the Land*, &c. Deut. 32. 46, 47. *Set your hearts unto all the words which I teſtifie among you this day, for it is not a vain thing for you, becauſe it is your life; and through this thing ye ſhall prolong your days in the Land* *wherein ye go.* The latter words are exegetical of the former: Through this thing ye ſhall prolong your days, is the interpretation of thoſe; *it is your Life.* And it may be conſidered alſo, whether this Particle [*in*] (which if a Man do, he ſhall even live [*in*] them) may not determine the nature and kind of that Reward which was promiſed in the firſt Covenant, as it was a *preſent* Reward, a Reward which was received even while the Work was doing, according to that, *Pſal.* 19. 11. *In keeping them there is great reward.* And this is agreeable to what fell out in the event. *The Lord was with them,* to proſper them, *while they were with him*; but when they forſook him, preſently Troubles overtook them. The pouring out of God's Fury on them to conſume them in the Wilderneſs, being put in *Ezek.* 20 13, 21. as the direct contrary to thoſe words, *which if a Man do, he ſhall even live in them,* ſeems greatly to favour this Notion. *But the houſe of Iſrael rebelled againſt me in the Wilderneſs: They walked not in my Statutes, and they deſpiſed my Judgments, which if a man do, he ſhall even live in them: Then I ſaid, I would pour out my fury upon them, to conſume them in the Wilderneſs.*

And indeed, one main difference between the two Covenants, (which I would have here obſerved) lies in this, to wit, the *preſentneſs* of the Reward promiſed in the firſt, and the *futurity* of that promiſed in the ſecond. St. *Paul* in his Allegorical deſcription of the two Covenants, *Gal.* 4. 24, &c. repreſents thoſe that adhered to the firſt Covenant, by the Children of the *Bond-ſervant,* to whom *Abraham* gave Gifts in preſent, and ſent them away, as in *Gen.* 25. 5. and thoſe that adhered to the ſecond, by *the Son of the free-woman, Iſaac,* who was *Abraham*'s Heir, to whom he gave the whole Inheritance at laſt. And the Adoption of Sons, as the Privilege of the New Covenant, is oppoſed to the condition of Servants under the Old, *Gal.* 4. 7. And what are they adopted to, but to an Inheritance for the future? For by Adoption they are made Heirs: *If a Son, then an Heir of God through Chriſt:* An Heir of what? *of an Inheritance for the future; an inheritance incorruptible, undefiled, and which fadeth not away, reſerved in Heaven,* 1 Pet. 1. 4. And therefore they are ſaid *to wait for the Adoption, to wit, the redemption of their Bodies,* at the Reſurrection, *Rom.* 8. 23. Sons and Heirs ſerve their Father with a free and ingenuous Spirit, though they have but little for the preſent, in confidence of what he will do for them hereafter in another World, when they ſhall come to Age. But thoſe under the Old Covenant, were like Servants, who ſerve with a ſervile Spirit, becauſe they do it with expectation of preſent pay. The one *walk by Faith, which is the ſubſtance of things hoped for, and the evidence of things not ſeen;* the other were influenced in their Obedience, by the expectation of preſent Reward, becauſe that was it which the firſt Covenant promiſed to the obſervers of it.

Theſe Promiſes now inſiſted on, were promiſes of Reward to the obſervers of this firſt Covenant: But beſides theſe, there was another ſort of Promiſes exhibited in the firſt Covenant, and they were Promiſes of Pardon, in many caſes, when the Laws of that Covenant were broken. There were (as I have ſhewed) Laws of Indemnity, which made many of the breaches of the Laws of Duty, pardonable upon certain conditions. And ſuch were all Sins of Ignorance and Inadvertency; and ſome of thoſe alſo which were committed wittingly. But preſumptuous Sins, and ſuch as carried in them a kind of contempt of the Law, theſe were exempted from Pardon: *Heb.* 10. 28. *He that deſpiſed Moſes's Law, died without mercy, under two or three witneſſes.* But for the other, there were promiſes of pardon upon certain conditions; which conditions were not always the ſame. In ſome caſes, the offering of a Sin-offering, or Treſpaſs-offering, was the condition. In other caſes, that with confeſſion of Sin, was the condition. And in ſome other caſes, Sacrificing, Reſtitution, and Satisfaction, were the condition. And afflicting of the Soul, as well as the Sacrifice for Atonement on the day of general Expiation, was always a condition of forgiveneſs. Theſe things, in the particularities of them, you have in the 4, 5, 6, 16, and 23d Chapters of *Levit.* And then the condition of the Promiſes of Purgation of Legal Uncleanneſſes, and the penal effects from them, was the obſerving the Rules preſcribed for purifying the Unclean.

Now the forgiveneſs promiſed by theſe Laws of Indemnity, did not free the Conſcience from all obligation to Eternal Puniſhment, but only freed the Perſon from ſuffering thoſe temporal Evils, which were threatned in this Covenant againſt thoſe which did not continue in all things written in the Book of it. Neither Sacrifices, nor Legal Purifications, *Sanctified, but unto the purifying of the fleſh,* and to their temporal Concerns only, *Heb.* 9. 9, 10, 13.

And here we may obſerve a five-fold difference in reference to Remiſſion of Sin, between the firſt Covenant, and the Covenant of Grace.

1. They differ in the nature of thoſe Sacrifices by which Atonements were made, and upon which Forgiveneſs was promiſed. The Blood of the Sacrifice of the firſt Covenant was but *the blood of Bulls and of Goats,* and the like, *Heb.* 10. 4. But the Blood of the Sacrifice of the ſecond Covenant, is the Blood of Chriſt, the Eternal Son of God. So that the nature of the Sacrifices of the two Covenants, upon which the Promiſe of the pardon of Sins was granted, doth differ as much as the Blood of Beaſts and the Blood of the Son of God differ.

2. Thoſe two ſorts of Sacrifices pertaining to two kinds of Covenants, differ in the proportion of Efficacy and Virtue to accompliſh their reſpective Ends and Effects. There is a greater Richneſs of proportion in the Blood of Chriſt to free the Conſcience from the guilt of Sin, or obligation to Eternal Puniſhment, than there was in the Blood of Beaſts to free the delinquent Perſon from temporal Puniſhments. This is plainly intimated in *Heb.* 9. 13, 14. *For if the blood of Bulls and of Goats, and the aſhes of an Heifer ſprinkling the unclean, ſanctifieth to the purifying of the fleſh;* [*how much more*] *ſhall the Blood of Chriſt, who through the Eternal Spirit offered himſelf without ſpot to God, purge your Conſcience from dead works, to ſerve the living God?*

3. They differ in the nature of the pardon promiſed in each of the Covenants reſpectively. The Redemption granted in the firſt Covenant, was but Temporal, as the Covenant it ſelf was; it was but from Evils temporal: But Chriſt Jeſus, by his Atonement, *hath obtained Eternal Redemption for us,* Heb. 9. 12.

4. They differ in reſpect of the Sins made pardonable by each Covenant reſpectively. There were many ſins for which the firſt Covenant granted no Pardon, upon any terms whatſoever. *They that deſpiſed Moſes's Law, died without mercy*, Heb. 10. 28. But the Covenant of Grace makes promiſe of the pardon of the Greateſt Sins upon Repentance. *All manner of Sin and Blaſphemy, except the Blaſphemy againſt the Holy Ghoſt*, are pardonable upon Repentance. This difference is ſet down, *Acts* 13. 39. *And by him all that believe are juſtified from all things, from which ye could not be juſtified by the Law of Moſes.* We may well ſuppoſe, that the firſt Covenant did finally Condemn ſome, which the Covenant of Mercy Pardoned. *David*, in the matter of *Uriah*, did that which was unpardonable by the firſt Covenant; it was a Fact to have been puniſhed with Death by the Law, but that there was none but God that could duly inflict it upon him, in his capacity; and yet, upon his Repentance, it was pardoned as to his Eternal Concerns, as well as Temporal, by virtue of God's Covenant of Mercy. On the other hand, a Man probably might be ſo Righteous in the Eye of the firſt Covenant, as not to be viſibly blameable, and yet even then be obnoxious to the Curſe of the Everlaſting Covenant. *Paul*, while he was *Saul*, and in the ſtate of Unbelief, was even then, *as touching the righteouſneſs which is in the Law, blameleſs*; as he himſelf ſaith, *Phil.* 3. 6. So different were theſe two Covenants, that him whom the one Condemned, the other might Juſtifie; and likewiſe Juſtifie him, whom the other Condemned.

5. They differed in reſpect of the condition to be performed on Man's part for the obtaining of pardon. Pardon was promiſed in the firſt Covenant upon condition of Doing only, without reference to Faith; but ſo are not the pardons of the New Covenant. *Gal.* 3. 11. 12. *But that no man is juſtified by the Law in the ſight of God, it is evident; for the Juſt ſhall live by Faith: And the Law is not of Faith; but the man that doth them ſhall live in them.* So much concerning the firſt Part of the Sanction of the firſt Covenant. Come we now to the ſecond.

The other part of the Sanction of this Covenant, did conſiſt in the Curſe of it denounced againſt the breakers of it. Though it's true, that every Man is under a Condemnation that would be Eternal, unleſs he comes to be abſolved by virtue of the Law of Grace; yet more than temporal Death was not expreſly threatned for breach of the Political Covenant, as ſuch.

1. For firſt, a violent Death inflicted by the hand of the Magiſtrate, for Capital Offences, is called the *Curſe*, Deut. 22. 23. *He that is hanged, is accurſed of God*, or is the Curſe of God.

2. Chriſt who did not ſuffer Eternal Puniſhment for Man's Sin, did yet *ſuffer the Curſe of the Law*, in that he *was hanged on a Tree*, Gal. 3. 13. It is true indeed, that by that temporary Sufferings of his, he redeemed us from Eternal Puniſhment, which we were obnoxious to.

3. Thoſe who Apoſtatize from Chriſt, and reject his Goſpel, merit *ſorer puniſhment* than what was inflicted on them that *deſpiſed Moſes*'s *Law*; and yet ſorer Puniſhment (for kind) they cannot ſuffer, if Eternal puniſhment had been the penalty of that Covenant, as ſuch, *Heb.* 10. 28, 29.

4. As the Promiſes of that Covenant, when particularly expreſſed, did appear to be but temporal, ſo the Curſes of it appear to be no other in the particular enumeration of them. As for inſtance, a violent Death inflicted by the Hand of the Magiſtrate, was the puniſhment threatned for many Capital Offences; Such as was Idolatry, Blaſphemy, Witchcraft, Working on the Sabbath, invading the Prieſts Office, and for being a falſe Prophet; and alſo for Murder, Adultery, Sodomy, Buggery, Man-ſtealing, Curſing, or Smiting of Parents, or being ſtubbornly Rebellious againſt them, and ſome other. And a cutting off from among the People, (whither by God's hand immediately, or by Man's, I determine not) was the penalty threatned for eating Leavened Bread within the time prohibited; for not Purifying ones ſelf, when Unclean; for profaning holy things; for ones eating of the Sacrifice, with his Uncleanneſs upon him; for offering Sacrifice any where but at the Tabernacle; for eating of Blood, and for eating of the Fat of the Sacrifice; for neglecting to keep the Paſſover, and for not afflicting the Soul in the Day of general Atonement; and for ſeveral other Offences. And thoſe Offences, for which cutting off from among the People is threatned, being leſs criminous than the former, we have no reaſon to think the penalty of cutting off from among the People, to ſignifie more (if ſo much) than the ſuffering of a temporal Death. We may obſerve how the *Iſraelites* various Puniſhments are expreſt for their manifold Crimes in the Wilderneſs, by *God's overthrowing them in the Wilderneſs,* by Peſtilence, and otherwiſe, 1 *Cor.* 10.

In brief, The temporal Evils threatned in this Covenant, were either Perſonal, Domeſtick, or National. The Perſonal and Domeſtick Evils, were no leſs, than whatſoever tended to the infelicity of Man's Life, as Diſeaſes in Body, Perplexity of Mind, Unfruitfulneſs in Body, in Cattel, in Ground; Scarcity, Poverty, Oppreſſion, loſs of Relations, fewneſs of Days, and an untimely cutting off from the Promiſed Land. The National were wild Beaſts, Peſtilence, Sword, Famine, Captivity, and ſuch like. Theſe were inflicted when the breach of the Covenant became National in the generality of the People: But eſpecially, when thoſe who had the management of Publick Affairs, Civil and Eccleſiaſtick, did not reſtrain the People by a due Execution of Laws; but rather led them into ſin by their Example, and ſometimes by their Commands; corrupting Religion, and perverting Juſtice, *Levit.* 26. *Deut.* 28. And the Evils threatned being National, as the Covenant it ſelf was, they muſt needs be but Temporal; becauſe there is no Judging, Condemning, and Executing Nations, as Nations, but in this World.

4. Come we now to ſhew reaſon, why this Covenant is called the *firſt* Covenant, ſince there were others made before it; as that with *Adam* in *Paradiſe*, and that Covenant of Salvation with *Adam* after his Fall, and with *Noah*, and *Abraham*. And,

1. Negatively; It is not ſo called, as if it were the ſame for ſubſtance with that which was firſt made with *Adam* in *Paradiſe*, as many have thought, or becauſe it was propoſed upon the ſame terms. For,

Firſt, That Covenant was eſtabliſhed upon the terms of condition of perfect Innocency; no proviſion being made in it for pardon, in caſe of failure, upon any condition whatſoever. But it was otherwiſe in this *Moſaick* Covenant, as I have ſhewed, in that it contained ſeveral Laws of Indemnity for the Relief of delinquent Perſons, upon certain poſſible and practicable Conditions.

Secondly, If this and the Paradiſical-Covenant had been of the ſame nature, then it and the Promiſe made to *Abraham*, and his Spiritual Seed, would have been inconſiſtent; the one promiſing Eternal Life upon Believing, the other only upon condition of ſinleſs Obedience. If this had been the caſe, the Law would have been againſt the Promiſe, which God forbid it ſhould, *Gal.* 3. 21. and the one would have excluded the other, according to St. *Paul*'s reaſoning. *Rom.* 11. 6. *If by grace, then it is no more of works; otherwiſe grace is no more grace. But if it be of works, then is it no more grace; otherwiſe work is no more work.* But,

2. Affirmatively. It is called the *firſt* Covenant, becauſe it is the firſt of the two under queſtion and diſpute between the Apoſtles and unbelieving *Jews*. The Queſtion and Controverſie between them was, which of the two Covenants, that by *Moſes*, or that by Chriſt, was to be finally adhered to, as the way of Salvation. In the handling of which Controverſie, that by *Moſes* is called the firſt, and the Goſpel-Covenant eſtabliſhed by Chriſt, as was Propheſied by *Jeremiah*, is called the ſecond: Even as the one is called the Old Covenant, not becauſe it was the oldeſt of all Covenants, but becauſe oppoſed to that which was Propheſied of under the name of a New Covenant. It is obſervable, that where we meet with the firſt mention of the firſt Covenant under that denomination, it is not ſtiled [*the*] firſt Covenant abſolutely, but [*that*] firſt Covenant, as pointing at that under Diſpute. *Heb.* 8. 7. *For if (that) firſt Covenant had been faultleſs, then ſhould no place have been ſought for the ſecond.*

CHAP. V.

The grand Miſtakes of the Jews *about the Law and Promiſe; and how St.* Paul *counter-argues theſe Miſtakes.*

I Am now in the next place to ſhew *the fatal miſtakes of the unbelieving Jews, about God's Promiſe to Abraham, and the Law of Moſes; and how St.* Paul *doth counter-argue theſe miſtakes.* A diſtinct underſtanding of which Errors, and of St. *Paul*'s arguings againſt them, ſometimes ſeverally, and ſometimes conjunctively, and in the groſs, will be as a Key to open many paſſages in his Epiſtles, which otherwiſe will be hard to be underſtood.

1. They held Circumciſion in the Fleſh to be the condition in ſpecial, upon which all the Bleſſings of God's Covenant with *Abraham* were promiſed; but did not underſtand that Spiritual Circumciſion, *viz.* the Mortification of ſinful Affections and Luſts, was principally intended, when God made Circumciſion the condition of his Covenant. For they were it ſeems groſly ignorant of the neceſſity of Regeneration, and ſo of the Spiritual deſign of Circumciſion; which was the reaſon why *Nicodemus*, though a Ruler among the *Jews*, anſwered Chriſt ſo aukardly as he did, when he Preached to him the neceſſity of being *born again*, Joh. 3. An Ignorance that ſome allowance poſſibly might have been made for, had not the Circumciſion of the Heart, and the making themſelves a new Heart, been expreſly called for, as it was *Deut.* 10. 16. *Jer.* 4. 4. *Ezek.* 18. 31. Now this Ignorance of theirs in the Doctrine of the Circumciſion of the Heart, and the ſenſe they put upon God's making Circumciſion to be the condition of his Covenant of being their God, was doubtleſs the reaſon why they placed ſo very much as they did in Literal Circumciſion. For, although Circumciſion firſt given to *Abraham* by way of Covenant, was afterwards incorporated with the body of *Moſes*'s Law, yet it ſhould ſeem theſe *Jews* conſidered it not ſo much as it was a part of that Law, but chiefly as a Condition of God's Covenant with them in *Abraham*, as they were his Seed. And therefore, St. *Paul* where he reckons up his Jewiſh Privileges, whil'ſt he was a *Phariſee*, puts Circumciſion in the head of them all, and as accounted by him while a *Phariſee* a Privilege diſtinct from his *being blameleſs, touching the Righteouſneſs which was in the Law*, Phil. 3. 5, 6. Whence alſo the Judaizers ſaid, *it was needful to Circumciſe them, and to command them to keep the Law of Moſes*, Acts 15. 5, 24. As if Circumciſing did import ſomething different from, or at leaſt ſomething more, than keeping of the Law did, though otherwiſe it was a part of the Law. Upon this account doubtleſs it was, that we find them more zealous for Circumciſion, than for any other Point of the Law beſides.

Againſt this Erroneous Opinion of theirs, touching Literal Circumciſions being the condition of the Spiritual Benefits of the Covenant, St. *Saul* argueth ſeveral ways. Firſt, By maintaining that the Covenant did chiefly reſpect Circumciſion in the Spirit. *Rom.* 2. 28, 29. *He is not a Jew, which is one outwardly; neither is that Circumciſion, which is outward in the fleſh*, (that is, it was not that Circumciſion which would ſavingly avail them, as they thought it would) *but he is a Jew, which is one inwardly; and Circumciſion is that of the Heart, in the Spirit, and not in the Letter; whoſe praiſe is not of Men, but of God.*

Again, by ſhewing that *Abraham* could not have been Juſtified before Circumciſion, if the great Benefits of the Covenant (of which Juſtification was one) were ſuſpended upon that as a neceſſary condition. And yet that he was Juſtified, vvhen not Circumciſed, there is the expreſs Authority of Scripture for. This he aſſerts. Rom. 4. 9, 10. *For we ſay that Faith was reckoned to Abraham for Righteouſneſs. How was it then reckoned? when he was in Circumciſion, or in Uncircumciſion? Not in Circumciſion, but in Uncircumciſion.*

Afterwards, he proceeds to undeceive them in the apprehenſion they had, that the Benefits of the Covenant were entailed upon *Abraham*'s Natural Seed as ſuch; or at leaſt as ſuch, with the addition of a Literal obſervation of Circumciſion, and the Law, without reſpect to the Spiritual and New Birth: *Rom.* 9. 6, 7, 8. *They are not all Iſrael, which are of Iſrael*, (as they thought they were) *neither becauſe they are the Seed of Abraham, are they all Children: But in Iſaac ſhall thy Seed be called*: That is, thoſe ſhall be called *Abraham*'s Seed, which are born as *Iſaac* was, by Faith in the Promiſe, which are therefore called *Children of the Promiſe.* For ſo the Apoſtle expounds it, ſaying, *They which are the Children of the fleſh, theſe are not the Children of God; but the Children of the Promiſe are counted for the Seed*; to wit, ſuch as are *born after the Spirit*, as it is explained, *Gal.* 4. 28, 29. And this agrees to what he had ſaid before, *Rom.* 2. 28. *He is not a Jew, which is one outwardly*, &c. Againſt which corrupt Opinion, *John* the *Baptiſt* did oppoſe himſelf, when he admoniſhed the *Phariſees*, *to bring forth fruit meet for Repentance, and think not to ſay within your ſelves, we have Abraham to our Father*, Mat. 3. 7, 8.

The Apoſtle labours to cure this grand Error about Literal Circumciſion as disjoyned from Spiritual, in many other places; and ſhews, how that Circumciſion *availeth nothing*, but *a New Creature*, ſuch as Spiritual Circumciſion makes a Man to be. *Gal.* 6. 15. *Not Circumciſion, but Faith.* Gal. 5. 6. *Not Circumciſion, but keeping the Commandments*, is that which would only reach thoſe great Ends which they ſought after in Literal Circumciſion, 1 *Cor.* 7. 19. But I ſhall have occaſion to improve theſe Scriptures further upon another Head of this Diſcourſe. And by the way, we may obſerve, that thoſe who build their hopes of future Happineſs upon their having been Baptized, and their being of the Church, without the inward Grace ſignified by Baptiſm, which is the *waſhing of Regeneration, and renewing of the Holy Ghoſt*, they are much a-kin to thoſe miſerable miſtaken *Jews.*

2. They not underſtanding the Typical and Spiritual uſe of the Legal Sacrifices, as they did prefigure the Death and Suffering of Chriſt, and the general Atonement which was to be made thereby, nor yet the Predictions of the Prophets touching his Death, they ran into another groſs Error, and that was, That the promiſed *Meſſias ſhould not, by ſuffering death, become a Sacrifice for ſin.* And therefore they ſaid to him, when he ſpoke to them of his Death; *We have heard out of the Law, that Chriſt abideth for ever; and how ſayeſt thou the Son of Man muſt be lift up?* Joh. 12. 34. They did not dream of his Dying, but of his Reigning viſibly as a Mighty Monarch among them, and ſubduing all Nations under them; *Becauſe they knew him not, nor yet the voices of the Prophets which are read every Sabbath-day, they have fulfilled them in condemning him*, Acts 13. 27. Their Ignorance in the meaning of the Types and Predictions touching the Death of the *Meſſias*, would have been the more excuſable, if they had not wilfully and obſtinately perſiſted in that Error after thoſe Types and Prophecies were fulfilled and explained to them. Ignorance in this matter was found in Chriſt's own Diſciples a great while; but their ſlowneſs to believe thoſe Types

and Prophecies after they were fulfilled, was a thing which our Saviour rebuked them for, ſaying, *O fools, and ſlow of heart, to believe all that the Prophets have ſpoken. Ought not Chriſt to have ſuffered theſe things, and to enter into his glory?* Luke 24. 25, 26. But the unbelieving *Jews* were tenacious of this Opinion, after they had ſufficient means to have been convinc'd of their Error in it. In oppoſition to which Opinion, the Author of the Epiſtle to the *Hebrews*, argues at large the neceſſity of Chriſt's Suffering by Death. As firſt, he argues it from his Prieſthood. For having proved him, according to Prophecy, to be a Prieſt, not after the Order of *Aaron*, but of *Melchizedeck*, and ſo a Prieſt of greater Dignity, *Chap.* 5. and 7. He infers, *Chap* 8. that as a Prieſt, he muſt have ſomething to Offer in Sacrifice, and that of greater value than what was Offered by Prieſts under the Law, that were but of an inferiour Order; and that he ſhews to have been Himſelf, and his own Blood, as the Antitype of all thoſe Legal Sacrifices, *Chap.* 9. Secondly, He proves his Death neceſſary for the confirmation of the ſecond and New Covenant, as he was Mediator of it. *As the firſt Teſtament was not dedicated without Blood,* ſo neither is the ſecond: *For where a Teſtament is* (ſaith he) *there of neceſſity muſt alſo be the death of the Teſtator,* Chap. 9. 15,--23. Thirdly, His Death was neceſſary for the obtaining of Remiſſion of Sins; a Benefit promiſed in the New Covenant: *For without ſhedding of Blood* (ſaith he) *there is no Remiſſion of Sin,* Chap. 9. 22. with Chap. 10. 5--18.

And indeed, it was a good part of the Apoſtle's work to beat down this Opinion, that the *Meſſias* was not to dye. *Acts* 17. 3. St. *Paul, as his manner was, went into them; and three Sabbath-days reaſoned with them out of the Scriptures, opening and alledging that Chriſt muſt needs have ſuffered and riſen again from the dead.* Yea, this Opinion had ſo generally obtained among them in our Saviour's time, that it ſeems the Apoſtles of Chriſt at firſt were not free from it. For when our Saviour told them, that at *Jeruſalem he ſhould be delivered to the Gentiles, and that they ſhould ſcourge him, and put him to death, and that the third day he ſhould riſe again;* it's ſaid, *they underſtood none of theſe things, and that this ſaying was hid from them, neither knew they the things which were ſpoken:* Though they were ſpoken plainly, and in no Parable, *Luke* 18. 32, 33, 34. Chriſt's being Crucified, *became a ſtumbling-block to the Jews* through this Error of theirs, and that which they inſiſted upon, as a Reaſon why they would not receive him as the Chriſt of God, 1 *Cor.* 1. 23.

3. They held another Error which probably was Mother or Daughter of the former, and that was, That the Legal Sacrifices did expiate and take away Sin, not only ſo as to free them from Legal Penalties and Temporal Puniſhments, as in many caſes they did; but ſo alſo as to free them from all obligation to Eternal Puniſhment. And ſo they did attribute to thoſe Sacrifices, the ſame atoning Virtue and purging Efficacy, as is proper only to the Blood of Chriſt. In oppoſition to this Opinion, it is maintain'd,

1. That thoſe Legal Sacrifices, were but Figures of the great Sacrifice, Chriſt Jeſus, *Heb.* 9. 10, 11, 12. and 10. 1.

2. It was argued, that it was *impoſſible that the blood of Bulls and of Goats ſhould take away Sin*, becauſe theſe were offered year after year, over and over in the day of general Atonement for the ſame ſins. And that if the former Sacrifices which were firſt offered, had taken away ſin, the latter could not have been neceſſary to the ſame purpoſe, *Heb.* 10. 1, 2, 3, 11. The often repetition of Sacrifices for the ſame ſins, argues that the Worſhippers had a ſecret ſenſe in their Conſcience, that thoſe Sacrifices were not of a competent Value, nor a ſufficient Price to Redeem their Souls from Sin, as it expoſeth to Eternal Puniſhment; however, they might *ſanctifie as to the purifying of the fleſh*, yet they could not *make any perfect as pertaining to the Conſcience*, Heb. 9. 9. and 10. 1, 2.

3. It was argued from a Prophetical paſſage in *Pſal.* 40. in which Chriſt is brought in ſpeaking thus; *Sacrifice and Offering thou would'ſt not, but a Body haſt thou prepared me: In burnt Offerings and Sacrifice for ſin thou haſt had no pleaſure: Then ſaid I, Lo, I come to do thy will, O God.* From whence he infers, that the firſt ſort of Sacrifices *were taken away* as inſufficient, *that the ſecond might be eſtabliſhed. By the which will*, ſaith he, *we are ſanctified through the offering of the Body of Jeſus once for all*, Heb. 10. 5.—10.

This Opinion of theirs, that Legal Sacrifices did expiate all their Sins, did keep up in them a hope of Impunity here and hereafter, under many Immoralities and great Tranſgreſſions in the courſe of their Lives. Though they multiplied Tranſgreſſion, yet if they multiplied Sacrifices too, they thought they ſhould eſcape well enough. *Amos* 4. 4, 5. *Come to Bethel and tranſgreſs, at Gilgal multiply tranſgreſſion, and bring your Sacrifice every morning, and your Tythes after three years, and offer a ſacrifice of thankſgiving with Leaven, and proclaim and publiſh your free-Offerings, for this liketh you, O Children of Iſrael, ſaith the Lord God.* And much after this rate do carnal Chriſtians bear up themſelves in hopes that all their ſins are done away by the Sacrifice of Chriſt the Lamb of God that taketh away the Sins of the World, though they live from day to day in ungodlineſs. Only indeed they ſin at a cheaper rate for the preſent, than the wicked *Jews* did. The *Jewiſh* ſinners were at the coſt of many a Sacrifice to ſtop the mouth of Conſcience; but theſe are at coſt only in *making proviſion for the fleſh, to fulfil the luſts thereof*, and depend upon Chriſt to pay all their Scores.

4. Another of their Errors, as conſequent upon the former, was this; That without Circumciſion and obſerving of the Law of *Moſes*, the *Gentiles* could not be ſaved. This Opinion the Judaizing Chriſtians retained after their Converſion to the Chriſtian Profeſſion. *Acts* 15. 1, 5, 24. *Certain men which came down from Judea taught the brethren, ſaying, Except ye be Circumciſed after the manner of Moſes, ye cannot be ſaved. There roſe up certain of the Sect of the Phariſees which believed, ſaying, that it was needful to Circumciſe them and to command them to keep the Law of Moſes.*

In oppoſition to which Opinion, St. *Paul* taught that the *Righteouſneſs of God by Faith without the Law is manifeſted unto all, and upon all that believe, whether Jews or Gentiles, and that there is no difference*, Rom. 3. 21, 22. And that a Man *is juſtified by Faith without the deeds of the Law*, though never Circumciſed: And that *God is the God of the Gentiles*, as well *as of the Jews*, and that *he doth juſtifie the Uncircumciſion and the Circumciſion*; thoſe that had obſerved the Law of *Moſes*, and thoſe that had not, upon the ſame terms, *viz.* of Evangelical Faith, *Rom.* 3. 28, 29, 30. Whereunto agrees the words of St. *Peter*, Acts 15. 9, 11. *He put no difference between us and them, purifying their hearts by Faith*; *i. e.* us *Jews*, and they *Gentiles*: *But we believe that through the Grace of our Lord Jeſus Chriſt, we ſhall be ſaved even as they*, and upon no other terms, though we have obſerved the Law, and they have not, *Gal.* 2. 15, 16. Upon the ſame account St. *Paul* again affirms, *Rom.* 4. 5. *That to him that worketh not, but believeth on him that juſtifieth the ungodly, his Faith is counted for Righteouſneſs.* That is, the Idolatrous *Gentiles* that never had obſerved the Law, but lived *without God in the World*, ſhould yet have their practical belief of the Goſpel imputed even to them for Righteouſneſs. And he further exemplifies this in *Abraham*, Ver. 9. 10, 11, 12. whoſe Faith was reckoned to him for Righteouſneſs before he was Circumciſed, that he might be the Patern and great Example of God's juſtifying the Heathen upon their believing and obeying as *Abraham* did, in leaving his Idolatry and his Country upon God's Promiſe and Command, though he never had been Circumciſed. And upon the like account he ſaith again, *Gal.* 3. 8, 9. *That the Scripture foreſeeing that God would juſtifie the Heathen through Faith, preached before the Goſpel unto Abraham, ſaying, In thee ſhall all Nations be bleſſed.* And from thence he concludes, that thoſe *Gentiles* that *be of Faith*, that believe as *Abraham* did, *are bleſſed as Abraham was, are bleſſed with faithful Abraham.*

5. Another Error which was held by ſome Judaizing Chriſtians was this; That Faith in Chriſt and Literal Circumciſion, with a Literal obſervation of the Law of *Moſes*, jointly, were the Condition of Juſtification. Though they were ſuch as Believed, yet they taught, that except Men were Circumciſed, and kept the Law of *Moſes*, they could not be ſaved, *Acts* 15. 1, 5. They ſeem to have retained the ſame falſe Opinion of Juſtification by the Law, as the unbelieving *Jews* did, but held the Death of Chriſt neceſſary to be ſuper-added.

To convince them of which Error, St. *Paul* ſets before them the bad conſequence of it in two reſpects. 1. In that they hereby rendred the Death of Chriſt needleſs in it ſelf. *Gal.* 2. 21. *If Righteouſneſs come by the Law, then Chriſt is dead in vain*: There would then have been no need of Chriſt's Death to accompliſh it, as the unbelieving *Jews* indeed did hold. 2. In that this Opinion of theirs made Chriſt and his Death uſeleſs unto them, and cut them off from receiving any benefit by him, *Gal.* 5. 2, 4. *Behold, I Paul ſay unto you, that if you be Circumciſed, Chriſt ſhall profit you nothing: Chriſt is become of none effect unto you: whoſoever of you are juſtified by the Law, ye are fallen from Grace*, And hereto agrees that in *Hebr.* 13. 10. *We have an Altar whereof they have no right to eat which ſerve the Tabernacle:* Thoſe Judaizers who ſtand for the neceſſity of Moſaic Obſervations, have no right to, nor ſhall receive benefit by Chriſt, who is the only Chriſtian Altar to which we bring all our Sacrifices.

6. They held the Law of *Moſes* to be unalterable, and of perpetual obligation. In oppoſition to which, the Author to the *Hebrews* improves to great purpoſe that Propheſie, *Jer.* 31. 31, 32. *Behold, the days come, ſaith the Lord, that I will make a new Covenant with the houſe of Iſrael, and the houſe of Judah: Not according to the Covenant that I made with their Fathers in the day when I took them by the hand to lead them out of the land of Egypt*, &c. *For in that he ſaith, a new Covenant, he hath* (ſaith he) *made the firſt old. Now that which decayeth and waxeth old, is ready* (ſaith he) *to vaniſh away.* And St. *Paul* ſhews how that the Legal Miniſtration, how glorious ſoever it was, was yet done away, when that which was far more glorious did appear, 2 *Cor.* 3. 7, 11. And again, *that we are become dead to the Law by the Body of Chriſt, and delivered from the Law*, Rom. 7. 4, 6.

7. The laſt of their Errors I ſhall inſiſt on, was this: They held the firſt Covenant as alone, or ſeparated, to be the Covenant of Salvation, only taking in with it the Covenant of Literal Circumciſion, which alſo was made a part of their Law. That firſt Covenant which I have already deſcribed as a Temporal Covenant, and the Promiſes and the Threatnings of it but Temporal, they took to be eſtabliſhed for perpetuity, and the Promiſes of it to contain Promiſes of Eternal Redemption, or Remiſſion, as well as Temporal; and Eternal Life and Felicity as well as Temporal: And ſuch a Literal obſervation of the Laws of it to be the condition of thoſe Promiſes, as would render them inculpable in the eye of the Magiſtracy; ſuch a Righteouſneſs ſufficient to juſtifie them before God, as St. *Paul* ſaith he had while he was a *Phariſee*, Phil. 3. 6. *As touching the Righteouſneſs which is in the Law blameleſs*; which then he accounted to be his gain.

Now that they did peremptorily adhere to this firſt Covenant, and the terms of it, for Juſtification and Eternal Life, it doth plainly appear by the mighty oppoſition which the Apoſtle made againſt them in it. For they did ſtill oppoſe another Covenant, as the Covenant of Juſtification and Eternal Life, unto this Moſaical Covenant; and Faith, as the Conditon of that, in oppoſition to Works as the Condition of this, as will appear if we come to Inſtances.

1. St. *Paul* argues it with them, that the Promiſe of God to *Abraham* and his Seed, *was not through the Law, but through the righteouſneſs of Faith*, Rom. 4. 13. Not through the Law, that is, not upon the terms upon which the benefits of the firſt Covenant were promiſed to the Nation of the *Jews*, but upon quite other terms, expreſs'd by the Righteouſneſs of Faith.

2. He argues it farther with them, That God's way of accounting Men Righteous by Faith, and their way of ſeeking Righteouſneſs upon the terms of the firſt Covenant, were utterly inconſiſtent, and the one deſtructive of the other, and that but one of theſe ways could poſſibly ſtand. *For if they which are of the Law be Heirs, Faith is made void, and the Promiſe made of none effect*, Rom. 4. 14. And again, *If the Inheritance be of the Law, it is no more of Promiſe: But God gave it to*

Abraham by Promiſe, Gal. 3. 18. *And if by Grace, then it is no more of Works, otherwiſe Grace is no more Grace*, &c. *Rom.* 11. 6.

3. And that the Law did not exclude the Promiſe to *Abraham*, he farther argues, in that the Covenant with *Abraham* was confirmed, and unalterably ſetled and eſtabliſhed in the *Meſſias* 430 Years before the Law by *Moſes* was given, and that therefore for them to go about to introduce the Law in the room of the Promiſe to *Abraham* ſo confirmed, would be as unreaſonable and unjuſt, as for one Man to alter or make void anothers Covenant, after he hath confirmed it. *Gal.* 3. 15, 17. *Brethren, I ſpeak after the manner of men: though it be but a Mans Covenant, yet if it be confirmed, no Man diſannulleth or addeth thereto. And this I ſay, that the Covenant that was confirmed before of God in Chriſt, the Law which was* 430 *Years after, cannot diſannul, that it ſhould make the Promiſe of none effect.*

4. St. *Paul* argues it impoſſible in the nature of the thing, that they ſhould be juſtified by the Law, becauſe one main end of God's promulging the Law of Nature, (which yet was a great part of the firſt Covenant) was to convince Men of their Guilt, and of their obnoxiouſneſs to Wrath, and to ſtop their Mouthes, and to leave them without any plea of defence as from it. *Rom.* 3. 19, 20. *Now we know that what things ſoever the Law ſaith, it ſaith to them who are under the Law: That every mouth may be ſtopt, and all the world may become guilty before God. Therefore by the deeds of the Law, there ſhall no fleſh be juſtified in his ſight: for by the Law is the knowledge of ſin.* And if the Law doth convict Men, it cannot juſtifie them: For the ſame Law cannot both Condemn and Juſtifie the ſame perſon, in reference to the ſame Charge. If all are Caſt and Condemned by the Original Law, as they are, (*for he hath concluded all under ſin, that he might have mercy upon all*, Gal. 3.) then ſo many as come to be juſtified after this, muſt needs be juſtified by another Law ſuperceding that, and that is none other than the Law of Grace. The Law of Nature Curſeth every one that hath broken it, though but once, and therefore it cannot juſtifie them too: *Out of the ſame mouth* (in this caſe) *doth not proceed Bleſſing and Curſing.*

5. He argues this Opinion of theirs to be contrary to the Doctrine of the Prophets many hundred years after, as well as contrary to the Promiſe to *Abraham* long before the Law. *That no man is juſtified by the Law in the ſight of God, it is evident: For the juſt ſhall live by Faith: and the Law is not of Faith; but the man that doth them, ſhall live in them*, Gal. 3. 11, 12. from *Heb.* 2. 4. The Law is not of Faith, that is, it doth not promiſe Pardon, or any other Bleſſing upon Believing, but upon condition of Doing the things therein required: *the man that doth them, ſhall live in them*, Levit. 18. 5.

6. The inſufficiency of the firſt Covenant to make Men Eternally Happy, and the neceſſity and validity of the ſecond to that end, as further argued in *Heb.* 8. from another famous Prophecy in *Jer.* 31. 31. &c. of God's making a New Covenant with *Iſrael* and *Judah* in the latter days, not according to that he made with their Fathers, when he brought them out of *Egypt*. 1. It's argued that the firſt Covenant was but Temporary, and *being old, was ready to vaniſh*, and to give place to

a New and Everlaſting Covenant, *Chap.* 8. 13. 2. That *the firſt Covenant was faulty*, or defective, or elſe there would have been *no place ſought for a ſecond*, ver. 7. 3. That the Promiſes of that firſt Covenant were not of ſuch things as Men ſtand in need of, to make them everlaſtingly Happy, as thoſe better Promiſes of the ſecond Covenant are, *ver. 6.* 4. And yet more particularly, that in this New Covenant, there is promiſe of ſuch a forgiveneſs of ſins, as that *iniquity ſhall be remembred no more*, ver. 12. whereas the firſt Covenant did not promiſe any ſuch Pardons: All that it promiſed, was a forgiveneſs only as to the concerns of this Life, otherwiſe their ſins were ſtill kept upon the File to be taken away (if ever taken away) by the *Mediator of the New Teſtament, by means of his Death, for the redemption of the tranſgreſſions that were under the firſt Teſtament*, Chap. 9. 15. But in thoſe Sacrifices, (which were but the Sacrifices of the firſt Covenant) *there was a remembrance again made of ſins every year*, Heb. 10. 3.

And now, by all theſe reaſonings of the Apoſtle put together, it ſufficiently appears that the unbelieving *Jews* did expect Juſtification and Eternal Life, only upon the terms of the firſt Covenant, and that they held that Covenant, as comprehending the Covenant of Circumciſion, to be the Covenant of Eternal Life. And indeed, this laſt mentioned Error of theirs, in holding the firſt Covenant to be the Covenant of Salvation, did in a manner contain in it all the reſt mentioned before, which did naturally grow out of it. For if that had been the Covenant of Salvation, then it would have followed, that the Sacrifices of that Covenant had been ſufficient, and the Death of Chriſt needleſs; and that Circumciſion and keeping the Law of *Moſes* would have been neceſſary to the Salvation of the *Gentiles*, &c.

And now after all this, conſidering what Erroneous Opinions the incredulous *Jews* held about the Law, and about Circumciſion; and conſidering in what ſenſe they aſſerted Juſtification by the Law, and by Circumciſion, it will be no difficult thing to underſtand exactly, in what ſenſe the Apoſtle doth every where deny Juſtification to be by the Law, or by the Works of the Law.

For doubtleſs St. *Paul*'s denial of Juſtification and Salvation to be by the Law, or Works of the Law, is to be underſtood in the very ſame ſenſe in which the incredulous *Jews*, againſt whom he Diſputed, did hold theſe to be attainable thereby. For elſe, his Reaſonings would have been beſide the Queſtion under debate between them. And therefore we muſt take our meaſure of St. *Paul*'s ſenſe in the Negative part of the Queſtion, by his Adverſaries ſenſe of it in the Affirmative. And if ſo, then in his denying Juſtification and Salvation to be by the Law, or by Works of the Law, we muſt underſtand him to deny a freedom from the Eternal Puniſhment to be attainable by Legal Sacrifices: And alſo to deny that the, promiſe of Eternal Life was made upon condition of Literal Circumciſion, and a Literal obſervation of the *Moſaical* Law, without being by Faith renewed in the inward frame and moral conſtitution of the Soul: and likewiſe, to deny Eternal Life to be attainable by the terms of their Political Covenant, the Promiſes whereof were not made upon condition of Believing, but of Doing.

The Law is not of Faith, but the man that doth thoſe things, ſhall live in them, Gal. 3. 12. For theſe and ſuch-like were the Opinions which thoſe *Jews* did hold, (as I have ſhewed) and theſe were the things in which St. *Paul* oppoſed them. They divided and ſeparated Circumciſion and the Law in the Letter of them, from the Spirit of them both; claiming Juſtification by the Letter alone. And they divided the Law from the Promiſe rightly underſtood, and looked to be Juſtified by Works of the Law, without Faith in the Promiſe rightly underſtood. They looked for the *Meſſias* indeed, but not to become a Propitiation for Sin, or to eſtabliſh a New Covenant of Salvation, but to further their Temporal and Eternal Felicity in the way of their Obedience to the Political Law.

But then it doth not in the leaſt appear, that St. *Paul* in denying Juſtification to be by the Law in the ſenſe thus explained, doth alſo thereby deny Works of ſincere Obedience to God, to concur with Faith in Man's Juſtification in all reſpects.

And if any ſhall yet ſuppoſe, that St. *Paul* in denying Juſtification by Works, in the *Jews* corrupt ſenſe, doth alſo, on the by, deny all Works of Evangelical Obedience to bear any part of the Condition on which God promiſeth to juſtifie Men through Chriſt; ſuch a Suppoſition, if admitted, would make his Doctrine herein inconſiſtent, not only with the Faith of the holy Men of Old, who were wont to expreſs the Condition of the Covenant of Mercy, by loving God, and keeping his Commandments; but it would alſo make him inconſiſtent with himſelf and his own Doctrine, and the Doctrine of other Apoſtles, as I doubt not but plainly to make appear, before I have done with this Diſcourſe.

There is one Character of Works given, by which you may certainly know what Works they were which St. *Paul* denied Men were juſtified by; and they were ſuch Works which were apt to occaſion boaſting. *Epheſ.* 2. 9. *Not of Works, leſt any man ſhould boaſt.* Rom. 4. 2. *For if Abraham were juſtified by Works*, (to wit, in the *Jews* ſenſe, by Circumciſion in the Fleſh, to which St. *Paul* alludes, *ver.* 1.) *he hath whereof to glory, but not before God*, but only before Men, who were not Circumciſed as he was. For the unbelieving *Jews*, who ſought and expected Juſtification by Circumciſion, and other Legal Obſervations, did glory over the poor *Gentiles*, that were deſtitute of thoſe Works, which conſiſted in the outward Privileges which the *Jews* had; and looked down upon them with contempt, though ſome of them were much better than themſelves, ſuch as *Cornelius*, whom they looked upon as unclean. This boaſting humor of the *Jews* over the *Gentiles*, is deſcribed and reproved, *Rom.* 2. from *ver.* 17. to 29. Now the Doctrine of Juſtification by Faith, of obtaining pardon by anothers Undertaking for us, to wit, Chriſt Jeſus, and of being accepted with God through him, upon our ſincere, though otherwiſe imperfect Obedience, (which ſincere Obedience too, is not performed without his ſpecial Grace and Aſſiſtance) takes away all occaſion of boaſting, in reference both to God and Men, and laid the *Jews* as low as the *Gentiles*, and made St. *Peter* a *Jew* to ſay, *But we believe that through the grace of the Lord Jeſus Chriſt*,

Chriſt we ſhall be ſaved, even as they, Acts 15. 11. And therefore vvhen St. *Paul* had ſaid, that *now the righteouſneſs of God without the Law is manifeſted, even the righteouſneſs of God which is by Faith of Jeſus Chriſt unto all, and upon all them that believe, for there is no difference*; meaning, betvveen *Jews* and *Gentiles*, Rom. 3. 21, 22. he thereupon demands, in *ver.* 27. ſaying, *Where is boaſting then?* It is excluded. By what Law? *Of Works? Nay, but by the Law of Faith.* Therefore we find the holy Men of old among the *Jews*, who expected Acceptance with God upon other terms than the Phariſaical *Jews* did, who placed their Confidence (called *truſting in the fleſh*, Phil. 3. 4.) in their External Privileges and Performances alone, were ſo far from glorying in ſuch a Righteouſneſs as that, that they cryed out in reference to that, *All our righteouſneſſes are as filthy rags*, Iſa. 64. 6. Thus Regenerating Grace made *David* ſo far from boaſting, either of Privileges, or of his Performances, that he ſaid unto God, *Who am I? and what is my people, that we ſhould be able to offer ſo willingly after this ſort? for all things come of thee, and of thine own have we given thee*, 1 Chron. 29. 14. This made St. *Paul* to ſay, *We are not ſufficient of our ſelves, as of our ſelves, to think any thing, but our ſufficiency is of God*, 2 Cor. 3. 5. And *by the grace of God, I am what I am*, 1 Cor. 15. 10. And *of him are we in Chriſt Jeſus, who of God is made unto us, Wiſdom, Righteouſneſs, Sanctification, and Redemption, that he that glorieth, may glory in the Lord*, having nothing but what he hath received from him *gratis*, and without all deſert, yea contrary to his demerits, 1 *Cor.* 1. 30, 31. The *good Works* which the Saints do, they do them by vertue of their being *created in Chriſt Jeſus* in order thereunto, *Epheſ.* 2. 10. and all that is good, *is through Chriſt ſtrengthening them*, Phil. 4. 13. From whence therefore we may well conclude, that if the Works which St. *Paul* wholly excludes in the matter of Juſtification, were only ſuch as were apt to occaſion boaſting, that then Acts of Evangelical Obedience were none of thoſe Works.

According to the ſenſe explained then, I preſume we may well underſtand that Text, *Rom.* 3. 28. which of all others ſeems in the Phraſe and Expreſſion to be moſt Excluſive of Works in the point of Juſtification; the Words are theſe, *Therefore we conclude, that a man is juſtified by Faith, without the deeds of the Law.* Which words (if you conſider the context) ſeem to import no more but this, *viz.* That a Man is juſtified in the Goſpel-way, which in the verſe before is called *the Law of Faith*: And not by the deeds of the Law, or upon the terms of the firſt Covenant, which in the verſe before likewiſe is called *the Law of Works.* Which two, the Goſpel-terms, and the firſt Covenant-terms, are ſtill oppoſed to each other in the point of Juſtification. Now although the concluſion here laid down is true, in reference to the *Jews* as well as to the *Gentiles*, yet it ſeems to be written here with ſpecial reference to the *Gentiles.* Intimating, that upon their Belief, they might be Juſtified, without turning Proſelytes to the Jewiſh way, as appears by that Interrogation in the very next words following, *ver.* 29. 30. *Is he the God of the Jews only? Is he not alſo of the*

Gentiles? yes, of the Gentiles alſo: Seeing it is one God which ſhall juſtifie the Circumciſion by Faith, and Uncircumciſion through Faith. And the words in the 31, *ver.* do intimate that the words in the 28th *ver.* are to be underſtood in ſuch a limited ſenſe, as I have aſſigned in my Explication, *viz.* as excluding the deeds of the Law; in the act of Juſtification, only in the *Jews* corrupt ſenſe of the Law: becauſe St. *Paul* therein affirms his foreſaid Doctrine of Juſtification by Faith, without the deeds of the Law, not to be at all deſtructive of the Law, but contrariwiſe, tending to *eſtabliſh the Law*, if we take the Law not in that diſtorted ſenſe in which thoſe *Jews* held it, but as it was appointed by God to promote Holineſs in the World, which is the end and ſcope of all his Laws. In which ſenſe, the Apoſtle was ſo far from excluding the Works of the Law from having any thing to do in the Juſtification of Men, as that he had expreſly affirmed before, That though the *hearers of the Law were not juſt before God, yet the doers of the Law ſhould be juſtified*, Rom. 2. 13. Meaning by doers, ſuch as do ſincerely obey that Law of God under which they are, and not ſuch as do perfectly fulfil it, as ſome would ſeem to underſtand it. For I have ſhewed before, that God never made promiſe of Juſtification upon naturally impoſſible Conditions, (as that would be, and they are diſhonourable thoughts of God to think he hath; and therefore the Apoſtle may not be underſtood to promiſe Juſtification to the doers of the Law upon any ſuch terms.

There is one vein of Texts more, wherein the oppoſition is made in ſuch a form of words between the *Jews* way of ſeeking Juſtification by the Law, and the Goſpel-way of ſeeking it by Faith: That being a little opened, will both illuſtrate and confirm what I have been repreſenting to you: And they are ſuch in vvhich the *Jews* erroneous vvay is called *their own Righteouſneſs*; and the true Chriſtian way of Juſtification, *the Righteouſneſs of God by Faith*, and the *Rightouſneſs of God.* Rom. 10. 3. *For they being ignorant of God's Righteouſneſs, and going about to eſtabliſh their own Righteouſneſs, have not ſubmitted themſelves to the Righteouſneſs of God.* Phil. 3. 9. *And be found in him, not having mine own Righteouſneſs, which is of the Law, but that which is through the Faith of Chriſt, the Righteouſneſs which is of God by Faith* This Righteouſneſs is called their ovvn Righteouſneſs, in oppoſition to the Righteouſneſs of God, upon a three-fold account, as I underſtand it.

1. Becauſe they ſought the pardon of their ſins by that only vvhich vvas their ovvn; their ovvn Sacrifices, Sacrifices vvhich they themſelves brought to be offered. Whereas the Chriſtian Juſtification is called the Righteouſneſs of God, becauſe the Sacrifice by vvhich pardon of ſin, and acceptation vvith God is obtained, vvas from God, and given by God, to vvit, Chriſt Jeſus, *whom God hath ſet forth to be a propitiation*, Rom. 3. 25. and Chriſt *hath given himſelf an Offering and a Sacrifice for us*, Epheſ. 5. 2. *And he is made unto us of God, Wiſdom, Righteouſneſs*, &c. 1 Cor. 1. 30.

2. It vvas called their ovvn Righteouſneſs, becauſe they did not think Regeneration, or Supernatural Grace neceſſary to the obtaining

of it, but a Literal obſervation of the Lavv and Circumciſion, ſuch as paſſed for a Righteouſneſs among Men, and ſuch as they, vvithout Supernatural Aid, vvere able to perform. As for thoſe Precepts vvhich commanded the loving of God vvith all the Heart, and the Circumciſing the Heart, becauſe theſe vvere not enjoyned under expreſs penalties, as thoſe things vvere of vvhich the Rulers vvere to take cognizance, therefore the *Phariſees* counted them but *Counſels* only, and not direct Precepts. But the Chriſtians-Righteouſneſs, vvhich is by Faith, may be ſaid to be of God, becauſe *by Grace they are ſaved through Faith in Chriſt Jeſus, and that not of themſelves, it is the gift of God: And we are his Workmanſhip, created in Chriſt Jeſus*, Epheſ. 2. 8, 10.

3. It vvas called their ovvn Righteouſneſs, becauſe it vvas a vvay of ſeeking to be juſtified of their ovvn deviſing, and not of God's appointing. And on the contrary, the Goſpel-Method of Juſtification is called the Righteouſneſs of God through Faith, becauſe it is of God's Inſtitution and Appointment: It is the ſubſtance of God's New Law or Covenant.

The reſult of all then is, That they were the Works of the Law, as excluſive of Faith in Chriſt and his Death; which the Apoſtle denied any Man to be juſtified by; and not thoſe Works of the Law, which are the immediate effects of Faith in Chriſt, in his Death, and in his Doctrine.

CHAP. VI.

How St. Paul's *Doctrine of Juſtification by Faith, and not by Works, was then miſtaken by ſome.*

I Come in the next place to ſhew how that St. *Paul*'s Reaſonings about Faith and Works, in reference to Juſtification, were probably miſtaken by ſuch Solifidians as St. *James* reaſoned againſt. For he having taught that God did juſtifie the ungodly *Gentiles* upon their Believing, and without the deeds of the Law, but denying Juſtification to as many of the *Jews* as did not Believe, though they were obſervers of the Law; there were ſome who thereupon through miſtake, laid the whole ſtreſs of Salvation upon Believing, to the neglect of a holy and virtuous Life. And St. *Paul* being ſenſible how apt ſome were to make a bad uſe of his good Doctrine, and to draw bad Concluſions out of good Premiſes, he frequently mentions ſuch Inferences, on purpoſe to caution Men againſt them. As for Inſtance: He having ſaid in *Rom.* 5. 20. *That where ſin abounded, grace did abound much more*: In Chap. 6. 1. he ſaith, *What ſhall we ſay then? ſhall we continue in ſin, that grace may abound?* as ſome it ſeems were ready to infer; *God forbid*, ſaith he; *how ſhall we that are dead to ſin, live any longer therein?* You may conſult to like purpoſe in general, *Rom.* 3. 5, 6,7,31. & 6.15. *Gal.* 2.17. and find that St. *Paul* and others were *ſlanderouſly reported to have ſaid, Let us do evil, that good may come.*

That there were ſuch as did miſrepreſent St. *Paul*'s Doctrine touching God's Grace and Long-ſuffering, and wreſt ſeveral paſſages in his Epiſtles, and other Scriptures, to their own deſtruction, we are told by St. *Peter* alſo, 2 *Pet.* 3. 15,16. *And account that the long-ſuffering of the Lord is Salvation; even as our beloved brother Paul alſo, according to the wiſdom given him, hath written unto you; as alſo in all his Epiſtles, ſpeaking in them of theſe things: In which are ſome things hard to be underſtood, which they that are unlearned and unſtable wreſt, as they do alſo the other Scriptures to their own deſtruction.*

And after St. *Paul* in his 2 *Tim.* 3. 2,3,4,5, verſes, had by many black Characters, deſcribed a ſort of Chriſtians that had *a form of godlineſs, but denied the power thereof:* In ver. 8. he further deſcribes them by that which was the cauſe of the forementioned unſavoury fruits of the Fleſh, to wit, that they *were men of corrupt minds* or *underſtandings, and reprobate concerning the Faith,* or void of Judgment concerning the Faith, as the Margin hath it. They were Men of corrupt Principles, and injudicious concerning the Doctrine of Faith: They did not diſcern Faith to be neceſſary in the operative and practical nature of it: But as they did ſatiſfie themſelves with a form of Godlineſs without the power: ſo they did likewiſe with a formal inefficacious and liveleſs Faith, which made them ſo unſavoury in their Lives.

And St. *John*, after he had in his firſt Epiſtle antidoted the Chriſtians againſt the pretentions of the *Gnoſticks*, who held a bad Life conſiſtent with Communion with God through illumination of mind, and the Chriſtian Faith, deceiving themſelves, and labouring to deceive others, in thinking they might be Righteous without doing Righteouſneſs, 1 *Joh.* 3. 7. He towards the concluſion of that Epiſtle, ſums up his general ſcope in it in theſe words: *Theſe things have I written unto you that believe in the Name of the Son of God; that ye may know that ye have Eternal Life, and that ye may believe on the Name of the Son of God,* Chap. 5. 13. His meaning is, as I conceive, that he wrote this Epiſtle, firſt, to the end they might be the better aſſured of Salvation by Chriſt upon their rightly Believing on him. And ſecondly, To the end they might not be drawn into miſtakes in the point of Believing, as if any Faith leſs than ſuch as is accompanied with a conſtant adherence to Chriſt's Doctrine and Example touching a holy Life, would give them that Aſſurance. He wrote to them that did Believe, that they might Believe; that is, that they might Believe yet more underſtandingly, more groundedly, and ſo perſeveringly againſt all temptations to Apoſtacy from the profeſſion of the Faith, or to looſneſs in the profeſſion of it.

St. *Jude* alſo, *ver.* 3, 4. ſtirred up the Chriſtians to *contend earneſtly for the Faith,* the Doctrine of ſaving Sinners in the way of Believing; becauſe, as he told them, there were certain Men profeſſing Faith, but of ungodly Lives, that were among them, *that turned the grace of God into laſciviouſneſs;* ſo underſtanding the Law of Grace, the

Goſpel, as if it had been a Proclamation from Heaven of a general Pardon for Chriſt's ſake, and through Faith in him, of as many ſins as Men had a mind to commit. The which Error, led them into thoſe Monſtrous Impieties charged upon them in that Epiſtle: By reaſon of which, *the way of Truth*, the right Faith they pretended to, *was evil-ſpoken of* in the World, (as St. *Peter* notes) they being indeed *Spots and Blemiſhes* to the Chriſtians and Chriſtian-profeſſion, ſo long as they were admitted to their Feaſts of Charity, as owned by them to be of their Number. This was indeed an ungodly Faith: But the Faith which he exhorted them to contend for, and to *build up themſelves upon*, as on a ſure Foundation, he calls *their moſt holy Faith*, verſ. 20. ſuch a Faith as is an Operative Principle of a holy Life.

And they were ſuch Chriſtians as St. *James* in his Epiſtle did expoſtulate with, that did lean ſo much upon a meer Believing, upon a meer Aſſent of the mind unto the truth of certain Propoſitions, as that they were careleſs in the ſubduing of their Paſſions, and bridling their Tongues, and regulating their Actions; as if theſe had not been neceſſary to Salvation: But thought themſelves ſafe upon account of their barren Faith, though they were Proud and Conceited of their Knowledge and Attainments, Cenſorious and Contentious, Unmerciful and Uncharitable. In a word, they were ſuch as were injudicious concerning the Faith that will Save, and under miſtakes of the Apoſtles Doctrine about it. All this will eaſily appear to any that ſhall but with a competent meaſure of Underſtanding, view and conſider the ſcope and contents of that Epiſtle.

And thus you ſee how plainly it appears by the Epiſtles of the Apoſtles, that the Doctrine of Juſtification by Faith, without Works, in the ſenſe in which the Apoſtles aſſerted it, was miſunderſtood by many *Gnoſticks*, carnal Goſpellers, or *Soliſidians*. The ſenſe in which the Apoſtles did aſſert it, was, that Faith juſtifies without Works Antecedent to Believing, and without Works, as the Works of a literal obſervation of *Moſes*'s Law, which was oppoſed by the *Jews* to Faith, as having Chriſt Crucified for its Object, and Repentance, Regeneration, and ſincere Obedience in a holy Life, for its inſeparable Effects. But theſe deceived Souls, that *deceived their own Hearts*, ſeem to have underſtood the Apoſtles, as if they had taught Juſtification by Faith, conſidered only as having the Death of Chriſt and the Atonement made thereby, for its Object, without reſpect to Regeneration and new Obedience, as any part of the Condition.

And it had been much better for the Chriſtian World, if thoſe corrupt Notions about the Doctrine of Faith as Juſtifying, had died with thoſe Men, which in the firſt Ages of the Chriſtian-Church were infected with them. But alas, it is too apparent, that the ſame, or much of the ſame dangerous and deſtructive miſtakes, have been tranſmitted to, or revived in theſe latter Ages of the Church. For we find by experience in this preſent Age, that very many of thoſe who are called Chriſtians, preſume themſelves to be Chriſtians indeed, and ſuch as ſhall be ſaved by Chriſt, though their Lives declare them to be far from being *New Creatures*, from being *renewed in the Spirit of* *their Minds, Wills, Affections, and Converſations*, as thoſe are that *have been taught as the Truth is in Jeſus*, Epheſ. 4. 21,--24. For they are confident they Believe all the Articles of their Creed; and in doing ſo, they are confident they ſhall be Saved; and ſo they would, if that Belief of theirs were but ſo effectual and operative as to produce ſuch a change in Heart and Life, as would denominate them New Creatures. But the miſchief is, they deceive themſelves in the nature of their Faith; it being but an Opinionative, Inoperative and dead Aſſent to the Truth of the Goſpel, ſuch as is only an Act of the Mind or Underſtanding, and doth not powerfully influence the Will, and ſo it is not *a believing with all the Heart*, but is the act only of one ſuch faculty of the Soul. A Belief it's probable may be found in the Devil himſelf: And ſuch a Belief was found in ſome who were ſo convinced by the power of Chriſt's Miracles, in concurrence with his Doctrine and Life, that they could not chooſe but believe him to be an extraordinary Perſon ſent from God; though their carnal Intereſt prevailed ſo much in them, as that it would not ſuffer them *to confeſs him openly, becauſe they loved the praiſe of Men, more than the praiſe of God*, Joh. 12. 42, 43. And beſides, theſe Men deceive themſelves about their Faith in this alſo; that they do not heartily Believe the whole Doctrine of the Goſpel, but are partial in their Faith. They in a ſort believe Chriſt to be the Son of God, and that he came into the World to ſave ſinners, and that he Died for our ſins, and the like. But then they do not heartily believe his Doctrine, touching the neceſſity of Repentance, of being born again; of *denying all ungodlineſs and worldly luſts, and of living righteouſly, godly, and ſoberly in this preſent world.* Or elſe they frame ſuch Notions of theſe things unto themſelves, of Repentance and Regeneration, as that they think they believe Chriſt's Doctrine touching them, when they believe only the lying Imagination of their own Brains.

And there is too much ground to fear, that many Mens ill managing the Doctrine of Juſtification by Faith, hath not a little ſtrengthened Men in this vain confidence. For while Evangelical Obedience it ſelf, under the Notion of thoſe Works to which Faith is oppoſed, hath been decryed as Popiſh, when intereſſed in Juſtification, and Juſtification aſſerted to be by Faith alone, in oppoſition to all Works whatſoever, Inward and Outward, as well Evangelical as Legal, as well thoſe after Converſion, as thoſe before, yea, and the diſpoſition thereunto; the Fleſh and the Devil to help it, hath got great advantage thereby to perſwade Men againſt the neceſſity of a holy Life, in ſuch a ſenſe of a holy Life, as the Scripture makes abſolutely neceſſary to Salvation. For though it's true that good Works have been acknowledged and preſſed too as neceſſary to Salvation; yet when withal, they have been denied to be neceſſary to Juſtification, and Men have been taught, that when once they are Juſtified, they can never fall away from a State of Juſtification, they have eaſily been drawn to believe, that good Works are not abſolutely neceſſary to Salvation, no more than to Juſtification, but Faith only. And upon ſuppoſition that the other two Points of Doctrine are true, it would be but rational for them ſo to believe. For if good Works be not neceſſary to Juſtification at all: And if it is impoſſible but that thoſe who are once juſtified ſhould be ſaved; how ſhould Men chuſe but infer from hence, that good Works are not abſolutely neceſſary to Salvation? Unleſs it ſhall be ſaid, that Men are not put into an immediate capacity of Salvation by being juſtified: Which to affirm, would be to ſay Men are not freed from Condemnation, by being freed from Condemnation, which would be a contradiction in terms: For to be juſtified, is to be freed from Condemnation, *Rom.* 8. 33, 34. and 5. 16, 18. and therefore Juſtification muſt needs put Men into an immediate capacity of being ſaved.

And as there is great reaſon to think that the Doctrine of Juſtification by Faith alone, in oppoſition to the Works of Evangelical Obedience, hath been a ſtumbling-ſtone unto many, and a back-friend to the power of Godlineſs; ſo there is another which hath been wont to be joyned with it, that hath rendred it the more dangerous, and it ſelf no good friend to holy Living; and that is the Doctrine of the Imputation of Chriſt's Righteouſneſs unto Juſtification, in that way in which it hath been managed by very many: For otherwiſe, there is a ſenſe (as I have ſhewed) in which it is a great and a comfortable Truth. For when Men have been taught to eſteem their own *Righteouſneſs but as filthy rags* (not only becauſe of its utter inſufficiency to juſtifie inſtead of Chriſt, or as he *juſtifies*, in which reſpect indeed it is no better; but alſo as any part of a Condition of Juſtification, or of our acceptance with God:) And when they have been taught alſo, that upon their Believing only, Chriſt's Righteouſneſs in fulfilling the Law for them, becomes imputed to them in it ſelf, and not only as the procuring cauſe of their Juſtification upon the terms of the Goſpel, ſo that they are looked upon as having themſelves perfectly kept the Law in him, it hath doubtleſs infeebled their endeavours after an inherent Righteouſneſs, and proved a temptation to them, to think that ſo long as they have ſuch anothers Inherent Righteouſneſs eſſentially in it ſelf imputed to them as Chriſt's is, they have no great need to find it in themſelves; conſidering alſo, that if they had it, they muſt rather loath themſelves for it, than take any comfort in it: *But let no man deceive you,* (ſaith St. *John*) *he that doth righteouſneſs, is righteous, as he is righteous,* 1 Joh. 3. 7.

I do acknowledge, that many of them have been worthy Men, who yet have propagated theſe Opinions: But that makes the Opinions never the better, but have done more hurt, in gaining thereby the more credit. It is true alſo, that thoſe worthy Men have zealouſly preſſed the neceſſity of Repentance, Regeneration, and a Holy Life: Which proved indeed an Antidote againſt the Poyſon of the other Opinions, ſo that they did not become Mortal to many, as otherwiſe they would have done. And indeed, they would have made mad work, if they had not been yoaked with wholeſomer Doctrine, as we ſee they did among *Antinomians*, *Ranters*, and other carnal Chriſtians that have followed the Ducture of thoſe Opinions, but have been ſhy of letting the Doctrines of Mortification and ſtrict Living, to have any power over them. But then if the preaching of thoſe ſounder Doctrines of Repentance, Regeneration, and a holy Life, have done much good, notwithſtanding they have been clogged with Opinions of another tendency; it is eaſie to imagine that they would have done much more good, if they had not been checkt by thoſe unſound Principles.

But I ſhall ſay no more of this, (though more might be ſaid) becauſe I hope I may ſay, that moſt of thoſe who have formerly imbibed theſe Opinions, are now come to deliver themſelves with more caution than heretofore. And ſo I ſhall proceed to the laſt thing I propounded to touch upon, and that is, to ſhew,

CHAP. VII.

That the Doctrine of St. Paul, *and of St. James, about Faith and Works, in reference to Juſtification, do not differ, but are wholly one.*

IT is true indeed, though the Doctrine of St. *PAUL*, and St. *JAMES*, was in nothing oppoſite the one to the other, yet the nature of the ſubject-matter of their Epiſtles, did differ, juſt as the Errors they engaged againſt, did differ. The Errors of the unbelieving *Jews* conſiſting much in denying Juſtification to be by Chriſt, and Faith in him, and in placing it in their own Works of Circumciſing, Sacrificing, and other *Moſaical* Obſervations. And St. *Paul*, deſigning in ſome of his Epiſtles, to antidote the Chriſtians againſt the Infection of them, and to eſtabliſh them in the ſaving Doctrine of the Goſpel, was led of courſe to bend his Diſcourſe in great part againſt Juſtification by Works of the Law; and on the contrary, to aſſert it to be by Faith in Chriſt, in his Death, and in his Doctrine, without thoſe Works. Whereas St. *James* having to do in his Epiſtle, with ſuch as profeſſed the Chriſtian Faith and Juſtification by it, but erring dangerouſly about the nature of Faith, as juſtifying, thinking that opinionative Faith would ſave them, though deſtitute of a real change in the moral frame and conſtitution of their Souls, and of a holy Life: Hereupon it became in a manner as neceſſary for him to plead the Renovation of Man's Nature, and Evangelical Obedience to be ſome way neceſſary unto Juſtification, as it was for St. *Paul* to contend for Juſtification by Faith, without the deeds of the Law. And therefore, though their Doctrines in this reſpect did in great part differ, yet they did not differ as Truth differs from Error, nor as oppoſites, but only as one Truth differs from another. For otherwiſe, when St. *Paul* had to do with the like Erroneous and Scandalous Chriſtians, as thoſe were which St. *James* expoſtulated the matter with: When he had to do with ſuch as had a form of Godlineſs, but denyed the power thereof, he could, and did decry a reprobate Faith, and plead the neceſſity of a *Faith* that is *unfeighned*, and of a holy Life, as well as St. *James*; as appears in part by what was ſaid in the former Chapter, and will, I doubt not, be made ſufficiently evident in this. In order whereto, I ſhall recommend to conſideration theſe ten things.

1. That Works of Evangelical Obedience, are never in Scripture oppoſed to God's Grace.

2. That St. *Paul*, in ſpeaking againſt Juſtification by Works, gives ſufficient Caution not to be underſtood thereby to ſpeak any thing againſt Evangelical Obedience in reference thereto.

3. That Regeneration, or the New Creature, as including Evangelical Obedience, is oppoſed to Works in the buſineſs of Man's Juſtification, as well as Faith is, and as well as the Grace of God it ſelf is.

4. That Evangelical Obedience, as well as Faith, and together with Faith, is oppoſed to the Works of the Law, in reference to Juſtification.

5. That Evangelical Obedience alone, is oppoſed to the Works of the Law.

6. Faith it ſelf is an Act of Evangelical Obedience.

7. By Evangelical Obedience, Chriſtians come to have a Right to Salvation.

8. The Promiſe of benefit by the Blood of Chriſt, is made to Evangelical Obedience.

9. Repentance. And 10. Forgiving Injuries, are both Acts of Evangelical Obedience, without which a Man cannot be juſtifyed. And if theſe things be made out, they will (I think) amount to ſuch a demonſtration, as that we cannot well deſire a clearer or fuller proof, that St. *Paul*, together with others the Apoſtles, taught Juſtification by Evangelical Obedience, as the effect of Faith, as well as St. *James*.

1. The Works of Evangelical Obedience, as the effects of Faith, and Regeneration by Faith, are never in St. *Paul*'s Epiſtles, or any other the holy Scriptures, oppoſed to God's Grace, in reference to Juſtification and Salvation. Works and Grace indeed are oppoſed to each other: But then, by Works we are to underſtand either Works antecedent to Converſion, or as they are denied to merit at the hands of God: Or the Works of the Law of *Moſes*, as Erroneouſly contended for by the *Jews*: Or the Works of the Law, as Typical, and as oppoſed to things Typify'd: Or the Works of the Law, as the Law is in its rigour oppoſed to the milder Oeconomy of the Goſpel: But the Works of Evangelical Obedience are never oppoſed to Grace, no more than Faith it ſelf is. And there is no reaſon why they ſhould, becauſe Evangelical Obedience is the effect of Divine Grace, as well as Faith it ſelf is, and tends to the praiſe of it, and is accepted, and will be rewarded through Grace.

Contrary hereunto, thoſe words in *Titus* 3.5. *Not by works of Righteouſneſs which we have done, but according to his mercy he ſaved us*, are wont to be alledged to prove that Works, after Converſion, as well as thoſe before, are oppoſed to the Mercy of God in the ſaving of Men. But whether this be duly collected from theſe words, will beſt appear by opening the ſcope and meaning of the words with the Context. The words in the 3, 4, and 5, Verſes, are theſe; *For we our ſelves alſo were ſometimes fooliſh, ſerving divers luſts and pleaſures, living in malice and envy, hateful, and hating one another. But after that the kindneſs and love of God our Saviour towards Man appeared: Not by Works of Righteouſneſs, which we have done, but according to his mercy he ſaved us by the waſhing of Regeneration, and renewing of the Holy Ghoſt.* By their being Saved here, is meant their being reſcued and delivered from their ſinful ſtate, mentioned *verſ.* 3. In that this is ſaid to be done, not by Works of Righteouſneſs which they had done, but according to God's Mercy: The plain meaning (I doubt not) is, that this change of their condition, and deliverance from their ſinful ſtate, was not effected, or ſo much as begun among them by any Reformation of their own, till the Goſpel came to work it, (which is meant by the appearing of the Kindneſs and Love of God, *verſ.* 4. and is of like import with that Chap. 2. 11, 12.) which God of his Mercy, and not of their Deſert, ſent among them to that end. And if this be the meaning of the words, the Apoſtle was far from intending by Works of Righteouſneſs in this place, Works after Converſion. I might rather well argue on the contrary from this place: That Baptiſm, which is an act of Evangelical Obedience in the Perſon Baptized; and Regeneration, which is Evangelical Obedience in the Root and Principle, are, together with the Mercy of God, and, as ſubordinate to it, oppoſed to the Works of Righteouſneſs here mentioned, in the Work of Salvation. For it is probable, that by the waſhing of Regeneration here, is meant Baptiſm, as the Figure of Regeneration; and by the Renewing of the Holy Ghoſt, Regeneration it ſelf. By both which, as ſubordinate to God's Mercy therein, they were ſaid to be ſaved, and not by the Works of Righteouſneſs, which they had done before theſe. There is another place in 2 *Tim.* 2. 9. which is wont to be urged with this to *Titus*, to the ſame purpoſe: But it being of the ſame nature with this, the ſame Anſwer may ſerve both with a little variation.

2. St. *Paul*, in ſpeaking againſt Juſtification by Works, gives ſufficient caution not to be underſtood thereby to ſpeak againſt Evangelical Obedience in the caſe. When he had aſſerted Juſtification to be by Faith, without the deeds of the Law, and that the *Gentiles* might be Juſtified by Believing, without ever obſerving *Moſes*'s Law, *Rom.* 3. 28. leſt he ſhould be underſtood thereby to favour *Gentiliſm*, or looſe living in Men, provided they would but turn Chriſtians; he frames and anſwers on Objection thus *verſ.* 31. *Do we make void the Law through Faith? God forbid: Yea, we eſtabliſh the Law.* And how did they ſo? Certainly they did not thereby eſtabliſh the Ceremonial Law in the Letter of it, but in the Spirit of it they did, in as much as in Preaching Juſtification in the Goſpel-way, they Preached in plain Precepts the neceſſity of that Spiritual purity unto Salvation, which was but darkly, and in a figure taught by the Ceremonial Law: And this they did, in Preaching the neceſſity of Mortification inſtead of Circumciſion. And by the Doctrine of Juſtification by Faith, they

eſtabliſhed the Moral Law, both in the Letter and Spirit of it, in teaching the neceſſity of Evangelical Obedience to it, after a more ſpiritual and forcible manner than had been taught before. So again, when he had charged the unbelieving *Jews* with a great Error, in going about to eſtabliſh a Righteouſneſs of their own, in oppoſition to God's, in adhering to their Law againſt the Goſpel, *Rom.* 10. 3. to the end it might not be thought that he would take them off their Law, that they might be Lawleſs, or leſs Religious, he adds, *verſ.* 4. that *Chriſt is the end of the Law for Righteouſneſs to every one that believeth.* For ſo he is in his Doctrine, having therein taught that Righteouſneſs of living which the Law it ſelf taught, but in a far more excellent, ſpiritual, and effectual manner, than was taught by the Law. So that all that he deſigned in taking them off from their Law, was but to put them under a better conduct: To make them *dead to the Law, that they might be married to another,* viz. to Chriſt by his Goſpel, that *they might bring forth fruit unto God,* as it is, *Rom.* 7. 4. And likewiſe in *ver.* 6. he ſaith, *We are delivered from the Law,* but not to be Lawleſs, but *that we might ſerve in newneſs of Spirit, and not in the oldneſs of the Letter*; that is, according to the Spirit, Scope, and Deſign of the Law, now expreſſed in plain Precepts, and not in the oldneſs of the Letter and Ceremony. And ſo he ſaith of himſelf, *Gal.* 2. 19. *I through the Law am dead to the Law, i, e,* he through a better underſtanding of God's deſign in the Law, became dead as to all his former expectations of Juſtification by it. But then, if he were dead to the Law, it was, as he ſaith, that he might *live unto God,* live *a life in the fleſh through the Faith in his Son,* through believing his Goſpel in its Precepts and Promiſes; the one directing, and the other quickning unto a moſt excellent Life, *ver.* 20.

And if St. *Paul* were thus careful in denying Juſtification by Works, to aſſert the neceſſity of Evangelical Obedience, we may well conclude that he never intended, under the notion of Works of the Law, to exclude Evangelical Obedience from having any hand ſooner or later in Juſtification.

3. Regeneration, or the New Creature, as including Evangelical Obedience, is oppoſed to Works of the Law, in the buſineſs of Man's Juſtification, as well as Faith is, and as well as the Grace of God it ſelf is. *Gal.* 6. 15. *For in Chriſt Jeſus, neither Circumciſion availeth any thing, nor Uncircumciſion, but a new Creature.* Circumciſion is here as elſewhere by a *Synecdoche,* put for the Works of the Law in general. For there were none that were for Circumciſing, but who were alſo for keeping the Law of *Moſes*: Only Circumciſion is mentioned frequently inſtead of all the reſt, becauſe they held it to be not only a part of the Law, but more; and becauſe they laid the greateſt ſtreſs upon it, as I ſhewed before, *Chap.* 5. Now in that which the Apoſtle denies Circumciſion and the Works of the Law to avail a Man, in that he affirms the becoming a New Creature will avail him, and that was in the buſineſs of Juſtification and Salvation: For in that ſenſe the unbelieving *Jews* and *Judaizers* held Circumciſion and other Works of the Law available. And this New Creature thus oppoſed to Works,

by opening the ſcope and meaning of the words with the Context. The words in the 3, 4, and 5, Verſes, are theſe; *For we our ſelves alſo were ſometimes fooliſh, ſerving divers luſts and pleaſures, living in malice and envy, hateful, and hating one another. But after that the kindneſs and love of God our Saviour towards Man appeared: Not by Works of Righteouſneſs, which we have done, but according to his mercy he ſaved us by the waſhing of Regeneration, and renewing of the Holy Ghoſt.* By their being Saved here, is meant their being reſcued and delivered from their ſinful ſtate, mentioned *verſ.* 3. In that this is ſaid to be done, not by Works of Righteouſneſs which they had done, but according to God's Mercy: The plain meaning (I doubt not) is, that this change of their condition, and deliverance from their ſinful ſtate, was not effected, or ſo much as begun among them by any Reformation of their own, till the Goſpel came to work it, (which is meant by the appearing of the Kindneſs and Love of God, *verſ.* 4. and is of like import with that Chap. 2. 11, 12.) which God of his Mercy, and not of their Deſert, ſent among them to that end. And if this be the meaning of the words, the Apoſtle was far from intending by Works of Righteouſneſs in this place, Works after Converſion. I might rather well argue on the contrary from this place: That Baptiſm, which is an act of Evangelical Obedience in the Perſon Baptized; and Regeneration, which is Evangelical Obedience in the Root and Principle, are, together with the Mercy of God, and, as ſubordinate to it, oppoſed to the Works of Righteouſneſs here mentioned, in the Work of Salvation. For it is probable, that by the waſhing of Regeneration here, is meant Baptiſm, as the Figure of Regeneration; and by the Renewing of the Holy Ghoſt, Regeneration it ſelf. By both which, as ſubordinate to God's Mercy therein, they were ſaid to be ſaved, and not by the Works of Righteouſneſs, which they had done before theſe. There is another place in 2 *Tim.* 2. 9. which is wont to be urged with this to *Titus*, to the ſame purpoſe: But it being of the ſame nature with this, the ſame Anſwer may ſerve both with a little variation.

2. St. *Paul*, in ſpeaking againſt Juſtification by Works, gives ſufficient caution not to be underſtood thereby to ſpeak againſt Evangelical Obedience in the caſe. When he had aſſerted Juſtification to be by Faith, without the deeds of the Law, and that the *Gentiles* might be Juſtified by Believing, without ever obſerving *Moſes's* Law, *Rom.* 3. 28. leſt he ſhould be underſtood thereby to favour *Gentiliſm*, or looſe living in Men, provided they would but turn Chriſtians; he frames and anſwers on Objection thus *verſ.* 31. *Do we make void the Law through Faith? God forbid: Yea, we eſtabliſh the Law.* And how did they ſo? Certainly they did not thereby eſtabliſh the Ceremonial Law in the Letter of it, but in the Spirit of it they did, in as much as in Preaching Juſtification in the Goſpel-way, they Preached in plain Precepts the neceſſity of that Spiritual purity unto Salvation, which was but darkly, and in a figure taught by the Ceremonial Law: And this they did, in Preaching the neceſſity of Mortification inſtead of Circumciſion. And by the Doctrine of Juſtification by Faith, they

eſtabliſhed the Moral Law, both in the Letter and Spirit of it, in teaching the neceſſity of Evangelical Obedience to it, after a more ſpiritual and forcible manner than had been taught before. So again, when he had charged the unbelieving *Jews* with a great Error, in going about to eſtabliſh a Righteouſneſs of their own, in oppoſition to God's, in adhering to their Law againſt the Goſpel, *Rom.* 10. 3. to the end it might not be thought that he would take them off their Law, that they might be Lawleſs, or leſs Religious, he adds, *verſ.* 4. that *Chriſt is the end of the Law for Righteouſneſs to every one that believeth.* For ſo he is in his Doctrine, having therein taught that Righteouſneſs of living which the Law it ſelf taught, but in a far more excellent, ſpiritual, and effectual manner, than was taught by the Law. So that all that he deſigned in taking them off from their Law, was but to put them under a better conduct: To make them *dead to the Law, that they might be married to another,* viz. to Chriſt by his Goſpel, that *they might bring forth fruit unto God,* as it is, *Rom.* 7. 4. And likewiſe in *ver.* 6. he ſaith, *We are delivered from the Law,* but not to be Lawleſs, but *that we might ſerve in newneſs of Spirit, and not in the oldneſs of the Letter*; that is, according to the Spirit, Scope, and Deſign of the Law, now expreſſed in plain Precepts, and not in the oldneſs of the Letter and Ceremony. And ſo he ſaith of himſelf, *Gal.* 2. 19. *I through the Law am dead to the Law, i, e,* he through a better underſtanding of God's deſign in the Law, became dead as to all his former expectations of Juſtification by it. But then, if he were dead to the Law, it was, as he ſaith, that he might *live unto God,* live *a life in the fleſh through the Faith in his Son,* through believing his Goſpel in its Precepts and Promiſes; the one directing, and the other quickning unto a moſt excellent Life, *ver.* 20.

And if St. *Paul* were thus careful in denying Juſtification by Works, to aſſert the neceſſity of Evangelical Obedience, we may well conclude that he never intended, under the notion of Works of the Law, to exclude Evangelical Obedience from having any hand ſooner or later in Juſtification.

3. Regeneration, or the New Creature, as including Evangelical Obedience, is oppoſed to Works of the Law, in the buſineſs of Man's Juſtification, as well as Faith is, and as well as the Grace of God it ſelf is. *Gal.* 6. 15. *For in Chriſt Jeſus, neither Circumciſion availeth any thing, nor Uncircumciſion, but a new Creature.* Circumciſion is here as elſewhere by a *Synecdoche*, put for the Works of the Law in general. For there were none that were for Circumciſing, but who were alſo for keeping the Law of *Moſes*: Only Circumciſion is mentioned frequently inſtead of all the reſt, becauſe they held it to be not only a part of the Law, but more; and becauſe they laid the greateſt ſtreſs upon it, as I ſhewed before, *Chap.* 5. Now in that which the Apoſtle denies Circumciſion and the Works of the Law to avail a Man, in that he affirms the becoming a New Creature will avail him, and that was in the buſineſs of Juſtification and Salvation: For in that ſenſe the unbelieving *Jews* and *Judaizers* held Circumciſion and other Works of the Law available. And this New Creature thus oppoſed to Works,

and thus available to Juſtification, conſiſteth in a new frame of Spirit, and the Vital Operations thereof, and which we can have no right notion of, without Evangelical Obedience in will and reſolution at leaſt (which are really inward acts of that Obedience, and are a conformity of the renewed Will to the Divine Law).

4. Evangelical Obedience, as well as Faith, and together with Faith, is oppoſed to the Works of the Law in reference to Juſtification and Salvation. *Gal .5. 6. For in Chriſt Jeſus, neither Circumciſion availeth any thing, nor Uncircumciſion, but Faith which worketh by love.* Here again Circumciſion, by the ſame Figure, and for the ſame reaſon as before, is put for the Works of *Moſes*'s Law. And as theſe are denied to avail any Man to Juſtification and Salvation, ſo on the other hand it is affirmed, that that Faith which worketh by Love doth avail to theſe great ends. For to ſay that Faith which worketh by Love doth ſo, is the ſame in ſenſe, as to ſay, that Faith which worketh by fulfilling the Law, and by keeping the Commandments, doth ſo avail: For ſo Love is ſaid to be, *Rom.* 13. 10. 1 *Joh.* 5. 3. The Aſſemblies *Annotations* upon the place give notice, that the Word here tranſlated [*Worketh*] (Faith which worketh by Love) being in the mean, or middle voice, may be taken either Actively or Paſſively. And ſeveral other Learned Men (among whom Dr. *Hammond* is one) do render and underſtand it paſſively; as if the Apoſtle ſhould have ſaid, Faith which is *wrought*, or *perfected*, or *conſummate* by Love, and ſo make it directly parallel with that in St. *James*, Chap. 2. 22. *By Works was Faith made perfect.* So far is the Scripture we ſee from oppoſing acts of Evangelical Obedience to Faith in the Works of Juſtification, as that it conjoyns them with Faith in the title to it, and in oppoſition to falſe pretentions to it.

5. Evangelical Obedience alone is oppoſed to the Works of the Law in reference to Juſtification; ſo far is it from being true, that where the Works of the Law are excluded, there Evangelical Obedience is excluded from having any ſhare in the Work of Juſtification. 1 *Cor.* 7. 19. *Circumciſion is nothing, and Uncircumciſion is nothing, but the keeping of the Commandments of God.* Circumciſion is here again, as before, put for the whole Law: And indeed, he that was Circumciſed, was bound to keep the whole Law, as this Apoſtle noteth in *Gal.* 5. 3. And when he ſaith Circumciſion is nothing, he means here doubtleſs, as in thoſe other places already opened, that it avails nothing to any Mans acceptation with God, or to his Juſtification and Salvation, as the *Juduizers* of thoſe Times thought it did. But then the keeping of the Commandments of God will avail to theſe ends: For that I conceive was intended, and ought to be underſtood by the oppoſition that is made between Circumciſion and keeping the Commandments.

6. Faith it ſelf is an act of Evangelical Obedience; this as well as Love is an act of Conformity to our Lord's Commands; and therefore a Man cannot be juſtified by Faith, but in being ſo, he muſt be juſtified by Evangelical Obedience. 1 *John* 3. 23. *This is his Commandments, that we ſhould believe in the Name of his Son Jeſus Chriſt, and love one another, as he gave us Commandment.* This by our Saviour is called a

work, Joh. 6. 29. *This is the work of God, that ye believe on him whom he hath ſent.* And there is ſo much of the nature of Evangelical Obedience in Faith it ſelf, as that to Believe and to Obey are promiſcuouſly put one for another; and ſo is Unbelief and Diſobedience. Accordingly you have in many places the one reading in the Text, and the other in the Margin, as *Acts* 5. 36. *Rom.* 11. 30, 31. *Epheſ.* 5. 6. *Heb.* 4. 11. and 11. 31. And Belief and Diſobedience are in Scripture oppoſed to each other as direct contraries, *Rom.* 10. 16. 1 *Pet.* 2. 7. 2 *Theſ.* 2. 12.

So that ſince Faith is an act of Evangelical Obedience, it follows that to ſay the Works of Evangelical Obedience do juſtifie, does no more derogate from the Grace of God, or the freeneſs of his Grace in juſtiying, than to ſay Faith juſtifies. Firſt, Becauſe other acts of Evangelical Obedience are the effects of God's Grace, and produced by it, as well as Faith. *It is God that worketh in you both to will and to do of his good pleaſure*, Phil. 2. 13. And ſecondly, Becauſe it is meerly of the Law of Grace, that Faith and other Acts of Evangelical Obedience, are made the condition of the Promiſe of Salvation. *Epheſ.* 2. 8. *By grace are ye ſaved, through Faith in Chriſt Jeſus; and that not of your ſelves, it is the gift of God.* As Men do not Believe or Obey of themſelves without ſupernatural Aſſiſtance, ſo neither is it of themſelves that they are Juſtified or Saved upon their Believing, but both the one and the other, is the Gift of God. *It is not of him that willeth, nor of him that runneth, but of God that ſheweth mercy.* It is by virtue of God's New Covenant, that a promiſe of Pardon is made to Repentance, or to Faith; for the primary Law, the Law of Nature, promiſed no ſuch thing upon Repentance. And it is by virtue of the ſame Law of Grace, that a Promiſe of Juſtification and Reward is made to ſincere Obedience in other Acts of Obedience, as well as thoſe of Faith and Repentance.

That which hath made many afraid of intereſſing Evangelical Obedience with Faith, in juſtifying Men, hath been an Opinion, that ſo to do would derogate from God's Grace, and attribute too much to Man: But you ſee there is no ground for ſuch an Opinion. It's true indeed, the proper merit of Works, and God's Grace are inconſiſtent: And therefore are oppoſed to each other in Scripture. But Evangelical Obedience, and Grace, are no more oppoſite or inconſiſtent, than Cauſe and Effect, or than Cauſes principal and ſubordinate. And as it doth not follow, that becauſe we are juſtified freely by God's Grace, that therefore we are not juſtified by Faith: So neither doth it follow, that becauſe we are juſtified by Faith, that therefore we are not juſtified by ſincere Obedience. For theſe and the Blood of Chriſt, do all concur in producing many of the ſame Effects, though not in the ſame reſpect.

7. By Evangelical Obedience, Chriſtians come to have a right to Salvation. *Revel.* 22. 14. *Bleſſed are they that do his Commandments, that they may have a right to the Tree of Life, and may enter in through the gates into the City.* This is left on Record as a ſpecial *Memorandum* for Chriſtians in cloſing up the Canon of the New Teſtament; and

therefore is to be taken ſpecial notice of. This right to the Tree of Life, and of entring into this bleſſed City upon keeping the Commandments, is from a New Covenant, or Law, Act, or Grant from God: For otherwiſe Man that had tranſgreſſed the firſt Law he was put under, would have been far from having any right to ſuch Happineſs upon the terms here mentioned, *viz.* of ſincere, though imperfect Obedience. But ſeeing that a Right to *Salvation* doth accrue to Men upon a ſincere keeping of God's Commandments, notwithſtanding their forfeiture of their firſt Right by Man's firſt Fall, it evidently follows, that Evangelical or Sincere Obedience, is part of the condition of the Promiſe of Bleſſedneſs in the New Law or Covenant, and is here put for the whole of it, as at other times Faith is put for the whole of the Condition. And that *Moſes*, *David*, *Solomon*, *Nehemiah*, and *Daniel* received it in this ſenſe, and underſtood all along that ſincere Obedience flowing from Love, was the condition of God's Covenant of Mercy when they ſtiled him a God keeping Covenant and Mercy with thoſe that Love him, and keep his Commandments, *Deut.* 7. 9. 1 *Kings* 8. 23. *Neh.* 1. 5. *Dan.* 9. 4. I have before ſhewed.

If it ſhall be here ſaid, that ſincere Obedience is indeed a condition of Salvation, but not of Juſtification, and that it is ſo made here in this 22d of the *Revelation*, I have I think ſufficiently anſwered this Objection in the former Chapter; but ſhall here add, That ſuch as thus ſay, are more curious and nice in diſtinguiſhing between Juſtification and Salvation, than St. *Paul* was. For he calls Juſtification, *the Juſtification of Life*, Rom. 5. 18. *Whom he juſtified, them he alſo glorified*, Rom. 8. 30. and proves that Men ſhall be juſtified by Faith, becauſe it is written that *the Juſt ſhall live by Faith*, Gal. 3. 11. Thus with him to be juſtified, and to be bleſſed are all one, *Gal.* 3. 8, 9. *Rom.* 4. 7, 8, 9. And to confirm this Righteouſneſs or Juſtification and Life, are uſed by him as Synonimous terms, *Gal.* 3. 21. *For if there had been a Law given which could have given life, verily Righteouſneſs ſhould have been by the Law.* And Juſtification and Condemnation are but in direct oppoſition to each other, *Rom.* 5. 18. and 8. 33, 34. And to be freed from Condemnation (which is Juſtification) and to be Saved, are as much one, as not to Dye, is to Live. In ſhort, Salvation as well as Juſtification, is promiſed to Believing, *Joh.* 3. 16. *Act.* 3. 31. *Heb.* 10. 39. And therefore Salvation, as well as Juſtification, muſt needs be the immediate effect of Faith; if we take Salvation, as begun here in this Life (as the Scripture repreſents it to be, *Joh.* 5. 24. 1 *Joh.* 3. 14. and 5. 12.) From all which we may conclude, That what is abſolutely neceſſary to Salvation, muſt needs alſo be neceſſary to Juſtification.

Add we hereto, that to be juſtified, and to be ſaved, is the ſame thing with St. *James*, as well as it is with St. *Paul*, according to the tenour of his Reaſoning, *Chap.* 2. from ver. 14. to the end. *What doth it profit my brethren* (ſaith he) *though a man ſay he hath Faith, and have not Works? Can Faith ſave him?* Verſ. 14. This Interrogation implies an Emphatical Negation; and the meaning is, that ſuch a Faith can by no means ſave a Man; and he gives the reaſon of it twice over in *verſ* 17, 20. becauſe Faith without Works is dead. And then afterwards argues the neceſſity of Works, together with Faith, unto Juſtification, or unto Salvation (which was the thing he began with) by God's juſtifying *Abraham* by Works, together with his Faith, who was the great Pattern or Example of God's juſtifying all others. If then to be juſtified, and to be ſaved, amounts to the ſame in St. *James*'s Diſcourſe here, then by the way, they do not rightly underſtand St. *James*, who think he doth not ſpeak of a Juſtification before God in this his Diſcourſe about Juſtification by Works, together with Faith, but of a Juſtification before Men, and to their own Conſcience only. Which ſuppoſition of theirs, doth directly thwart the very ſcope and deſign of his whole Diſcourſe, which is to ſet forth what will, and what will not avail a Chriſtian-Profeſſor in the ſight of God, to the ſaving of his Soul, as abundantly appears. So that *the Scripture which ſaith Abraham believed God, and it was accounted to him for Righteouſneſs*; and which St. *James* ſaith *was fulfilled* in *Abraham*'s being juſtified by Works as well as by Faith, was not fulfilled in *Abraham*'s being juſtified to others, and to his own Conſcience, but in his being juſtified before God; and ſo St. *Paul* underſtood it, *Rom.* 4. 3. *Gal.* 3. 6. But this was touched before in *Chap.* 1.

The reſult then of what hath been argued in Anſwer to the Objection, is this, *viz.* That all that are juſtified, are thereby put regularly into an immediate capacity of Salvation; ſo that if they ſhould dye the very next moment after they are once juſtified, they would undoubtedly be ſaved. And therefore Evangelical Obedience can be no more neceſſary to Salvation, than it is to Juſtification; and it is as neceſſary to the one as to the other. And if to ſay Evangelical Obedience is neceſſary to Juſtification, be injurious to Chriſt, and to the Grace of God, as ſome would pretend, how comes it to paſs then, that to ſay Evangelical Obedience is neceſſary to Salvation, is not ſo too? For our final Salvation is as much the effect of God's Grace, and of Chriſt's Undertaking for us, as our Juſtification it ſelf is, and of as much Value. And therefore if the one be not injurious in this kind, neither is the other.

8. As the Promiſe of forgiveneſs of ſins by the Blood of Chriſt, or the Promiſe of an intereſt in his Blood to the pardon of Sin, is ſometimes made unto Believing; ſo ſometimes again it is made unto Evangelical Obedience, or a holy Life, as in 1 *Joh.* 1. 7. *If we walk in the light, as he is in the light*, (that is, endeavouring to be holy, as God is holy) *then have we fellowſhip one with another, and the Blood of Jeſus Chriſt his Son cleanſeth us from all Sin*; but otherwiſe, it doth not. And ſo the Chriſtians to whom St. *Peter* wrote, were ſaid to be *elect according to the fore-knowledge of God the Father, through Sanctification of the Spirit, unto obedience, and ſprinkling of the Blood of Jeſus Chriſt*, 1 *Pet.* 1. 2. But they were not elect to the benefit of being ſprinkled with the Blood of Chriſt without Obedience. And therefore by this

we ſee alſo, that Evangelical Obedience is part of the Condition of the Promiſe of Juſtification by the Blood of Chriſt.

9. To forgive Injuries is an act of Evangelical Obedience to that Precept of our Lord, *Mar.* 11. 25. And yet without this act of Obedience, Men that have been injured, cannot be juſtified, becauſe they cannot be pardoned, according to the Word of our Lord, *Mark* 11. 26. *Mat.* 6. 15. and 18. 35. Therefore Evangelical Obedience muſt needs be part of the Condition of Juſtification.

10. Repentance is an eminent Act of Evangelical Obedience, *Acts* 17. 30. and yet pardon of ſin, which is eſſential to Juſtification, is not to be obtained without it, *Luke* 13. 3, 5. Therefore again it follows, that Evangelical Obedience is neceſſary to Juſtification, and part of the Condition of it.

And now by this time I ſuppoſe it fully appears to any unprejudiced Reader, that the Doctrine of St. *Paul*, yea, and of St. *Peter* and *John* too, do fully accord with the Doctrine of St. *James*, touching the neceſſity of Evangelical Obedience unto Juſtification. The oppoſition then which ſome have made between Faith and all Internal and External Works in reference to Juſtification, as well Evangelical, as *Moſaical*, hath not been only *without* Scripture-ground, but *againſt* Scripture-evidence; and looks more like that which was made by the *Gnoſticks*, or other *Solifidians*, oppoſed by St. *James*, (if it be not the very ſame) than any the Scripture any where maketh. And how much injury the Chriſtian Religion and the Souls of Men may have ſuffered thereby, is a thing to be thought on, and ſadly laid to Heart.

It is a pleaſant Doctrine, and the worſt of Men called Chriſtians are glad to hear that they may be juſtify'd by Chriſt, only upon their Believing in him, without any Works of Righteouſneſs or Self-denial of their own. And upon that account (preſuming verily that they do Believe) they are confident that they are juſtify'd, though they are unſanctify'd. But thoſe eſpecially are in great danger of deceiving their own Souls, by building their Confidence upon this Doctrine, who, together with this Belief, have more of the form of Godlineſs than the other have, and are found much more in the uſe and exerciſe of the external Devotional part of Religion, and are zealous for this or that Opinion, Party, or Way, which they think moſt Orthodox; though they be greatly deſtitute of Love to the Nature of God, and of Humility, Charity, ſtrict Juſtice, Fidelity, Peaceableneſs, Sobriety, Temperance, Modeſty, and Meekneſs, and of that renewed frame of Soul which would make them like Chriſt Jeſus, wherein the power of Chriſtianity doth conſiſt: The external Duties of Hearing, Reading, Praying, and the reſt, being in great part but means referring to the other as the end. So that no Man is to account himſelf truly Religious, further than he attains to theſe truly Chriſtian Qualifications, by the uſe of the External Means, and Internal Aids. Yea, the fleſhly part even in Men good in the main, is very apt to make an advantage of ſuch a Doctrine as aforeſaid, to the leſſening of their Care, Diligence, and Zeal, in working out their Salvation, in ſtriving to enter in at the ſtraight Gate, in governing their own Spirits and Appetites, in cleanſing themſelves from all filthineſs of Fleſh and Spirit, and in perfecting holineſs in the fear of God.

And therefore there is great need for thoſe that are Spiritual Guides to the People, to inſiſt much upon the neceſſity of Repentance, Regeneration, and a holy Life, as well as Faith, in order to their being juſtified and ſaved by Chriſt Jeſus. For the People, yea, the better ſort of them, ſtand moſt in need, as of being well-grounded touching the Truth of the Chriſtian Religion, ſo eſpecially of having the Doctrines of Morality inculcated upon them, the Precepts of the Goſpel being almoſt all of that Nature, (thought ſome ſpeak diminutively of moral Preaching) and tend to the perfecting of the Nature of Man, in regulating the Internal Operations of the Soul, and the External Actions of Life, in reference both to God and Man, our Selves and Others: The recovering of Men to which, is God's great Deſign by the Goſpel, in order to their being made perfectly Happy at laſt, as I have ſhewed in Chap. 1.

There is indeed an abſolute neceſſity of Believing the Goſpel in order to Chriſtian Practice: And therefore our bleſſed Saviour did not only Preach the neceſſity of Faith in him and his Doctrine, but alſo wrought abundance of Miracles to beget this Faith in Men. And yet he knowing the great danger of Men's miſcarrying in point of Morality in the diſpoſition of Soul and actions of Life, inſiſted chiefly in his Preaching, upon Doctrines of that nature; as you may ſee in his Sermon on the Mount, and elſewhere. He taught the neceſſity of being *born again*: *Of making the Tree good, that the Fruit might be good.* And to inforce this Doctrine of his, he was not wont to tell his Auditors that every Man ſhall be Rewarded according to his Belief, but that *when the Son of Man ſhall come, every Man ſhall be rewarded according to his Works*: That *thoſe that have done good, ſhall come forth to the reſurrection of life; and thoſe that have done evil, to the reſurrection of damnation*: That *by their words they ſhall be juſtified* (which are no more Faith than Works are) and *by Their words they ſhall be condemned*: That in the Great Day of the Tryal of all Nations, every Man ſhall be Acquitted or Condemned, according to the Good they have done, or neglected to do, *Mat.* 25 And that then not every Man that had Faith enough to *Cry, Lord, Lord*, or, *to Propheſie, caſt out Devils, or do wonders in his Name, ſhall enter into the Kingdom of Heaven*, but ſuch and ſuch only *as have done the will of his Father.*

Great need there is therefore of Peoples examining themſelves impartially, and of being often admoniſhed to take heed, leſt they miſtake and deceive themſelves in the nature of Religion, and in what is abſolutely neceſſary to be done on their part; becauſe Men are very apt to flatter and deceive themſelves in that, and to think that when their Faith is right in the object of it [as when they believe in the true God, and in his Son Jeſus Chriſt, and expect Salvation by him alone] that then they are true Believers, and ſuch as ſhall be ſaved; eſpecially if therewith they joyn the frequenting of God's Ordinances, and the paring off of ſome of the groſſer Enormities of their Lives, though in the mean while they make no Conſcience of cleanſing their Hearts, and governing their Spirits, of ſubduing their Paſſions and inordinate Affections, and of bridling the Tongue. For this cauſe it is that Chriſtians are ſo often in Scripture cautioned to take heed leſt they ſhould be deceived. *Be not deceived, God is not mocked: For whatſoever a Man ſows, that alſo ſhall he reap,* Gal. 6. 7, 8. *Little Children, let no Man deceive you: He that doth Righteouſneſs, is Righteous, even as he is Righteous,* 1 Joh. 3. 7. 1 Cor. 6. 9. Epheſ. 5. 6.

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FINIS.

A
DISCOURSE
ON
FAITH.

MEN's Eternal Eſtate of Weal or Wo in another World, and their Peace and Comfort in this, being very much concerned in their right underſtanding, or miſtaking the nature and difference of that Faith which is Saving, and of that which is not; I ſhall here ſtate the nature and difference of thoſe two kinds of Faith, with what brevity and perſpicuity I can. I cannot (I confeſs) think that the nature of Faith, which is of abſolute neceſſity to the Salvation of the meaneſt Chriſtian, is in it ſelf hard to be underſtood, were it not that the many Controverſies about it, about its Object, and the Acts of the Soul neceſſary to it, had puzzled Mens Minds, and diſtracted their Apprehenſions concerning it.

Things abſolutely neceſſary to Salvation, as they are not many, ſo there are hardly any Doctrines delivered with more plainneſs than they, that the Weak who are as much concerned in them as the Strong, might competently underſtand them as well as they.

Men may multiply Notions about Faith, as the Scripture uſeth various expreſſions about it: But I doubt not but that the general ſenſe of the Scripture hereabout may be ſummarily expreſſed in this plain Propoſition: That ſaving Faith is ſuch a Belief of Chriſt to be the Son of God, and of the truth of his Doctrine, eſpecially touching the virtue of his Death and Reſurrection, and the neceſſity of amendment of Life, for the obtaining Remiſſion of Sin, and Eternal Life, as cauſeth a Man to deny all Ungodlineſs and Worldly Luſts, and to Live a Godly, Righteous, and a Sober Life.

This is ſo plain in Scripture, as that there is no Chriſtian ſo weak but may eaſily come to underſtand it; and ſo evident, that none who acknowledge the Truth of the Goſpel, can deny it. That I may ſtate the difference then between Effectual and Ineffectual Faith, and matters relating to them, with all the plainneſs I can, I ſhall very briefly endeavour theſe five things.

I. *To open the comprehenſive Nature of Faith.*

II. *Shew wherein the defect lies of that Faith which is not ſaving.*

III. *Shew whence that defect proceeds.*

IV. *How, and after what manner, Faith in the Underſtanding, works ſavingly upon the Will.*

V. *Anſwer ſome few Objections.*

CHAP. I.

I. *The Comprehenſive Nature of ſaving Faith opened.*

THat I may open the comprehenſive Nature of Faith the better, I ſhall firſt obſerve, how variouſly the Condition, upon which ſaving Benefits are promiſed, is expreſſed in Scripture, and then what actings of the Soul are thereby ſignified.

It is thus variouſly expreſſed in Scripture: Sometimes it's called a believing God, *Rom.* 4. 3. *Gal.* 3. 6. a believing in God, 1 *Pet.* 1. 21. a believing on God, *Rom.* 4. 24. a believing the Record which God hath given of his Son, 1 *Joh.* 5. 10. Sometimes it's called a believing on Chriſt, *Joh.* 3. 16, 36. *Acts* 16. 31. a believing him to be the Chriſt the Son of God, *Joh* 20. 31. 1 *Joh.* 5. 5. It's called Faith in his Blood, *Rom.* 3. 25. a believing that God raiſed him from the dead, *Rom.* 10. 9. Sometimes it's called a believing of the Goſpel, *Mar.* 16. 15, 16. a believing of the Truth, 2 *Theſ.* 2. 15. a believing the teſtimony of the Apoſtles, 2 *Theſ.* 1. 10. Sometimes it is expreſſed under the Notion of Repentance, *Acts* 2. 38. and 3. 19. and 11. 18. 2 *Cor.* 7. 10. and ſometimes of Obedience, 1 *John* 1. 7. *Pet.* 1. 2. *Heb.* 5. 9.

The Condition of the Promiſe of ſaving Benefits being thus variouſly expreſſed, can ſignifie no leſs than a three-fold Act of the Soul: The firſt, being the Act of the Underſtanding: The ſecond, of the Will: The third, of the Underſtanding and Will conjunct.

1. Such expreſſions of the Condition of the Promiſe as is the believing in God, the believing his Record, the believing the Goſpel the believing Chriſt to be the Son of God, do moſt properly ſignifie the Act of the Mind or Underſtanding, in *Aſſenting* to the truth of what God teſtifieth, or promiſeth. Which aſſent is grounded upon a knowledge, or belief of God's Veracity, his Truth, and Faithfulneſs, armed with All-ſufficiency of Power, Wiſdom, and Goodneſs, to make good his Word to a tittle. And although ſuch expreſſions as aforeſaid, do moſt properly ſignifie the act of the Underſtanding, yet whenever ſaving Benefits are promiſed, and the Condition expreſſed in ſuch a form of Words as doth moſt properly and primarily ſignifie the *Aſſent* of the Mind, even then the act of the Will in *Conſenting* to the Condition, is implyed, and ought to be underſtood; as I ſhall fully prove in the next Particular.

And the reaſon why the whole of the Promiſe relating to the Conſent of the Will, as well as the Aſſent of the Underſtanding, is frequently expreſſed in ſuch a form of words, as primarily and ſtrictly ſignifie the Aſſent of the Mind, is, I conceive, becauſe ſuch *Aſſent* of the Mind, is the Principle from which all concurrent acts of the Will neceſſary to Juſtification and Salvation do proceed.

And it is of frequent uſe in Scripture, to denominate the whole of Religion, by ſome one Principal part, which is a fruitful Principle of all the reſt.

Thus the Knowledge of the true God, and of Jeſus Chriſt whom he hath ſent, is ſaid to be Eternal Life, *Joh.* 17. 3. And thus ſome times the Fear of God, and ſometimes the Love of God, is put for the whole of Mens ſaving Religiouſneſs, and the ſame Promiſe of Bleſſedneſs made to one of theſe ſingly expreſt, is to be extended to the whole.

In like manner, the whole of Chriſtianity, is frequently denominated by *Faith*, and the Chriſtians ſtiled *Believers*, and the *Houſhold of Faith*, and the like; and all becauſe that Chriſtian Life of theirs, by which they differ from other Men, flows from their Faith, which is the firſt active Principle of it.

2. Another act of the Soul eſſentially neceſſary to that Faith which is the Condition of the Promiſe, is the *Conſent* of the Will to Repent, to receive Chriſt as Lord and King, to be governed by his Laws as well as to own him for a Prieſt once Offering himſelf, and ever making Interceſſion for us.

For the Condition of the Promiſe of Pardon and Salvation, is expreſſed under the notion of *Repentance*, and ſometimes of *Obedience*, as I ſhewed before: And Repentance and Obedience are acts of the Will as renewed.

And that there is no Promiſe of ſaving Benefits upon meer Believing, without obſerving that part of the Condition which conſiſteth in Repentance, Regeneration, and Obedience, is moſt evident: Becauſe they are expreſly excluded in Scripture from having any ſhare in the ſaving Benefits of the Covenant, Juſtification, or Salvation, who do not Repent, *Luke* 13. 3. who are not Regenerate, *Joh.* 3. 5. who Love not the Lord Jeſus Chriſt, and that above any Worldly Enjoyment 1 *Cor.* 16. 22. *Matth.* 10. 37: and who do not Obey him, *Acts* 3. 22, 23. *Luke* 19. 27. 2 *Theſ.* 1. 7: By all which we may certainly know, that whenever there is Promiſe of Juſtification and Salvation made to Believing, it is to be underſtood of ſuch a Believing as doth at that inſtant in which a Man Believes, ſavingly produce a ſincere Conſent of the Will to Repent, to Love Chriſt, and to Obey him: For otherwiſe thoſe Scriptures, and theſe would be inconſiſtent.

For if Men cannot be Pardoned, nor delivered from the Curſe, nor be ſafe from Deſtruction, until they have Repented, are Regenerate, do love Chriſt, and Obey the Goſpel, as the forecited Scriptures do aſſure us they cannot; then no Faith whatſoever is juſtifying, or can entitle them to Pardon and Salvation according to the Tenour of God's Promiſe, until it hath produced that Repentance, Regeneration, Love, and Obedience: Which is a full and an undeniable proof of the neceſſity of ſuch a conſent of the Will as aforeſaid, to render Faith juſtifying and ſaving.

Now this Conſent and reſolution of the Will to Repent and Obey Chriſt, and to forſake all for him, is the Moral Change of the Soul, and the New Life in its firſt beginning. And ſo a Man's firſt effectual Belief, is his whole Chriſtian Life in its beginning. And a Man's firſt Faith is perfected afterwards by Works, (*Jam.* 2. 22.) as a Child is perfected in his manly ſtate, as he grows up to manly actions; or as the Seed is perfected when it grows to a full Ear.

By this firſt Conſent of the Will, we reſtipulate and ſtrike Covenant with God; and not only ſo, but we hereby begin alſo to keep and perform Covenant with him on our part. When this Conſent is firſt wrought in the Will, then the Laws of the new Covenant are firſt put into the Mind and written in the Heart: And by this we firſt begin to become ſavingly a People unto God, to Believe in him, to Love and Serve him, as he by Covenant and Promiſe becomes a God unto us, to make us Happy. *Heb.* 8. 10. *This is the Covenant that I will make, I will put my Laws into their mind, and write them in their hearts; and I will be to them a God, and they ſhall be to me a People.*

3. The other act of the Soul, which I call the act of the Underſtanding and of the VVill conjunct, is an *Affiance* in God through Chriſt; a truſting in him, or a relying on him for the fulfilling of his Promiſe of ſaving Benefits, while we continue ſincerely to Conſent, reſolve and endeavour to perform the Condition on our part.

This is that, or part of that, which is called a Believing *on God*, a Believing *on Chriſt*, and a *Truſting in him*: Noting the Souls dependence upon Chriſt for the ſaving Benefits which accrue to Men by his Mediation, Office, and Undertaking, and on the Truth and Faithfulneſs, Power, VViſdom, and Goodneſs of God, to perform all that he hath promiſed them through his Son, and upon the terms he hath promiſed, and not otherwiſe.

For the Promiſe of ſaving Benefits being made but upon the Condition before-mentioned, a true Believer, or he that is Rational and VViſe, Wiſe, conſiders as well upon what terms the Benefits are promiſed, as who hath promiſed them, and what they are; and expects the one no otherwiſe than as he ſincerely reſolves and endeavours to perform the other.

And therefore, if any ſhall Rely on God and Chriſt for thoſe Benefits, in whom yet the qualifying Condition of the Promiſe of them is not found; ſuch a Reliance is but a groundleſs Preſumption, and not Faith or Affiance duly ſo called. For ſuch do not only rely on Chriſt for that for which they have no promiſe, but for that which God hath expreſly declared they ſhall have no ſhare in whilſt they remain deſtitute of that qualification, which is the Condition upon which, and not without it, the promiſe of thoſe Benefits is made.

Theſe three acts of the Soul exerciſed on their Objects, do make up that Faith which is juſtifying and ſaving. And when juſtifying Faith in the compleat nature of it is ſpoken of in Scripture, all theſe three acts of the Soul are to be underſtood, and eſpecially the two firſt; though perhaps they are many times mentioned ſeverally and apart; Faith being deſcribed ſometimes by one of them, and ſometimes by another: As God himſelf is repreſented to us, ſometimes by one Attribute, ſometimes by another.

CHAP. II.

Wherein the Defect lies of that Faith which is not ſaving.

BY what hath been diſcourſed touching the nature of that Faith which is ſaving, it is eaſie to diſcern wherein the defect lies of that Faith which is not ſo.

And the defect lies chiefly in the Will, in its not Conſenting to perform the Condition of the Promiſe, in Repenting, and in receiving Chriſt as Lord, to be governed by his Laws.

I will not deny but the defect in part may be in the Underſtanding, when its Aſſent unto the Truth of Divine Revelation is ſo weak, as that it can make but a too weak and faint impreſſion upon the Will, to procure its Conſent unto the Condition of the Promiſe.

But then that defect in the Aſſent of the Underſtanding, doth uſually, at leaſt in great part, proceed from the Will; as I ſhall ſhew afterwards. Now, that the defect lies mainly in the Will's not Conſenting to the Condition of the Promiſe, appears by this; becauſe unregenerate Men may aſſent unto the truth of God's Teſtimony, and may truſt that they ſhall be ſaved by Chriſt, (which contain the other two acts of the Soul) but no Man truly conſents to perform the Condition of the Promiſe, but in doing ſo, he is Regenerate in the firſt Act, and Juſtified.

1. Unregenerate Men may have the ſame Faith of Aſſent in the Underſtanding to a degree, as the Regenerate may: They may believe God to be the Father Almighty, Maker of Heaven and Earth, and Jeſus Chriſt to be his only Son, and the reſt of the Articles of the Creed; and they may believe in great part that to be their Duty both towards God, and Man, which is ſo indeed, and yet hold that Truth in unrighteouſneſs, which they do believe. *Rom.* 1. 18. *Many of the chief Rulers believed on Chriſt*, who yet *loved the Praiſe of Men, more than the praiſe of God*, and durſt *not confeſs him*, Joh. 12. 42, 43. As alſo did many others when they ſaw his Maricles, who yet were ſuch as Chriſt had no mind to commit himſelf to, *Joh.* 2. 23, 24. And *Simon Magus believed, wondering, and being aſtoniſhed at the ſigns which were done by Philip*, who yet remained in the *bond of iniquity*, Acts 8. Such as are reſembled by the ſtony Ground, believed, who yet loved their eaſe, and worldly Intereſt more than Chriſt; and thoſe that St. *James* expoſtulates with, *Chap.* 2. were thus far Believers alſo.

2. Excepting the Conſent of the Will to the Condition of the Promiſe, Unregenerate Men may hope to be ſaved by Chriſt, and rely on him for Salvation as well as the Regenerate: Only for want of their performing the Condition of the Promiſe, their hopes and confidence are groundleſs, and will deceive them. But otherwiſe, Men that are but carnal, and live in ſome known ſin, may, and oftentimes do perſwade themſelves that they ſhall be ſaved by Chriſt Jeſus, becauſe they believe that he died for Sinners, and becauſe they ask God forgiveneſs, and perform ſome acts of Religion.

Our Saviour ſaith, *Many will ſay unto me in that day, Lord, Lord, open unto us: Have we not propheſied in thy Name, and in thy Name have caſt out Devils, and done many wonderful works? We have eaten and drunk in thy preſence, and thou haſt taught in our ſtreets.* To whom he will ſay for all that, *Depart from me, ye workers of iniquity*, Matth. 7. 22, 23. Luke 13. 25, 26. Theſe had ſome kind of Faith in Chriſt, by which they Propheſied in his Name, and caſt out Devils, and did many wonderful Works. They were ſuch as were Hearers of his Word and Preachers of it too, and had eaten and drunk in his Preſence. And becauſe of this Faith, and theſe Works, they had a Hope and Confidence that Chriſt would open unto them, and receive them into his Kingdom, and would not be eaſily beaten off from this Confidence.

But the true reaſon why their Faith will ſtand them in no ſtead, nor their Religious performances neither, is, becauſe for all that, they were workers of Iniquity; they never heartily conſented to the Terms of the Promiſe of Salvation by Chriſt in Repenting: They did not firſt heartily reſolve, and after ſincerely endeavour to turn from every known Sin, unto every known Duty. And in this very thing doth the defect of that Faith lie which is ſhort of ſaving.

VVhich will yet farther appear, in that St. *James*, when he would ſtate the difference between that Faith which is ſaving, and that which is not, fixeth it here.

The dead Faith is denominated ſuch by him, from its being alone without VVorks, *Jam.* 2. 17. *Even ſo Faith, if it hath not Works, is dead, being alone, or by it ſelf.* And again, *verſ.* 20. *But wilt thou know, O vain Man, that Faith without Works is dead.* And again, *ver.* 26. *For as the body without the Spirit is dead,* ſo *Faith without Works is dead alſo.* Meaning by its being dead, that it avails a Man no more to his Juſtification and Salvation, than a dead Corps avails to the producing the uſeful and ſerviceable effects of a Living Man; or than a Tree that is dead, avails to the bringing forth Fruit; or than a few good words, *Depart in peace, be ye filled and warmed,* will avail poor people, *when nothing is given which is needful to the body,* ver. 15, 16, 17.

In all this I do not deny, but that there may be in ſuch as do not ſavingly believe, ſome Conſent of the Will to do ſomething towards performing the Condition of the Promiſe, in Repenting and Obeying. Such Men may Conſent and reſolve to forſake ſome ſins, and to do ſome, yea many Duties, who yet never ſavingly conſent, becauſe they do not heartily conſent and reſolve to forſake [All] known ſin, and to do [All] known duties; in which the ſincerity of Repentance and Obedience doth conſiſt, to which the Promiſe is made. Such Men may not be far from the Kingdom of God, but yet muſt go farther, if ever they would have any good ground of hope to enter into it: But of this more afterwards.

CHAP. III.

Whence this defect doth proceed.

I Have ſhewed before, that there is the Faith of aſſent in the Underſtanding unto the truth of God's Teſtimony, in ſome unregenerate Men, as well as in the regenerate. And in whomſoever the Faith of *Conſent* in the Will to perform the Condition of the Promiſe is found, it always proceeds from the Faith of *Aſſent* in the Underſtanding. A Man always (in order of Nature at leaſt) believes that the promiſed Benefits ſhall be made good to him, in caſe he perform the Condition, before he Conſents to perform it; and doth conſent to perform the Condition in hope and confidence of obtaining the promiſed Benefits.

Now then the Queſtion is, whence is it, and what is the reaſon, that the Faith of Aſſent in the Underſtanding doth not always produce the ſame Conſent in the Will in one, as well as another; and as it always doth, when it becomes effectual to Juſtification and Salvation? Why doth this Faith remain alone in ſome, when as it is accompanied with Works in others?

I ſhall offer what I conceive to be the reaſon of this; Firſt, in general, and than more particularly.

The difference ſometimes may proceed from the different meaſures and degrees of the evidence upon which the ſame Truth is believed. One Man may have a clearer diſcerning of the evidence than another, which cauſeth a ſtronger Aſſent in the diſcerning faculty, and that ſtronger Aſſent in the Underſtanding, may well cauſe a ſtronger, Conſent in the Will, and a firm and laſting reſolution. As on the contrary a weak and partial Conſent and reſolution in the Will to the Condition, ſometimes proceeds from a weak Aſſent in the Mind, to the Truth of God's Teſtimony, or Promiſe, and that from the weakneſs of the faculty in the diſcerning the evidence of that Truth which is the object of Faith.

But the reaſon moſt commonly why the *Aſſent* in the Underſtanding unto the Truth of God's Teſtimony doth not work a *Conſent* in the Will to the Condition of the Promiſe, is to be taken, I conceive, from the oppoſition which the lower faculties of the Soul, the Will and Affections, aſſiſted and influenced by the ſenſual Appetites, make againſt the ſuperiour Faculty, the Mind, or Underſtanding; ſo that they do not hearken to its Notices, nor obey its Dictates. The Will, which is the Spring of Action, is a middle Faculty, between the Underſtanding and the ſenſitive Affections or Appetites, and is ſolicited by both.

As the Underſtanding calls upon it to obey its rational Dictates in chuſing the means which tend to the beſt end, both which the Underſtanding repreſents to it from the Word of God; ſo on the other hand, the ſenſitive Affections ſolicite it to be on their ſide, and to be active in making proviſion for the Fleſh, in chuſing ſuch things as tend to ſatisfie its Cravings and Luſts. And becauſe the Will hath uſually been pre-ingaged to the Fleſh, and had a ſhare in its Gratifications, it's not without much difficulty prevailed with to be conſenting to, and active in the *crucifixion of thoſe Affections and Luſts.* Which until the Will do, and herein obey the enlightned Underſtanding, the Faith of *Aſſent* in the Underſtanding abideth alone. The Will's obſtinate adherence then to Mens fleſhly Luſts, and carnal Intereſts, in oppoſition to that belief in the Underſtanding which puts it upon deſtroying them, as abſolutely neceſſary to the Man's Salvation, as believing God touching the neceſſity of this as a means, as well as it doth believe him touching the bleſſedneſs of the end; this obſtinate oppoſition in the Will, I ſay, is the true reaſon why the Faith which is in ſome Men, is but a dead Faith. *How can ye believe* (ſaith our Saviour) *which ſeek honour one of another, and ſeek not the honour that cometh from God only?* Joh. 5. 44. Yes, ſome of them could, and did *believe* ſo far as to *Aſſent* in their Minds, that Chriſt was no Impoſtor, but one that came from God; and that therefore his Doctrine muſt needs be true; but they did not believe ſo as to be converted in their Wills, to conſent to part with their carnal intereſt of Honour and Reputation, with their Party the *Phariſees*, which they muſt have done as the caſe then ſtood, if they would have confeſſed him openly; which to do, was neceſſary to make them capable of the Promiſe of Salvation by him. Joh. 12. 42, 43. *Among the chief Rulers, many believed on him, but becauſe of the*

the Phariſees, they did not confeſs him, leſt they ſhould be put out of the Synagogue, for they loved the praiſe of Men, more than the praiſe of God. Theſe had more underſtanding than the common People, who, as they ſaid, knew not the Law, (*John* 7.) and yet not ſo many of them as of the people believed on Chriſt, ſo as to confeſs and follow him, becauſe their worldly intereſt being greater, it held them faſter and had the greater power over their Wills. The unbelief then of Men where the Goſpel comes, is generally to be reſolved into the obſtinacy of their Wills, in oppoſition to the convictions of their Underſtanding. *John* 5. 40. *Ye will not come to me that ye might have life. How oft would I have gathered you, and ye would not,* Mat. 23. 37. *O that my people had hearkened to my counſel! But Iſrael would none of me,* Pſal. 81. 11. *They did not chuſe the fear of the Lord,* Prov. 1. 29. *They choſe* their own ways, their Souls *delighted in their abominations,* Iſa. 6. 3. Thus much in general. But I would ſhew yet more particularly how the Will doth obſtruct the perfecting the work of Faith after it's begun in the Underſtanding. And it doth it as I conceive,

1. By calling off the Underſtanding from a frequent conſideration of that evidence by which it was firſt convinced of the Truth of God's Teſtimony touching the Promiſed Benefits, and the Condition and Means of obtaining them, and from a frequent application of it to the Will: And this the Will can do.

For, as the Underſtanding hath a power over the Will, ſo far as to repreſent its apprehenſions to the Will in order to its acting thereupon according to a Man's own concerns therein; ſo alſo the Will hath a kind of power over the Underſtanding, both to put it upon frequent conſideration, to ſtrengthen it ſelf in the belief of that which the VVill would have to prove true and to be believed; and alſo to call it off from ſo doing, when there is a great reluctancy in the VVil againſt having that prove true which the Underſtanding repreſents as true. And if the Underſtanding be taken off, ſo that it hath not frequent recourſe to that evidence which firſt procured its *Aſſent* unto the Truth of God's Teſtimony in the Goſpel, that it might be thereby nouriſhed, ſtrengthened, and maintained; that Faith in the Underſtanding will languiſh and grow weak, and ſo have no powerful operation upon the VVill to change and renew it, and to procure its effectual conſent to perform the Condition of the Promiſe, when the Will ſtands diſinclined of it ſelf, to the Verdict of the Underſtanding. Beſides, if the Underſtanding doth not *ply* the VVill, and frequently inculcate upon it, its own apprehenſions concerning God's Teſtimony, and the conſequence and concernment of it to a Man's own ſelf, thereby to make the VVord believed to be an *ingrafted Word,* it will not work any Cure upon it, or any thorough change in it.

The unwillingneſs in Men to have their Minds ingaged in the conſideration of God's ways and their own, is the reaſon of their turning back from him. *Job* 34. 27. *They turned back from him, and would not conſider any of his ways.* As on the contrary, the Scripture repreſents the converſion of a ſinner as proceeding from the conſideration of the bad tendency of his evil ways. *Ezek.* 18. 28. *Becauſe he conſidereth* *and turneth away from all his tranſgreſſions which he hath committed, he ſhall ſurely live; he ſhall not dye.* And our Saviour ſeems to caſt mens profiting, or not profiting; their Belief, or not Belief, by hearing God's Teſtimony in the Goſpel, upon their conſidering, or not conſidering of it. *Mark* 4. 24. *And he ſaid unto them, Conſider what you hear* (ſo Dr. *Hammond* reads it) *for with what meaſure ye meet* (viz. in conſidering, or not conſidering) *it ſhall be meaſured to you again,* in profiting, or not profiting; which is to be underſtood according to God's ordinary proceeding with Men.

The reaſon why the Faith of thoſe reſembled by the ſtony ground, doth not abide, or come to perfection, is, becauſe they have no Root in themſelves, and that comes to paſs for want of much conſideration, and a frequent working the firſt conviction of the mind from the evidence of Truth, into the Will and Affections, by a conſtant Conſideration, and cloſe Application of it. *Acts* 17. 11. *They ſearched the Scriptures* [*daily*] *whether thoſe things were ſo*; and *therefore they* Believed.

2. When men hold faſt their Luſts, out of their great love to them, notwithſtanding their conviction in their Underſtandings, and are not willing to part with them upon any terms, the Fumes of thoſe Luſts continually aſcending, will cloud and darken the Underſtanding as a thick Fogg doth the Sun, and by degrees make it leſs capable of diſcerning its Object, *viz.* ſaving Truth, in its clear evidence, and proportionably hinder its operation upon the Will. *The cares of this World, and the deceitfulneſs of Riches, and the luſts of other things, choak the Word, and it becometh unfruitful,* Mar. 4. 19. *He that hateth his Brother is in darkneſs, and walketh in darkneſs, and knoweth not whether he goes, becauſe darkneſs hath blinded his eyes,* 1 John 2. 11.

3. Sinful Mens Underſtandings are not ſo uncorrupt, but that they are apt to be bribed by their Wills, to caſt about and deviſe how to evade the force and edge of their own Notices and Dictates, and to attempt and baffle their former apprehenſions and convictions, to the end they may ſtill retain their luſts without any great diſturbance from their Underſtandings. This when it is yielded to, and put in practice, is that which in Scripture is called Mens *cloſing their eyes, leſt at any time they ſhould ſee with their eyes, and hear with their ears, and underſtand with their hearts, and ſhould be converted and healed,* Mat. 13. 15. And when this takes place in Profeſſors of Chriſtianity, that do believe that Faith, Repentance, and Obedience are neceſſary to Salvation, as the Condition on which it is promiſed; the way by which they uſually deceive their own Hearts, is, by perſwading themſelves, that they do perform the Condition of the Promiſe in theſe, when indeed they do not; but frame to themſelves Notions of ſaving Faith, Repentance and Obedience, different from the Scripture Notions of them, as I ſhall ſhew in each of them.

1. Many delude themſelves, by taking up a wrong Notion of Saving Faith, and ſo think they have it, when they have it not. They believe indeed Chriſt to be the Son of God, and Saviour of the World, and that thoſe ſhall be ſaved that believe in him, and

thoſe damned that do not, becauſe the Scripture, which they believe to be the Word of God, ſaith ſo: And thus far they believe rightly objectively. But then they deceive their own Souls, by perſwading themſelves that a meer *Aſſent* of their minds to the Truth of theſe, and other Evangelical Verities, is the Faith to which the promiſed Juſtification and Salvation is made, though it hath no ſuch powerful operation upon their Wills, as to make them new Creatures, to make any thorow change in the temper of their Hearts and tenor of their Lives. And many doubtleſs have been greatly ſtrengthened in this deluſive confidence, by having been taught that Faith juſtifies without any VVorks at all. Aud theſe again perſwade themſelves, that they believe in Chriſt to the ſaving of their Souls, becauſe they rely on him alone for Salvation, and upon what he hath done, and ſuffered for them, though they love their ſins, and live in them ſtill. Juſt like ſome *Jews* of old, who though they were very bad in their Lives, yet *leaned upon the Lord, and ſaid, is not the Lord among us? None evil can come upon us*, Mich. 3. 11. Iſa. 48. 1, 2 They leaned upon God's Promiſe of being their God, as thoſe do upon Chriſt's undertaking to be a Saviour, although they overlooked the Condition to be performed by them in being a People unto him, in loving and ſerving him as thoſe Chriſtians I ſpeak of, alſo do. Though Chriſt alone is to be relyed on for Salvation, as touching all that is proper to the Mediatory Office and VVork, yet no Man is to rely on him, ſo as to think he ſhould excuſe him, if he do not Repent, or be not Regenerate; or as if he did Repent, or were Regenerate for him. If they do; they promiſe themſelves from him, that which he never promiſed, or undertook, but hath told them plainly, That except they themſelves Repent, they ſhall Periſh; and that except they themſelves be Born again, they cannot ſee the Kingdom of God.

2 They deceive their own Hearts alſo in the nature of Repentance; their Notion of it being one thing, and the Scripture-Notion of it quite another: So that they perſwade themſelves they have Repented, when indeed they have not. They know and believe perhaps Repentance to be neceſſary to Salvation, becauſe Chriſt hath ſaid, that *except ye repent, ye ſhall all likewiſe periſh* But then they miſtake, in perſwading themſelves that they do repent, becauſe they are frequently ſorry for what they have done, tho' they ceaſe not to do the ſame again. Indeed, when the pleaſure of Sin is over, and rebukes of Conſcience come in the room of them; theſe trouble their minds for what they have done, which was the Repentance of *Judas*; and *there is no peace to the wicked, who are like the troubled Sea.* Now this they count Repentance, though it work no effectual and thorow change in Heart and Life; but when that ſad fit is over, they appear to be the ſame Men they were before, by returning to the ſame ſins.

And herein the *Romiſh* Church hath moſt unhappily laid a Snare, which, as is to be feared, catcheth multitudes of Souls to their Deſtruction, in aſſerting *Contrition*, yea, *Attrition* with Confeſſion, to be Repentance ſufficient to Salvation. VVhereas ſorrow *alone*, though it be *godly ſorrow*, is not Repentance, but as St. *Paul* ſaith, *Godly ſorrow worketh*

Repentance, 2 Cor. 7. 10. But Repentance it ſelf, which is Saving, conſiſteth chiefly in a real change in Mens apprehenſions of, and affections to both Sin and Duty; and in *ceaſing to do evil*, *and learning to do well*.

Others again deceive themſelves in taking a partial Reformation, for true Repentance: Becauſe they have left ſome ſins which they could beſt ſpare, as blemiſhing their Reputation, or impairing their Eſtates, or their Health: And becauſe they have done many things (which yet *Herod* alſo did, *Mar.* 6.) they think they have Repented, and are Converted, though they retain others which are more gainful, or yield them more pleaſure. VVhereas the ſincerity of Repentance can be nothing leſs then a hatred of, and turning from ſin, as ſin, and ſo from all ſin, by diligent and careful endeavours.

3. They deceive themſelves by a falſe Notion of that Obedience which is neceſſary to Salvation. They believe in the groſs indeed, that Obedience to the Commands of God, to the Rules and Precepts of the Goſpel, is neceſſary to Salvation, becauſe the Scripture ſo plainly declareth it to be ſo: But then, they deceive their own Hearts, in thinking and perſwading themſelves that they have performed this part of the Condition of the Promiſe, whenas they have not performed one half of it. They have been, it may be, ſomewhat careful to be found in acts of External Worſhip and Devotion, both publick and private; and to keep themſelves from Idolatry, Swearing, Curſing Sabbath-breaking, Murder, Adultery, Stealing, Falſe-witneſs-bearing, and the like, in the outward and groſs acts of them. But all the while have made no conſcience of governing their Thoughts, Affections, and Paſſions, nor their Tongues neither, as to many things. And in all this, wherein do they exceed the *Phariſees?* whom if we exceed not in Righteouſneſs, Chriſt hath told us (who beſt knows) that we ſhall never enter into the Kingdom of Heaven, *Matth.* 5. 20. They were ſtrict and zealous in the obſervation of the Laws for Circumciſion, Sacrifices, Sabbaths, Tythes, and other poſitive Precepts, and that to a tittle: And Faſted often, and made long Prayers, and gave Alms; and made Oſtentation alſo that they were not as others were; Extortioners, Unjuſt, Adutlerers, nor as the *Publicans*. And why would not all this bring them to Heaven? Becauſe all this notwithſtanding (as they had not Faith in Chriſt, ſo) they were Covetous, Proud, and Ambitious, ſeeking Honour one of another, contemning, and deſpiſing others; they were Envious and Malicious, Cruel and Ill-natured, Unmerciful, and Perſecuting ſuch as faithfully reproved them. They made clean the outſide of the Cup and Platter; and ſo far as they did ſo they did well: But that for which Chriſt denounced Woe to them, was, that their *inward part was full of ravening and wickedneſs*, and for want of love to God, and of Judgment, Mercy, and Fidelity.

God is a Spirit, and the Service that is acceptable to him, as being moſt agreeable to his Nature, is that which is done *in Spirit and Truth*. And therefore his Precepts are given to govern the inward Man, as well as the outward.

He that ſaid, *Thou ſhalt not kill*, hath ſaid alſo, *Thou ſhalt not hate thy Brother in thy heart, nor be Angry with him without a cauſe*, or *bear a grudge againſt him*. He that ſaid, *Thou ſhalt not commit Adultery*, hath ſaid alſo, *Thou ſhalt not luſt after a Woman in thy heart*. And he that ſaid, *Thou ſhalt not ſteal*, hath ſaid alſo, *Thou ſhalt not covet*, and the like. And therefore, they that think themſelves to be Obedient Children to God, upon account of their abſtaining from outward groſs Sins, and of being outwardly Righteous, and do not truly endeavour, and make a buſineſs of it to mortifie and ſubdue their Pride, Covetouſneſs, love of the World, Envy, Hatred, Malice, thoughts of Revenge, the unrulineſs of Paſſions, and all immoderate Affections; but indulge themſelves in theſe, or any of theſe, or the like; they deceive themſelves, whatever their External Conformity to Divine Precepts otherwiſe may be. They are *the pure in heart that ſhall ſee God*. *And they that are Chriſts, have crucified the fleſh, with the affections and luſts.*

God obſerves more what Men are inwardly, than what they are outwardly; and judges of them accordingly. *He is not a Jew*, nor he a Chriſtian, *who is one outwardly in the fleſh, but he who is ſo inwardly in heart, whoſe praiſe is not of Men, but of* God, Rom. 2. 28, 29. And therefore St. *James* counted them but *Earthly*, *Senſual, and Deviliſh*, in their Profeſſion of Chriſtianity, how high ſoever they profeſſed, and ſuch as did *lye againſt the Truth*, that indulged *bitter envying and ſtrife*, though it were but *in their hearts*, Jam. 3. 14, 15. And if Luſts and Paſſions within ſhall break out in an unbridled Tongue, in Slandering, Reviling, Back-biting, Evil-ſpeaking, raſh and uncharitable Cenſuring, or the like; how Religious ſoever ſuch a Man may otherwiſe ſeem to himſelf, or others, yet St. *James* hath plainly determined his caſe; ſuch an one hath *deceived his own heart, and his Religion is vain*, Jam. 2. 26. Mat. 5. 22.

Men may go a great way in Religion, yea ſo far as until they *are not far from the Kingdom of God*. Yea, *many ſhall ſeek to enter* in, by doing many things in order thereto, and yet *ſhall not be able*, for want of *ſtriving* to do all that is neceſſary thereto. And for that very reaſon, and becauſe of the great danger of Chriſtians falling ſhort, tho' they have gone far, and done much, are they ſo earneſtly Exhorted to *work out*, or to *work through* their own Salvation with Fear and Trembling; with a fear of falling ſhort, *Phil.* 2. 12. And not only ſo, but to *fear* even a *ſeeming* to come ſhort of the promiſed Reſt. *Heb.* 4. 1. *Let us therefore fear, leſt a promiſe being left us of entering into his Reſt, any of you ſhould ſeem to come ſhort of it.* The matter is of that huge conſequence, that every wiſe Man that doth not *deſpiſe his own Soul*, ſhould be afraid to do, or omit to do, any thing that hath but the leaſt *ſeeming* ſhew or apperance of putting his Salvation into any hazard. And therefore [All] *diligence* is not too much for the wiſeſt Man living to uſe, to *make his calling and election ſure*, 2 Pet. 1. 10.

Thus when Mens Underſtandings are bribed by their corrupt Wills, they then take up with a partial Faith, a partial Repentance, and a partial Obedience, inſtead of that which is Evangelically compleat, and hope it is a fulfilling of the Condition of the Promiſe.

And when Men ſhut their own Eyes, and ſtop their own Ears againſt the evidence of the Word of Salvation, that they may the more quietly enjoy the pleaſures of any ſin, God many times in his Righteous Judgment, after much ſtriving, and long-ſuffering, withdraws the Aſſiſtance of his Grace and Spirit, and leaves them to themſelves, and their own Deluſions, and to be practiſed upon by the Devil for their farther hardening; according to that dreadful Propheſie, in *Iſa.* 6. 9, 10. mentioned no leſs than five or ſix times in the New Teſtament, *Mat.* 13. 14. *Mar.* 4. 12. *Luke* 8. 10. *Joh.* 12. 40. *Acts* 28. 26. *Rom.* 11. 8. *Go tell this people, hear ye indeed, but underſtand not, and ſee ye indeed, but perceive not. Make the heart of this people fat, and make their Ears heavy, and ſhut their Eyes,* &c. When Men will not receive the love of the Truth, that they might be ſaved, but have pleaſure in Unrighteouſneſs, God ſometimes *ſends them ſtrong delnſions to believe a lye,* 2 Theſ. 2. 10, 11, 12. Whereas on the contrary, the good-ground hearers are diſcribed by the *honeſty* of the Heart, into which they receive the Word: They ſtudy no tricks or ſhifts, nor uſe any ſhuffling upon the account of any diſhoneſt intereſt, to evade the plain Truth, but are content that ſhould take place, and all other things give place to it: They *ſuffer* that Word which was received and aſſented to in the Judgment before, in order of Nature, *to ſink down into their hearts,* by which the Will and Affections become changed.

CHAP. IV.

How, and after what manner, Faith in the Underſtanding, works ſavingly upon the Will.

THE Faith of *Aſſent* in the Underſtanding, worketh a *Conſent* in the Will unto the *Condition* of the Promiſe, by its operative and affecting influence upon the Paſſions of Hope, Fear, and Love, the powerful Principles of Action in Man. For tho' Faith in the Underſtanding, is the firſt Principle of Action as Chriſtian, yet not that, but the Will, as it is affected with Hope, Fear, or Love, is the next and immediate Principle of Action. The Underſtanding, when it rightly performs its Office, doth not only aſſent unto the Truth of Divine Revelation, upon competent Evidence that it is from God; but alſo conſiders and weighs, as in a balance, the import of it, and how a Man is concerned in it; as whether it betoken Good or Evil to him, and how much, and upon what terms, whether Abſolutely, or Conditionally; and what the Condition is: All which, when brought down to the ſubordinate Faculties of the Soul, the Will and Affections, is apt to affect them, and work upon them more or leſs, according as the things believed are apprehended more or leſs to concern a Man.

And the things believed, Eternal Life, and Eternal Death, in another World, being Inviſible and abſent things; it is a Man's Faith, touching the reality of them, that ſupplies the room or abſence of ſenſe. *For Faith is the ſubſtance of things hoped for, and the evidence of things not ſeen*, Heb. 11. 1. We neither ſee nor feel the glorious things promiſed, nor the dreadful things threatned in another World, otherwiſe than by Faith, which gives the Believer a proſpect of them. But a Man by his Faith in that Goſpel by which they are revealed, hath a foreſight of them, (as *Abraham* had of Chriſt's Day) and that fills the Soul with Hope, and Fear, and a ſenſe of God's love, in giving ſuch an Hope. And this Hope, Fear, and Love, puts Men upon, more or leſs, Care, Diligence, and Induſtry, in doing what is neceſſary for the obtaining of the one, and eſcaping the other, as they are more or leſs influenced by a Faith that is weaker or ſtronger, or more or leſs active and exerciſed about theſe things. And hence comes that change which is made in the Hearts and Lives of true Believers, who *walk by Faith, and not by Sight*; that is, they govern their Lives by the belief of inviſible, and not ſenſible things, 2 *Cor.* 5. 7. This in general. But more particularly, the Faith of *Aſſent* in the Underſtanding, works the Faith of *Conſent* in the Will, by its operation upon thoſe three Paſſions, or Affections of the Will, Hope, Fear, and Love.

1. As a firm aſſenting to the Truth of God's Promiſe through Chriſt, of pardon of Sin, and Eternal Life, upon Condition of Repentance and new Obedience, together with his Faith, gives a Man hope and confidence of obtaining theſe great benefits upon the terms on which they were promiſed.

The hope of this Happineſs, cauſeth a Man to be willing to comply with the Condition upon which it is promiſed, in order to the obtaining the Happineſs itſelf.

There is a Principle of Self-love, planted by God in the Nature of every Man, by which he doth naturally deſire and aſpire after the happineſs of his own Being. And that will put a Man upon the uſe of ſuch Means, and the performance of ſuch a Condition, without which, he believes, and is verily perſwaded, he cannot be happy. Now, every Man in whom there is the Faith of Aſſent unto the Truth of God's Teſtmony in the Goſpel, firmly fixed, being verily perſwaded that everlaſting Happineſs is not attainable without Repentance, Regeneration, and ſincere Obedience, becauſe God hath declared this as plainly as he hath done any thing: (And it is the nature of Faith to acquieſce in his Teſtimony.) The love of the End, which is Man's own Happineſs, makes him in love with the Means, ſuch as is Repenting, Mortifying, and Obeying, without which he cannot attain his end in being Happy. This Principle of Self-love under the conduct of a Man's Underſtanding and Reaſon enlightned, and regulated by a Declaration of the Divine Will, and influenced by a firm belief of it, will work in a Man new Apprehenſions of, and new Affections to both Sin and Duty; and will cauſe him to abandon the little *pleaſures of ſin, which are but for a ſeaſon*, that he may come to the fruition of that *fulneſs of joy, and thoſe Rivers of pleaſure, which are in the preſence of* God, *at his right hand, for evermore*; when once he knows, and firmly believes that they cannot otherwiſe be obtained.

Thus by Faith is the *victory over the world* obtained, in all its Temptations, from Honours, Profits, and Pleaſures, 1 *Joh.* 5. 4. For by ſuch a Faith a Man well perceives that the World offers him to his unſpeakable loſs, though it ſhould offer him all of theſe that it is able to confer upon him, if it be upon condition of doing, or omitting to do, that by which he ſhall certainly deprive himſelf of that *Glory, Honour, and Immortality*, which he is well aſſured of, through Faith in God's Promiſe, if he *overcome*.

We ſee Men are ſo commonly governed by a Principle of Self-love, in parting with a leſſer Good or Conveniency for a greater, even in the things of this Life, that they are worthily and deſervedly counted Fools that do the contrary: And therefore, thoſe are guilty of ſo much the greater Folly and Madneſs, who deprive themſelves of the Happineſs of Heaven, by a ſinful ſeeking or poſſeſſing of the Honours Profits, or Pleaſures of this Life: As the Happineſs of Heaven exceeds the enjoyments of this World, in kind and height of Satisfaction, and in continuance and duration; ſo Rational a thing it is to live and walk by Faith of unſeen things, and Unreaſonable and Unmanly to be governed by the ſenſe of preſent things, in oppoſition thereunto, 2 *Theſſ.* 3. 2.

2. The Faith of Aſſent in the Underſtanding, worketh a Conſent in the VVill to the Condition of the Promiſe, as the paſſion of Fear is awakened by believing God's Threatnings againſt ſuch as do not obſerve and fulfil that Condition. There is a Principle of Self-preſervation planted by God in every Man's Nature, by which he fears and abhors that which he knows, and verily believes, tends to the infelicity and miſery of his Being; and which puts him upon the avoiding of that which he believes hath ſuch a tendency, in order to the declining the Miſery, or Deſtruction itſelf.

VVhen a Man receives ſuch ſayings into his Underſtanding, as threaten, that, *if ye live after the fleſh, ye ſhall die*; that, *except ye repent, ye ſhall all periſh*; that, *without holineſs, no Man ſhall ſee the Lord*, and the like; and doth Aſſent unto them, as the true ſayings of God, which Aſſent is his Faith; the fear of the Miſery threatned, and the Principle of Self-preſervation, work in him a deſire and endeavour to have his ſinful Inclinations and Appetites Mortified, and a care to avoid the outward acts of ſin, as really and truly as he deſires to eſcape Eternal Deſtruction itſelf; as believing and knowing they tend thereto, and that he cannot eſcape the one, without a ſincere deſire and endeavour to deſtroy and avoid the other.

And in this way, Faith is a Believer's *Victory, by which he alſo overcomes the World*, when it tempts him to ſin, by threatning him with Diſgrace, loſs of Eſtate, or Liberty, or with enduring of corporal Puniſhment, or Death itſelf. For he believes the Puniſhments in the other VVorld to be of ſuch a nature and duration, as that the worſt things which Man can inflict, are altogether inconſiderable in compariſon of them. By which Belief he is ſo far guided, that he chuſes to ſuffer the leſs, when his faithfulneſs to God, and his own beſt intereſt doth expoſe him to it, rather than to expoſe himſelf by unfaithfulneſs to infinitely the greater, to avoid the leſs. And thus Faith purifies the Heart of all inordinate Affection to Riches, Honour, Eaſe and Pleaſures, *Acts* 15. 9.

III. The Faith of Aſſent or Credence in the Underſtanding, touching the exceeding greatneſs of God's Love to Mankind in the gift of Chriſt for their Redemption, and in his great and precious Promiſes made in him, upon a very gracious Condition, works in the Will a love to God, and ſo a love to pleaſe him, in doing thoſe things which he hath made the Condition of his Promiſe. When once the Underſtanding repreſents it to the Will, as a certain Truth, upon clear Evidence, that notwithſtanding Mens Apoſtacy from God, and Rebellion againſt him, and the Condemnation they are under thereby; yet God is Reconcilable to them, yea, willing, and ſo deſirous to Reconcile them to himſelf; that, as an Evidence and Proof of it, he hath given his own Son Chriſt Jeſus, to become *a Ranſom for them*; and that he hath made a new Covenant, declaring that upon account of his Son's undertaking for them, he is not only abundantly willing to pardon all ſuch as ſhall unfeignedly Repent of their diſloyalty, and ſincerely return to their Duty; but that he will alſo bountifully reward their future ſincere Obedience, with perfect and perpetual Happineſs: I ſay, when all this is repreſented to the Will, as unqueſtionably true, it will work in it a love to that God and Saviour, that hath been ſo loving, if it be but kept cloſe to it. A manifeſtation of ſuch love and goodneſs to Man, and that while yet in enmity againſt God, ſo ill deſerving, and ſo obnoxious to *the power of his wrath*; when he hath no need of him, nor can be profited by him, will create good thoughts of God, and reconcile Man's Mind to him, and work melting Affections in him to God, when heartily believed.

What Rebel is there, or nature ſo bad, that would not be won to leave off Rebelling againſt his Prince, and to love and pleaſe him upon undoubted aſſurance, that by ſo doing he ſhould not only be pardoned, and reſtored to Favour, but alſo perferred to the greateſt Honour and Happineſs he is capable of receiving from any Mortal? And yet how weak a motive is this in compariſon of what comes from God, to reduce Men to their love and loyalty to him? God's love to Man, when perceived, and heartily believed, is the great motive, and attractive of Man's Love to God. *We love him, becauſe he firſt loved us*, 1 Joh. 4. 19. Love is an active and commanding Principle in Man, and procureth Thoughts, Cares, and Endeavours of pleaſing God. *If any Man love me, he will keep my words*, ſaith our bleſſed Saviour, *Joh.* 14. 23. And after this manner, *Faith worketh by Love*, Gal. 5. 6.

Thus I have repreſented to you, how, and after what manner, Faith in the Underſtanding works a ſaving Conſent in the Will, unto the Condition of God's Covenant of Salvation.

CHAP. V.

Some few Objections anſwered.

I. SOME have thought Men may be Juſtified only by their Believing, even while they are Ungodly in their Lives; and have thought that Scripture, *Rom.* 4. 5. will bear them out in ſuch a conceit, which ſaith, *He that worketh not, but believeth on him that juſtifieth the ungodly, his Faith is counted for Righteouſneſs.* But they groſly miſtake the Scripture, and deceive themſelves. For that Text ſpeaks of God's Juſtifying the *Gentiles* upon their ſincere converſion to the Chriſtian Faith and Life, though they had lived in *Gentiliſm*, in all Ungodlineſs before, and until then, and though they ſhould not work at all, as the Judaizers would have had them, in turning *Proſelytes* to the Jewiſh way. But otherwiſe, it's flatly againſt the expreſs Doctrine of the Goſpel, and current of the Scriptures, for Men to hope to be pardoned by any Believing whatſoever, while they remain Impenitent; as every Man doth while he remains Ungodly. *To juſtifie the wicked, is an abomination to the Lord.* It's ſaid that Chriſt made the Blind to See, and the Deaf to Hear, and the Dumb to Speak; as well as it's ſaid, God Juſtifieth the Ungodly. But is any Man ſo ſenſeleſs, as to think that Chriſt made them to See, to Hear, and to Speak, while they remained Blind, Deaf, and Dumb? And if not, but that they know the meaning is, that Chriſt made thoſe to See, to Hear, to Speak, which had been Blind, Deaf, and Dumb, before thoſe Cures were wrought upon them; they might as well know alſo, that the meaning is, that God juſtifieth thoſe upon their believing, which had been Ungodly until then, and not that he juſtifies them whil they remain Ungodly.

II. Some alledge, that although the Faith which is alone, and without the concomitant effects of it, Repentance, Regeneration, *&c.* doth not juſtifie; yet that Faith *alone* which doth produce ſuch effects, doth juſtifie without the concurrence of theſe in the juſtifying Act. Which they illuſtrate by this Similitude. A Man ſees with his Eye alone, though he doth not ſee with his Eye that is alone, or ſeparated from his Body. In return to all which, let theſe things be conſidered.

1. They that go thus far, do grant that which will ſecure the Notion of the neceſſity of Repentance, Regeneration, and new Obedience unto Juſtification. They grant we ſee ſuch a neceſſity of theſe, as without which no Man can be juſtified, no not by Faith. In granting which, though we ſuppoſe them to err in their foreſaid Notion, yet this makes their Error the leſs dangerous; becauſe the preſence

of Repentance, Regeneration, and Obedience, are no leſs neceſſary to Juſtification, according to this account, than they eſteem them to be, who ſay they concur with Faith in the very act of Juſtification.

2. When they ſay, Faith alone is all that is neceſſary to the Juſtifying Act, without the concurrence of any thing elſe done by us: By Juſtifying Act, they mean either God's Act, or Man's Act. If Man's Act, that's nothing but Man's performing the Condition upon which God hath promiſed to Juſtifie Men. If they mean God's Act, it is his imputing Mens performing the Condition of the Promiſe unto them for Righteouſneſs. The only thing then in queſtion will be, what it is which is a fulfilling of the Condition of the Promiſe of Juſtification, which God imputes for Righteouſneſs? If they ſay, it is only the Aſſent of the Underſtanding unto the Truth of God's Teſtimony in the Goſpel; or this Aſſent, together with a Reliance on Chriſt for Salvation: I have ſhewed before, that both theſe may be found in Men Unregenerate, and Unjuſtified: And that theſe two of themſelves, without Repentance and hearty Obedience to the Laws of Chriſt, are not a fulfilling of the Condition of the Promiſe, and that conſequently Men, without theſe, cannot be juſtified by any Faith whatſoever; and ſo not by Faith alone; unleſs they will call Repentance and Heart-Obedience, in conjunction with the foreſaid Aſſent of the Mind and reliance of the Soul, by the name of Faith: Which if they will, we are agreed as to the Thing at leaſt, if not to the Name, that we are juſtified by ſuch a Faith alone. And yet I doubt not, that whenever Juſtification is promiſed to Believing ſingly and alone expreſt, but that there the foreſaid effects are comprehended under the name alſo, for the Reaſons formerly given.

3. They which ſay, we are juſtified by Faith alone, but not by that Faith which is alone, do diſtinguiſh, where the Scripture doth not diſtinguiſh: The Scripture no where ſaith, we are juſtified by Faith alone, as contradiſtinguiſhed from Repentance, Evangelical Obedience, &c. The third Chapter of *Rom.* 28. and *Tit.* 3. 5. are ſometimes made uſe of to countenance their Notion; but to how little purpoſe, hath been ſhewed already in the Treatiſe, which needs not be here repeated.

4. The Scripture is not only ſilent in the caſe, not any where affirming we are juſtified by Faith alone; but it expreſly affirms the quite contrary. *Jam.* 2. 24. *Ye ſee then how that by Works a Man is juſtified, and not by Faith only.* That this is affirmed in reference to our Juſtification before God, had been ſhewed before.

5. Faith and Repentance are a joint Condition upon which Juſtification is ſuſpended, and are both conſtituted ſo by the ſame means, and that is by promiſe of pardon to ſuch as do Believe, to ſuch as do Repent, and by threatning the contrary to thoſe that do not both. And if they are a joint Condition of the Promiſe of Juſtification, then Juſtification proceeds not upon either of them alone, but upon both together.

6. Whereas it is ſaid in the Similitude, that a Man ſees with his Eye alone, though not with his Eye which is alone, or when it is

alone. I doubt this is no more true, than that which is intended to be illuſtrated by it. For Naturaliſts will tell them the contrary, That it is not the Eye alone, by which a Man ſees, but that it is the Soul that ſees by the Eye as its Organ. The Eye ſees not when the Soul is departed, though it be not then alone. I confeſs, I cannot poſſibly conceive either how the Soul ſhould not concur with the Eye, in the Act of ſeeing, when the Eye cannot ſee without it; nor yet that Repentance ſhould not concur with Faith, in the Act of Juſtification, ſo long as Men cannot be Juſtified by Faith it ſelf without it, or in the abſence of it, as they themſelves grant.

3. This lies in the way of ſome; they cannot conceive how Juſtification by Evangelical Obedience, as well as Faith, ſhould conſiſt with the poſſibility of ſomes being juſtified by Believing, who yet may not live ſo long after, as to have an opportunity of doing good Works.

How rare Inſtances of this kind are, I ſhall not diſpute: But doubtleſs, whenever Men ſo believe God's Promiſe of pardon through Chriſt upon their Repentance, and the neceſſity of their own Repentance for the obtaining of it, as that they in VVill, and a fixed and laſting Reſolution, become new Men, then they firſt believe unto Juſtification. And it is not impoſſible but that ſome may ſo believe, that may never after they do ſo have opportunity to be much active in External Acts of Obedience. But though this ſhould ſo fall out, yet ſuch are not juſtified without Evangelical Obedience as well as Faith. For,

1. Theſe Motions and Acts of the VVill, are themſelves Acts of preſent Evangelical Obedience.

2. They are in the Root and Cauſe, Evangelical Obedience future, and to come.

Firſt, They are in themſelves Acts of preſent Evangelical Obedience. For by theſe Motions and Acts of the VVill, Men do, whenever they take place, turn from Sin to God and their Duty, out of Hatred to that they turn from, and out of Love to that they turn to. And theſe Acts of the VVill, which conſiſt in Affection and Reſolution, are proper effects and fruits of Faith in the Underſtanding, and Acts of Heart-Obedience in the ſight of God, and a conformity of Soul to his declared VVill and Commandment. And they may as well, and as truly be called VVorks, as evil Acts of the VVill may, ſuch as are a love to evil, and deſires and reſolutions of perpetrating it: VVhich evil Acts of the VVill, are yet in Scripture called VVorks, and a working of wickedneſs, *Pſal.* 58. 2. *Ye work wickedneſs in your Hearts*, Micah. 2. 1. *He that looketh upon a Woman to luſt after her, hath committed adultery with her already in his heart*, Matth. 5. 28. And *envy, wrath, and hatered,* which are Internal Acts of the Soul, are called VVorks of the Fleſh, *Gal.* 5. 19, 20, 21. And if ſuch inward fixed Reſolutions in Men, of obeying God in external Acts, if ever they have opportunity and a Call to it, did not paſs in God's account for Obedience, and were not accepted inſtead of the Deed, when opportunity for the Deed is wanting, the beſt Man in the World could be no Diſciple of Chriſt, who doth not actually forſake all that he hath, and lay down his Life for him. *Whoſoever of you forſaketh not all that he hath, cannot be my Diſciple*, ſaith he, *Luke* 14. 26, 33. Whereas Chriſt pronounceth the Poor in Spirit, Bleſſed; many of whom never became actually Poor for his ſake, as not being called to it. But if they are Poor in Spirit, if they firmly reſolve to become Poor, in forſaking all for Chriſt's ſake, when called to it, theſe are capable of Bleſſedneſs in Chriſt's account, as well as thoſe that ſuffer the loſs of all for Righteouſneſs ſake, *Matth.* 5. 3.

Secondly, Thoſe Acts of the Will, are, in the Root and Cauſe, Evangelical Obedience future, and to come: Becauſe thoſe Reſolutions againſt evil, and for good, when they are of a fixed and laſting nature, (as they always are, when, together with Faith, they make Men capable of Juſtification) will certainly produce external Acts of ſincere Obedience, as opportunity doth occur.

When the Tree is made good, it will bring forth good Fruit in the ſeaſon of Fruit, if it be not cut down before. When the Heart is renewed in affection and reſolution, the courſe of a Man's Life will certainly be anſwerable to it, if ever it have opportunity of ſhewing it. *A good Man, out of the good treaſure of his heart, bringeth forth good things*, Mat. 12. 35. And God who knows the Heart, doth judge of, and eſtimate Men according to what they are in the inward frame of their Heart, and prevalent bent of their Wills. *If there be firſt a willing mind, it is accepted according to that a Man hath, and not according to that he hath not*, 2 Cor. 8. 12. We judge of the Cauſe, by the Effects; of the goodneſs of Mens Hearts by the goodneſs of their Lives; to us the Tree is known by its Fruit: But God who is greater than our Hearts, and knows them better than we do, judges of the Effect by the Cauſe, and knows what a Mans Life will be, by what his Heart is, upon its firſt Converſion to him; and ſo confers on him the benefit of Juſtification, when the Foundation of a good Life is laid in the converſion and renewing of the Heart.

The Underſtanding of this Part of Diſcourſe, will ſerve not only to ſatisfy the foreſaid Doubt, but alſo to inform us what Evangelical Obedience is neceſſary to Juſtification in its beginning. Not but that actual Obedience in Life is neceſſary to the continuance of Juſtification, where Life is continued. And therefore we find that *Abraham* was juſtified by his after-believing, and after-obedience, as well as by his firſt; and ſo was *Noah* before him. *Noah* was a Righteous Man, and juſtified before *he became heir of the Righteouſneſs which is by Faith*, by his believing and obeying God, in preparing the Ark, *Gen.* 6. 9. *Heb.* 11. 7. It was by Faith in God's Promiſe that *Abraham* left his Country to obey God at the firſt, and by that he was firſt juſtified, *Heb.* 11. 8. And yet his believing God's Promiſe, *ſo ſhall thy Seed be*, which was not made till ſome years after, was imputed to him alſo for Righteouſneſs, *Gen.* 15. 9. It was many years after that again, that by Faith he offered his Son *Iſaac* upon the Altar, and yet by that he was juſtified as well as by his firſt Faith and Obedience, *Jam.* 2. 21. Pardon of ſin, is our Juſtification from ſin, *Acts* 13. 39. And this we are directed by the Lord's Prayer, to pray for daily all our days. And the continuance of Juſtification is promiſed upon condition of continuance of Faith and Obedience to the Goſpel, *Col.* 1. 21, 22, 23. and a diſcontinuance of it threatned in caſe of diſobedience, according to the Tenour of the Parable, *Mat.* 18. from *ver.* 23. to *ver.* 35. By all which we may ſee what need there is for all Chriſtians to *work out*, to work through *their own Salvation with fear and trembling*, to which they are earneſtly exhorted, *Phil.* 2. 22. and *to run ſo, that they may obtain*, 1 *Cor.* 9. 24.

IV. Some to evil affect their own and others Minds with prejudice againſt Diſcourſes of this nature, do ſuggeſt, That the laying ſo great a ſtreſs upon Duty, as to eſteem any thing of it neceſſary to Juſtification, ſave Believing only, doth derogate from the Glory of Chriſt's great Undertaking in the buſineſs of Man's Salvation; and that it is a truſting in our own Righteouſneſs. But it will appear far otherwiſe, if they will but impartially conſider in what ſence, and upon what account ſuch ſtreſs is laid upon Duty; which I ſhall open in two Particulars.

1. They that rightly underſtand themſelves in this matter, do not look that any of their Duties, of what nature ſoever, ſhould of themſelves, as ſuch, be available to their Juſtification or Salvation; but that it is for the ſake of Chriſt, and upon account of his Undertaking for us, that God accepts and imputes for Righteouſneſs to us, ſuch Duty as Faith, Repentance, and Obedience is, and that he doth make promiſe of Juſtification upon Condition of theſe.

Since the Fall, we ſay, all our Duties that are acceptable to God, or available to us, become ſo through Chriſt, and for his ſake. And therefore, ſo long as we attribute and aſcribe the benefit we expect upon our Repentance, and ſincere Obedience, or Belief, unto Chriſt, and to his great and worthy Undertaking for us; we are far from derogating from the Glory of it, and from truſting in our own Righteouſneſs, in that Notion in which Mens truſting in their own Righteouſneſs is condemned in Scripture, or any otherwiſe than as our Duty is made a Condition, without which we ſhall have no part in Chriſt, nor be qualified for Glory.

2. When we lay ſuch ſtreſs upon Repentance, Obedience, *&c.* as a Condition, or part of a Condition of the Promiſe of Juſtification and Salvation, as without which we ſay, we cannot be Juſtified or Saved by Chriſt's Undertaking for us; yet then, this ſtreſs is laid, and depends upon the Will and Appointment of God, by which theſe Duties are thus made the Condition, and not on the intrinſick worth or value of the Duties themſelves ſimply conſidered, without reference to God's Ordination, appointing them to that uſe. For if God had

not made a New Covenant, promiſing pardon for Chriſt's ſake to ſuch as do Repent, and Acceptance and Reward to ſuch as ſincerely Obey him, they would have had no ſufficient ground to have been confident of Pardon, Acceptance, or Reward, though they ſhould have Repented, and ſo Obey'd. And the reaſon is, becauſe Men are not Juſtified in the Eye of the Natural or Moral Law, upon any ſuch account as that is. So that all the ſtreſs which is laid on Duty by them that rightly underſtand their Duty in this matter, doth terminate partly in Chriſt's Undertaking for them, and partly in God's Inſtitution, and Appointment, who hath made his Promiſe of Juſtifying us for Chriſt's ſake ſo, as that he hath made our Duty of Repentance, and ſincere Obedience, a neceſſary Condition of it. And he that truſteth to be Pardoned, Accepted, and Rewarded for Chriſt's Sake upon his Repentance, and ſincere Obedience, becauſe God hath promiſed that he ſhall; truſteth in God, and in the fidelity of his Word and Promiſe. And in doing ſo, what more ſtreſs doth he lay upon Duty in this kind, than they that truſt to be Juſtified and Saved upon their Believing? For their Believing is matter of Duty, as well as their Repenting and Obeying: And their Believing would no more have entitled them to the benefit without the Promiſe, which gives them that Title, than other Acts of Duty would do. And other Acts of Duty do entitle to the ſame benefits as fully as Faith itſelf doth, where there is promiſe of the ſame benefits annexed to them, as Faith hath: And that they have, I have ſhewed before. So long then as the ſtreſs which is laid on Duty, terminates in Chriſt, and in God's Will and Appointment in the New Covenant, and is regulated by his Word and Promiſe, there is no danger of overcharging Duty.

It's true indeed, if we ſhould expect that Duty ſhould do that for us, which is proper only to Chriſt, as to expiate our ſin, or the like; we ſhould ſinfully overcharge it, as the Phariſaical *Jews* did their Sacrifices and other Legal Obſervances, in expecting remiſſion of Sin by them, without Chriſt's Atonement: Which Righteouſneſs of theirs, is for that cauſe called their own Righteouſneſs, which was by the Law, as being no method of Juſtification of God's appointment, but of their own deviſing, which in that reſpect, was indeed *but as filthy Rags*, and loathſome to God. But this is not the caſe with Proteſtant Chriſtians, who lay no ſuch ſtreſs upon Duty, no not upon Faith itſelf; but do acknowledge that all the power and virtue it hath to juſtifie, depends wholly upon, and is derived from the Will and Ordination of God in Chriſt, *Joh.* 6. 40. and 1. 12. *Epheſ.* 2. 8. And we ſay the ſame of Repentance, and ſincere Obedience alſo. And a confidence of being ſaved in a way of Duty upon ſuch terms, is repreſented in Scripture, as truſting in the *Righteouſneſs of God through Faith*, in oppoſition to ones truſting in his own Righteouſneſs, *Phil.* 3. 9. ſo far is it from truſting in our own Righteouſneſs, or from derogating from Chriſt in the Glory of his Undertaking for us.

And now for a Concluſion: It would be conſidered, whether ſuch as are educated in Chriſtianity, are not hardlier brought to live as becomes the Goſpel in point of Practice, than to believe that Chriſt Jeſus came into the World to ſave Sinners: and that he Died for them, and Roſe again: And whether there is not cauſe to fear, that very many more ſuch do eternally miſcarry through neglect of the former, than for want of the latter: And if there be, as doubtleſs there is, then Practical Diſcourſes among ſuch muſt needs be highly neceſſary, however ſome of weak minds, thirſt more after Diſcourſes Conſolatory upon account of Believing only. Which may ſerve inſtead of an Apology for writing this Diſcourſe. Saint *Paul* charged *Titus* to *affirm* this [*conſtantly*] that they which have Believed, be careful to maintain good Works, *Tit.* 3. 8.

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F I N I S.

A
View of Juſtification;
OR, THE
WORK of FAITH with POWER.

Wherein the Apoſtles Doctrine touching Juſtification without the Deeds of the Law, is opened; and the Senſe in which Goſpel-Obedience, as well as Faith, is neceſſary to Juſtification, is ſtated.

BRITISH MUSEUM

A
View of Juſtification.

CHAP. I.

Containing an Introduction to the following Treatiſe.

Romans iv. Ver. 5.

But to him that worketh not, but believeth on him that juſtifieth the ungodly, his Faith is counted unto him for Righteouſneſs.

AMongſt other things in St. *Paul*'s Epiſtles, which (as the Apoſtle *Peter* obſerves, 2 *Pet.* iii. 16.) *are hard to be underſtood, and which they that are unlearned, and unſtable, wreſt to their own deſtruction*; there is too much cauſe to ſuſpect the Text now before us to be one. For whoever ſhall but judiciouſly conſider the Epiſtles of the Apoſtles, *James*, *Peter*, *John* and *Jude*, beſides other Scriptures, may eaſily perceive, that many Profeſſors of the Goſpel then, did ſo bear themſelves upon a meer form of Knowledge and Faith, as if the Promiſe of Salvation had been entailed to that alone, without reſpect had to that holy Life enjoyned in the Goſpel, *without which no Man ſhall ſee the Lord*, Heb. xii. 14. Into which moſt dangerous and deadly Snare it's like enough they might be brought, by miſunderſtanding and wreſting ſuch Scriptures as my Text; which makes the Man that Worketh not, but Believeth, the capable Subject of Juſtification.

And is there not cauſe to fear, that multitudes of poor Souls to this day, are ſtill under the ſame deſperate and deſtructive miſtake? Whence elſe proceeds that high Confidence in the moſt amongſt us, of their being ſaved by Chriſt, altho' but ſtrangers to the Life of God? having this Saying to defend themſelves againſt the Reproof of their ſinful Life; no Man ſhall be ſaved by his Works; or elſe, *not by the Works of Righteouſneſs which we have done, but according to his Mercy he ſaved us*: leaving out that which follows, viz. *by the waſhing of Regeneration, and renewing of the Holy Ghoſt*, Tit. iii. 5. Whence is it alſo that multitudes of Profeſſors under various forms, as well that which is right, as thoſe which are wrong, take themſelves to be *rich, and to have need of nothing* more than they have, to entitle them to Remiſſion of Sins and Salvation, whenas they are meer Beggars and Bankrupts as to a humble, ſober, ſelf-denying Life? Is it not that they value themſelves by that ſtock of Brain-knowledge, and barren Faith which they are ſure they have, and thereupon think themſelves ſure of thoſe Promiſes which are made to thoſe that know and believe the Truth?

Nay, hath not the Doctrine of Juſtification without Works, as commonly aſſerted from that Text which I have choſen, on which to found my preſent Diſcourſe, and other of the like nature, proved a Temptation even to many good Men, to have a lighter and lower eſteem of good Works, and of the neceſſity of them to Juſtification and Salvation, than of right belongs to them? Yea I am perſuaded, that the ſtrenuous urging of ſuch Texts againſt the Papiſts in diſputes about Juſtification, without that due care which ought to be had in diſtinguiſhing the Works which my Text ſpeaks of, from thoſe of another nature, hath occaſioned many honeſt Hearts to content themſelves to write but fifty, which otherwiſe would have ſubſcribed an hundred, towards the promoting of the Goſpel Deſign in themſelves and others, had they clearly underſtood the Mind of God in this buſineſs.

What ſhall I ſay! Chriſt Jeſus himſelf, though ſent on purpoſe to ſave and not to deſtroy, and not only to ſhew but to be the very way unto Life and Glory; yet the Ignorance and Miſunderſtanding of the Counſel of God touching the Terms how and after what manner he is ſo, hath rendred him to very many *a Stone of ſtumbling*, *a Rock of Offence*, *a Snare and a Gin*; a means of a more dreadful Condemnation, than ever they ſhould have fallen into, had Chriſt never been offered to them as a Saviour. But to whom is he ſo, but as St. *Peter* tells us, *to thoſe that ſtumble at the Word?* (1 Pet. ii. 8.) not underſtanding, but miſtaking the Nature and Terms of the Doctrine of Grace, and the Scripture Expreſſions thereabout; either thinking that Faith will ſave without Works, otherwiſe than the Scripture intends, or that this or that Belief is the Faith unto which Juſtification and Salvation are promiſed, whenas it is neither this nor that, but another. So that when St. *Peter* ſays, that ſuch as are unlearned and unſtable, wreſt the Scriptures of St. *Paul* and others to their own Deſtruction, (2 *Pet.* iii. 16.) it is not meant of ſuch as are unlearned in humane Arts, but unlearned in the Method and Terms of God's proceeding with Men, to bring them to Salvation: Being carried away with a ſound of Letters and Words, not being careful to order themſelves in their underſtanding of Scripture Expreſſions, by thoſe principal Heads and Veins of Doctrine which are but few, unto which a great Variety of Words and Scripture Expreſſions do relate.

A piece of Unlearnedneſs, unto which *the wiſe and prudent of the World*, Doctors and Rabbies of the Times have been, and may be more liable, and in which more intangled, than others, who in compariſon of them have been but Babes and Sucklings; as theſe and the like Scriptures do witneſs, *Mat.* xi. 25. *John* vii. 48, 49. 1 *Cor.* i. 26, 27. one main Reaſon whereof is this; becauſe they, (I mean the Wiſe and Learned of the World) by their Wiſdom and Learning being Veſſels better fitted and prepared for Worldly Glory than others are, are in that reſpect under the greater Temptation to ſeek and *receive Honour one of another, and not that Honour that comes from God only*; and conſequently by their greater parts, to over-maſter, bend and bow, wring and wreſt under plauſible Pretences and fair Flouriſhes, the Holy Scriptures, in their ſeveral Forms of Expreſſion, ſo as that they may not ſo much as ſeem to contradict, but to countenance their Deſign of Worldly Glory and Intereſt: And their Worldly Honour and Intereſt likewiſe as intermixt with their Goſpel Profeſſion, not ſo much as ſeem to obſtruct, but to accommodate the Deſign of God, and the Affairs of the Goſpel, in themſelves and others. The prevailing of which carnal Device of corrupting the Word, reducing and accommodating the pure Goſpel Doctrine and Life, unto a nearer Compliance with the Principles of Worldly Wiſdom and Intereſt than would conſiſt with *the Simplicity which is in Chriſt*, was that which proved the Bane of thoſe flouriſhing Churches which were planted by the Apoſtles, and at this day is the great Enemy of the Life and Power of Godlineſs, and ſuch as betrays Men into a Soul-deceiving way of profeſſing the Goſpel; as might eaſily be ſhewed, might I now ſtand upon it.

On the other hand, whereas the Babes and Sucklings; I mean Perſons who by reaſon of their natural Capacities, Education or Rank in the World, are but of weak and low parts, and in that reſpect but Veſſels of Diſhonour in the World's Eye; are not in that Danger to be courted by the World, nor under any Probability or Hopes of obtaining Honour from the World, though they ſhould ſeek it; thence it comes to paſs, that their Minds are more at liberty to look after Glory and Greatneſs in the next World, ſince they neither have, nor are like to have any in this; and ſo to fall in with the Doctrine of the Goſpel which both offers and opens the Way to the Glory to come, but makes little of this World, calls Mens Minds off it, and teaches ſelf-denial about it. And then when ſuch have actually embraced the Truth as it is in Jeſus, though they themſelves are but poor and mean in Parts and humane Abilities, and of ſhallow Capacities, yet the Spirit of God now becomes their Guide, *and he takes of the things of Chriſt*, viz. his Doctrines contained in the Scriptures, *and ſhews them unto them*, *John* xvi. 14. And whatever Parts and humane Abilities Men may have, by the Power of which they may go for us to the Grammatical Senſe of the Scriptures, yet as to the ſpiritual Deſign of them, whilſt they themſelves are Strangers to the Senſe of ſuch a thing upon their own Hearts, and conſequently have not that preſence of the Spirit of Truth, who keeps at a diſtance from the high-minded and worldly-wiſe, they muſt needs be in greater danger of wreſting the Scriptures as unto the ſpiritual Deſign of them; than the poor, humble, and meek Soul, with whom God delights to dwell, and whom he hath promiſed to guide in Judgment, and teach in his Way (*Pſalm* xxv. 9. *Iſa.* lvii. 15.) though very far inferior in humane Accompliſhments.

But ſince the Miſ-underſtanding of the Scriptures about the Doctrine of Juſtification by Faith without the Works of the Law, hath proved, and I exceedingly fear doth ſtill prove, a Snare of Death unto vaſt Multitudes of poor Souls (as I intimated before) therefore to awaken Men who have been but in a ſpiritual Dream about this important Buſineſs, and to undeceive many poor Souls who are in extream danger of periſhing eternally under a miſtaken Confidence of Salvation, I ſhall as of the Ability which is of God, by comparing the Scriptures hereabout, endeavour to open, and farther to clear this mighty Point, upon the practical underſtanding of which doth depend even the Salvation of all our Souls.

CHAP. II.

Shewing of what ſort, or kind, of Works thoſe are which St. Paul *in his Epiſtles excludes in the Point of Man's Juſtification before God.*

Romans iv. 5.

But to him that worketh not, but believeth on him that juſtifieth the ungodly, his Faith is counted unto him for Righteouſneſs.

Sect. I. NOT to meddle with the Coherence of theſe Words for the preſent, becauſe I ſhall have a fit Occaſion to touch that afterwards; you may eaſily perceive that they do in themſelves, contain a brief Deſcription of the Man whom God will juſtifie. And we have him here deſcribed both negatively, and affirmatively. 1. Negatively, he is ſuch an one *as worketh not*; ſo ſaith the Text; *To him that worketh not*, &c. 2. Affirmatively, he is ſuch an one as does *believe on him that juſtifieth the ungodly:* For the Text tells us concerning him, *that his Faith is counted to him for Righteouſneſs.*

I ſhall, God willing, ſpeak ſomething to both parts of the Deſcription, and ſhall begin with that firſt which is firſt in the Text.

How then is the Apoſtle to be underſtood when he affirms the Man that works not to be the capable Subject of Juſtification? Provided otherwiſe he be ſuch an one as doth believe? What kind of Works are they which he ſhuts out from having Part and Fellowſhip in this matter? And in what reſpects?

1. Whatever they are, it is not the Preſence of them which he excludes, as if a Man that hath the Works he here ſpeaks of, could not be juſtified; but it is ſuch a juſtifying Vertue, Power, and Property which ſome ſuppoſed to be in them, but were deceived; which he excludes, as having no hand leſs nor more in any Man's Juſtification; for otherwiſe St. *Paul*, though whilſt he was a Phariſee, and to the very time of his believing, was ſuch a Worker as that he could ſay, That *as touching the Righteouſneſs of the Law he was blameleſs*, Phil. iii. 6. yet this was no Obſtruction to his Juſtification, when he did believe indeed.

2. But the Apoſtle's meaning is, that the Abſence of the Works here ſpoken of, would not at all hinder a Man's Juſtification in caſe he did believe, but that he was in as good a Capacity of Juſtification upon his believing, though he had none of the Works he here ſpeaks of, as he would or could have been in caſe he had them all.

3. But then in the next place the main Queſtion will be, What, and what manner, ſort, or kind of Works it is, without which a Man if he believe ſhall be juſtified? And whether he intends to exclude all, and all manner of Works in this caſe, or ſome one ſort or kind only?

For the Reſolution whereof, we muſt conſider upon what occaſion theſe Words of the Apoſtle are here brought in; and what People, and what Opinions they are, againſt which he is here diſputing: The Knowledge of which will be as a Key to open the Door of this Text, and to give us clearly to underſtand what Works they are, without which a Man believing, may be juſtified.

That it is not againſt any ſuch Opinion as reckons a Goſpel-Converſation, conſiſting of Self-denial, Mortification of Worldly Luſts, and Sinful Affections, the Love of Chriſt above all, and the preferring other Men's Spiritual Intereſt and Profit before their own Temporal; and a tender caring for others Temporal Good, as well as their own; I ſay, that it is not any ſuch Opinion againſt which the face of the Apoſtle's preſent Argumentation is bent, will evidently appear,

1. By the carriage of other Scriptures, which are ſo far off from affirming any Man to be juſtified by Faith without theſe Works, as that contrarily they do poſitively and peremptorily conclude and declare that Faith to be dead, unprofitable, and vain, and ſuch as ſhall never ſave, that is without theſe. And therefore we may by no means underſtand the Apoſtle in any ſuch ſenſe, as would make him claſh with, and fall foul upon the general current of the Scripture elſewhere. But the farther opening and handling of this, I muſt reſpite unto its proper place afterwards.

Sect. II. 2. But that the Works here caſt out of doors by the Apoſtle in the matter of Man's Juſtification, are preciſely of that ſort or kind, which are elſewhere called by him *the deeds of the Law*, Rom. iii. 28. *viz.* Moſaical Ordinances and Services, eſpecially ſuch as were Circumciſion, and Sacrifices, and the like, which were Works required in the Law of *Moſes*, I come now to demonſtrate. And for the clearing of our way to this, we will, as I ſaid, conſider the Perſons and their Opinions, againſt which the Apoſtle diſputes.

The Perſons againſt whom the Apoſtle was ingaged in this Diſpute of his, were the unbelieving Jews, or at leaſt ſuch as did Judaize it, that is, in a great meaſure comply with them in their Opinion touching the neceſſity of Circumciſion, and other Moſaical Rites, to Juſtification. For the Jews then being ſcattered among the Gentiles here and there in the Roman Cities and Provinces, and particularly here at *Rome*, *Acts* xxviii. 17, 24. did vehemently oppoſe the Doctrine of the Apoſtles, eſpecially in their preaching Salvation to the Gentiles upon their believing, without the Works of the Law; *forbidding them to ſpeak to the Gentiles*, or to declare unto them, that they might be ſaved upon any ſuch terms. 1 *Theſſ.* ii. 16. *Forbidding us to ſpeak to the Gentiles that they might be ſaved*, &c. To fortifie the Believers, whether Jews or Gentiles, againſt their Inſinuations and Oppoſitions in this kind, the Apoſtle at large debates the Caſe in difference between them, both in this Epiſtle to the *Romans*, and in that to the *Galatians*; which Churches, *viz.* of *Rome* and *Galatia*, it is like, were then peſtered more than others in this kind.

The unſound Opinions held by them, and which this Apoſtle in his Doctrine of Juſtification doth oppoſe in this and other of his Epiſtles, were ſuch as theſe.

Sect. III. 1. That the Meſſiah or Chriſt, which God had promiſed, and they expected, ſhould, whenever he came, abide for ever, and not die. *John* xii. 34. *We have heard out of the* Law (ſay they) *that Chriſt abideth for ever; and how ſayeſt thou the Son of Man muſt be lift up?* This was a Doctrine which it ſeems paſs'd for current among them, their Guides miſ-interpreting ſome one or more paſſage in the Old Teſtament to that purpoſe, that the Meſſiah ſhould never die, but abide for ever without any change by Death: Which Doctrine they took as inconſiſtent with Jeſus his being the Chriſt indeed, and yet ſuffering Death by being lifted up upon the Croſs, which he Prophetically foretold, 1 *Cor.* ii. 7, 8. *But we ſpeak the Wiſdom of God in a myſtery, even the hidden Wiſdom which God ordained before the World unto our Glory. Which none of the Princes of this World knew: for had they known it, they would not have crucified the Lord of Glory.* What was that Wiſdom of God in a myſtery which he ſays they preached? Why it was this, that God had offered Salvation to the World by Chriſt as crucified, which both to the Jews and Greeks was ſuch a Myſtery, as but few of them underſtood, but was their occaſion of ſtumbling at Chriſt, 1 *Cor.* i. 23, 24. But we preach Chriſt crucified, unto the Jews a ſtumbling-block, and to the Greeks fooliſhneſs; but unto them which are called, both Jews and Greeks, Chriſt the Power of God, and the Wiſdom of God. *Which Myſtery*, ſaith he, 1 *Cor.* ii. 7, 8. *viz.* that the Counſel of God was ſo laid, to bring about the Life of Men by the Death of the Meſſias, *None of the Princes of this World knew*, (*viz.* the chief of thoſe that had their hands in his Death,) *for had they known it, they would not have crucified the Lord of Glory.* No ſurely they would not; but it was their ignorance touching thoſe Scriptures which foretold his Humiliation and Death that proved a Snare to them, firſt to reject him becauſe of his low condition, and afterward to crucifie him: So ſaith the Text in effect, *Acts* xiii. 27. *For they that dwell at Jeruſalem, and their Rulers, becauſe they knew him not, nor yet the voices of the Prophets which are read every Sabbath-day, they have fulfilled them in condemning him.*

Sect. IV. 2. The next damnable Opinion which they held, into which they were led by the hand of the former, was this: That Jeſus was not the Chriſt. For they concluded him therefore not to be the Chriſt, becauſe he ſuffered and was crucified; they holding the former Opinion, that ſuch a thing was impoſſible to befal the Chriſt of God. This is clear from 1 *Cor.* i. 23. it was his being crucified that cauſed them to ſtumble at him, and not believe him to be the Chriſt, as it is ſtill unto this day. In oppoſition to which Opinion it is, that the Apoſtle hath that ſaying, *Heb.* ix. 16. *For where a Teſtament is, there muſt alſo of neceſſity be the Death of the Teſtator.* Where he argues the neceſſity of the Death of the true Chriſt for the Ratification of the New Teſtament, of which he is Mediator, in oppoſition to ſome of another mind. Therefore we ſhall find, that to prove the neceſſity of the Death and Reſurrection of the true Chriſt, as alſo to prove that Chriſt his being crucified did not at all argue him not to be the true Chriſt, but the contrary, was a great part of the Apoſtles diſpute againſt the Jews, who as it thereby appears held the contrary, *Acts* xvii. 2, 3. *And Paul, as his manner was, went in unto them,* (*viz.* the Jews in their Synagogues, ver. 1.) *and three Sabbath-days reaſoned with them out of the Scriptures, opening and alledging that Chriſt muſt needs have ſuffered, and riſen again from the dead, and that Jeſus whom I preach unto you is Chriſt.*

Sect. V. 3. Another thing which they held alſo was this, that their Sacrifices (in conjunction with Circumciſion, and other Obſervances) did take away Sin. For, 1. In that they offered Sacrifices for Sin, they thereby acknowledged themſelves to be Sinners, and ſuch as ſtood in need of Atonement; for ſaith the Apoſtle, *Heb.* x. 3. *In thoſe Sacrifices there is a remembrance again made of Sins every Year.* 2. In that they held the true Chriſt ſhould never die, as we heard before, they muſt therefore needs hold withal, that Sin was not to be purged by his Death and Sacrifice. And then, 3*dly.* If not by that, by what then, but by thoſe very Sacrifices of Bulls and Goats which were offered for Sin? which indeed was the naughty Opinion againſt which the Apoſtle ſaith ſo much in the Epiſtle to the Hebrews, *Heb.* x. 1. *For the Law having a ſhadow of good things to come, and not the very image of the things, can never with thoſe Sacrifices, which they offered year by year continually, make the Comers thereunto perfect*; as ſome it ſeems on the contrary did hold. Again, ver. 4. *For it is not poſſible that the Blood of Bulls and of Goats ſhould take away ſins.* What! ſhall we think that the Apoſtle ſets up a Man of Straw, and then fights with it? or that he beats only the Air with his Word? Shall we think that he ſo ſolemnly over and over, and over denies that which no Man affirmed? or would he make ſuch a buſineſs of it to argue the Inefficaciouſneſs, the Unavailableneſs of thoſe Sacrifices to take away Sin, if no body had aſſerted their Power and Efficacy in that behalf? Surely he would not; ſuch a thing is much below the Wiſdom of an ordinary Man, and much more below the Wiſdom and Gravity of a great Apoſtle. It is a good Rule by which to make Judgment of the ill Opinions and Practices then reigning among Men in the Apoſtles times, *viz.* by their zealous and faithful Engagements againſt them, as declared in their Epiſtles, tho' they do not in ſo many words, charge ſuch and ſuch Men with holding or practiſing ſuch or ſuch things.

And ſo when we find the Apoſtle (*Heb.* x.) ſo mightily labouring in this buſineſs, when he hath to do with the believing Jews, that were under Temptations of looking back, arguing from the Old Teſtament, that it was never God's intent to ſet up thoſe Sacrifices under the Law to take away Sin, or to purge the Conſcience, but that they ſerved only unto an outward Purification, and to be as a School-maſter to bring to Chriſt, *by the offering of whom once for all, are perfected for ever thoſe that are ſanctified,* it may be eaſily collected, that certainly the unbelieving Jews did firmly hold the contrary, and that the believing Jews were in danger of being ſhaken in their Faith hereabout; to prevent which, and to eſtabliſh them firmly in the Truth, is the Prize for which the Apoſtle runs, as in the Epiſtle in general, ſo more eſpecially in thoſe Paſſages of it in the ninth and tenth Chapters, which do more immediately concern this buſineſs. See more particularly hereabout, *Heb.* x. 1, 4, 5, 9, 10, 11, 12, 14, 18. and ix. 12, 13, 14, 22, 25, 26. and i. 3. *Acts* xiii. 39.

Theſe three now mentioned, moſt erroneous and highly dangerous Opinions held by the obſtinate Jews, I take to be wrapt up by the Apoſtle in *Rom.* ix. 31, 32, 33. *But Iſrael, which followed after the Law of Righteouſneſs, hath not attained to the Law of Righteouſneſs: Wherefore? becauſe they ſought it not by Faith, but as it were by the Works of the Law: for they ſtumbled at that ſtumbling-ſtone; as it is written, Behold I lay in Zion a Stumbling Stone and a Rock of Offence, and whoſoever believeth on him ſhall not be aſhamed.* That Chriſt was and is a Stumbling Stone unto the Jews, becauſe of his being crucified, is that I ſhewed before: Such a thing falling croſs to their received Opinion, that the true Chriſt ſhould never die; they thereupon thought they had good reaſon to reject Him, and thoſe that taught in his Name, as being confident for that very reaſon he could not be the Meſſiah. So that thoſe two Opinions, 1*ſt*. That the true Chriſt ſhould never die; and 2*dly*, That Jeſus was not the true Chriſt, becauſe he did ſuffer Death, are both implied in that ſaying, ver. 32. *They ſtumbled at that Stumbling-Stone*; and then the third thing, *viz.* their expectation of Remiſſion of Sins, and Acceptation with God by the Legal Sacrifices, and other Moſaical Obſervances, is that which in ver. 31. and 32. is called their following after, or ſeeking the Law of Righteouſneſs, *i. e.* as I conceive, that Law or Covenant by which God hath promiſed to count Men righteous: This indeed they ſought to come under, but miſſed it, becauſe they ſought it not in God's way of believing in Chriſt Jeſus, and him crucified, (for they ſtumbled at that Stumbling-Stone) *but as it were by the Works of the Law*; i. e. I conceive they ſo ſought it, as if the terms of attaining it, appointed by God, had been the doing thoſe Works of the Law.

Sect. VI. 4. Another erroneous Opinion of the unbelieving Jews, wherein ſome alſo of thoſe who did in a ſort believe, did comply with them, was this: That the Gentiles could not be juſtified or ſaved, unleſs they became Proſelytes to their Religion, and were Circumciſed, and ſo kept the Law of *Moſes*, Acts xv. 1, 5. *And certain Men which came down from Judea taught the Brethren, and ſaid, Except ye be circumciſed after the manner of Moſes, ye cannot be ſaved.* Which yet is more fully expreſs'd, ver. 5. *But there roſe up certain of the Sect of the Phariſees which believed, ſaying, that it was needful to circumciſe them, and to command them to keep the Law of Moſes.* Which dangerous Opinion being obtruded upon the believing Gentiles, to the great unſettlement of many of them, thereupon the Apoſtle *Paul* (who was the Apoſtle of the Gentiles) to the end he might undeceive ſuch as had been ſurpriſed with it, and ſtrengthen the Brethren againſt the Infection of it, wrote, as to the Churches in *Galatia*, ſo to this at *Rome*, in both which Epiſtles he doth at large counter-argue this, together with the other fore-mentioned Soul-deſtroying Opinions.

Sect. VII. In flat Contradiction therefore unto theſe Opinions aforeſaid, our Apoſtle in my Text doth affirm, *That to him that worketh not*; that is, to the Gentile who never had obſerved or kept the Law of *Moſes*, *who never had followed after Righteouſneſs*, Rom. ix. 30. *but had lived without God in the World, and as an alien from the Commonwealth of Iſrael; but believeth on him that juſtifieth the Ungodly:* That is, tho' he do not, nor have done the former, yet if he do the latter; that is, if he ſhall believe on him that *came into the World to ſave Sinners, and which in due time died for the Ungodly:* His Faith, that is, this Faith of his, and not thoſe Works of the Law, *ſhall be counted to him for Righteouſneſs.* This then is clearly the Doctrine of the Text, that a poor Idolatrous Heathen, that had no precedent Works of the Law to commend him, of which the Jews boaſted, and in which they truſted; and though ſuch as ſhould never after his beginning to believe, be either circumciſed, or offer the Sacrifices for Sin commanded in the Law, or perform other Jewiſh Rites, yet in caſe he did but believe, and ſhould indeed really imbrace the Goſpel, the Doctrine of Jeſus, he ſhould moſt certainly be juſtified, and perſevering therein, be undoubtedly ſaved, the higheſt and moſt confident Pretenſion of the Jew to the contrary notwithſtanding.

That the faſtening of this Nail is the very Scope and Drift of the Apoſtle, not only in the words of my Text, but alſo in his precedent and ſubſequent Diſcourſe, as well that which goes before, as that which follows after my Text, is that which I ſhall now as briefly, as well as I may, come plainly to ſet before you.

I ſhall carry you no farther back than to *Rom.* iii. 21. *But now the Righteouſneſs of God without the Law is manifeſted, being witneſſed by the Law and the Prophets.* The Righteouſneſs of God; that is (I conceive) God's way and terms of making or accounting

counting Men righteous, *without the Law is manifeſted:* That is, in and by the Goſpel it is declared, publiſhed, tendred, and offered; in the believing and embracing of which Goſpel, and the terms of Grace therein propounded, a Man may attain this Righteouſneſs, tho' he had never heard of the Law. Tho' it's true alſo, that the ſame way and terms of Juſtification is witneſſed and aſſerted in the Law and the Prophets, which is now publiſhed and tender'd by the Goſpel. Which way of accounting Men righteous, or the terms upon, or according to which he does ſo eſteem them, and accordingly deal with them, we have ſet down in the next verſe 22. *which is*, ſaith he, *by Faith of Jeſus Chriſt, unto all, and upon all that believe, for there is no difference:* That is, This Righteouſneſs of God, or this Juſtification of God, or which is of God, it is by Faith of Jeſus Chriſt; that is, it does accrue to Men, or is vouchſafed by God unto Men, by the Faith of Chriſt; that is, by that Faith which Men, that rightly believe, have concerning Chriſt. And this is a Privilege (a glorious one indeed) which is vouchſafed unto all Men indifferently who do believe, whether Jew, who hath followed the Law, or Gentile, who hath been without Law; *it is unto all, and upon all that believe*; *for there is*, ſaith he, *no difference:* The Jew by his Law is never the nearer Juſtification, nor the Gentile by his living without it, never the farther off it, in caſe he do believe, but both in a like capacity, and both actually juſtified upon their believing, and neither the one nor the other at all juſtified till then. For, ſaith he ver. 23. *All have ſinned, and come ſhort of the Glory of God,* both Jews and Gentiles, and therefore both alike are caſt upon the meer Mercy and free Grace of God, ver. 24. *Being juſtified* (if ever they be juſtified) *freely by his Grace, through the Redemption that is in Jeſus Chriſt*, ver. 25. Whom God hath ſet forth (both to Jews and Gentiles) *to be a Propitiation through Faith in his Blood.* Upon which the Apoſtle, ver. 27. makes this demand, *Where is boaſting then?* If the Gentile without the Law be on equal terms with the Jews under his Law, if there be no difference between them, if all have ſinned, and all to be juſtified freely by Grace; if this Juſtification or Righteouſneſs be vouchſafed unto all, and conferred upon all that believe, and not otherwiſe; and that there is no difference between Jew and Gentile in theſe reſpects; then, pray you, where is Boaſting? What is become of the boaſting of the Jews, who were wont to ſay, *We have Abraham to our Father*, and rejoiced in Circumciſion, and made their boaſt of the Law? *Rom.* ii. 23. if for all the Privileges which in this kind they had enjoyed above the Gentile, yet if the Gentile by the Grace of the Goſpel is made equal to the Jew, though he do not at all come under the Law; where then is there any longer place for boaſting?

And in the 28th verſe he draws up his Concluſion from his Premiſſes, ſaying, *Therefore we conclude that a Man is juſtified by Faith, without the Deeds of the Law:* The ſame in effect with my Text. If there be no difference between Jew and Gentile, as was ſaid before, and that the Righteouſneſs of GOD without the Law is manifeſted and tendred to the Gentile, we may well conclude, that a Man, even an ungodly Gentile that hath no Deeds of the Law, if he once come to forſake his Ungodlineſs, and to believe and obey the Goſpel which is to be preached to every Creature, we may conclude that he is indeed juſtified, his Sins pardoned, and he accepted in the Beloved, in whom he hath believed.

But though the Apoſtle concludes the thing, *ver.* 28. *viz.* That the Gentiles might as well be juſtified without the Deeds of the Law, as the Jews with them, and both alike upon condition of believing; yet he does not there conclude his diſcourſe of this matter, but is at it again and again. And therefore in *ver.* 29. he begins again, demanding as it were with Authority thus; *Is he the God of the Jews only?* is he not *alſo of the Gentiles? Yes, of the Gentiles alſo.* As if he ſhould ſay, What do you think that God only takes care of the Jews, and of their Salvation, and that he hath no regard at all to the Gentiles, let them ſink or ſwim? Is he not the God of the Gentiles alſo? Is he not willing to bring them to Salvation as well as the Jews? To which Interrogation he returns this Anſwer: yes, he is the God even of the Gentiles alſo; one propitious and favourable to them as well as the Jews, which appears in this thirtieth Verſe, *Seeing it is one God which ſhall juſtifie the Circumciſion by Faith, and Uncircumciſion through Faith:* The ſame God hath vouchſafed the ſame means, and propoſed one and the ſame way of Juſtification and Salvation, both to thoſe that are circumciſed, and to thoſe that are not, and that is the Faith of the Goſpel. *Where there is neither Jew nor Greek, Circumciſion nor Uncircumciſion:* i. e. no difference between theſe, but as the Scripture ſaith, *They are all one in Chriſt Jeſus*, Gal. iii. 28. Col. iii. 11.

Sect. VIII. Come we now to the 4th Chapter, and draw we nearer the Text. In this fourth Chapter in which my Text is, we have the Truth under Conſideration drawn in lively Colours, *viz.* that Men without Circumciſion, and the reſt of the Jewiſh Ordinances, may upon their cordial embracing the Goſpel, attain Juſtification in the Sight of God. This he makes plain, and proves againſt all Contradiction from the Example of God's proceeding with *Abraham* in the Matter of his Juſtification, who as he was the Father of the Jew, and one in whom they gloried, as counting themſelves the only People of God upon the account of that Covenant which God made with him and his Seed, whoſe Seed according to the Fleſh they were, ſo alſo was he a Father of many Nations, even of as many as ſhould believe, in all Nations of the World, and why ſo? But becauſe God was intended to juſtifie them upon the ſame Terms as he juſtified *Abraham*.

Rom. 4. 1. The Apoſtle begins thus, *What ſhall we ſay then, that Abraham our Father, as pertaining to the fleſh hath found?* In which affirmative Interrogation, we have laid down a vehement Negation of the thing interrogated, according to the uſual Cuſtom and Dialect of the Scriptures in that kind. As if he ſhould ſay, look now upon *Abraham* our Father, and conſider God's proceeding with him, and the Terms upon which God conferred Righteouſneſs or Juſtification on him. And what then? Shall we ſay or think that *Abraham* our Father according to the Fleſh hath found? Hath found what? namely, Juſtification in the Sight of God; for that's the thing in queſtion, the Subject of his preſent Diſcourſe, and that which he preſently mentions, *ver.* 2. as that to which the Interrogation relates. Hath he found it as pertaining to the Fleſh? What's that? Hath he found it in that way in which the Jews boaſtingly think they have met with it, and urge the Gentiles to ſeek after it, *viz.* Circumciſion, and other Works of the Law, which in Oppoſition to the Goſpel-way of Juſtification, is called Fleſh? *Phil.* iii. 3, 4, 5, 6. *Gal.* iii. 3. Hath he found, or did he meet with Juſtification in this way? No certainly, he did not. This he proves, firſt by a clear Text of Scripture out of the Old Teſtament, *ver.* 3. *For what ſaith the Scripture, Abraham believed God, and it was counted to him for Righteouſneſs.* If his believing God was the thing that was counted to him for Righteouſneſs, (which is the thing the Scripture affirms, *Gen.* xv. 6.) then Circumciſion and the reſt of the Ceremonies of the Law could not be it, and therefore could be no more neceſſary in the Gentiles to their Juſtification, than they were to *Abraham*, but that they without Circumciſion, believing as *Abraham* did, they alſo without Circumciſion might be juſtified as *Abraham* was. And therefore accordingly from this Example, the Apoſtle doth aſſert in the words of my Text (which are brought in upon this occaſion) *That to him that worketh not, but believeth on him that juſtifieth the ungodly, his Faith is counted to him for Righteouſneſs.* Which Doctrine of Imputation, of Faith unto Men for Righteouſneſs without Works, the Apoſtle in *ver.* 6, 7, 8. makes clearly agreeable to that Paſſage of *David*, in *Pſalm* xxxii. 1, 2. where he ſays, *Bleſſed are they whoſe Iniquities are forgiven, and whoſe ſins are covered: Bleſſed is the Man unto whom the Lord will not impute ſin.* Whereupon the Apoſtle to draw home this part of his Diſcourſe unto *Abraham*'s Caſe, which is the chief thing he proſecutes throughout this Chapter; in the ninth Verſe he makes this Demand: *Cometh this Bleſſedneſs then upon the Circumciſion only, or upon the Uncircumciſion alſo? For we ſay that Faith was reckoned unto Abraham for Righteouſneſs*, ver. 10. *How then was it reckoned, when he was in Circumciſion or in Uncircumciſion? Not in Circumciſion, but in Uncircumciſion.* Which way of arguing here uſed by the Apoſtle, is of mighty force to evince the Non-neceſſity of Circumciſion unto Juſtification, a thing which the Jews would have impoſed upon the Gentiles in order thereunto, as I have oft ſaid. For if *Abraham*'s Faith was reckoned to him for Righteouſneſs before he was circumciſed, then was not his Circumciſion neceſſary unto his Juſtification which he had without it. And if it were not neceſſary hereunto in *Abraham* their Spiritual Father, neither was it now neceſſary among the believing Gentiles, his Spiritual Children. For the Apoſtle ſeems to intimate in *ver.* 11, 12. that God had this deſign in it, that *Abraham* ſhould receive his Circumciſion, not before, but after his Juſtification; to wit, that he might be the Father, the great Exemplar, Copy, or Pattern, how or after what manner God would juſtifie the uncircumciſed, or Gentiles in time to come, *viz.* by or upon their believing in him without Circumciſion. I might likewiſe ſhew you farther, how the Apoſtle in *ver.* 13. argues the Non-neceſſity of keeping the Law of Commandments contained in Ordinances, in relation to Salvation upon this ground, becauſe the Promiſe of Heirſhip was not made to *Abraham*, or to his Seed through the Law, or upon condition of obſerving that, but through the

Righteouſneſs of Faith, or upon condition of believing unto Juſtification. Of which wiſe and gracious Diſpoſition of theſe things by God, that the Promiſe ſhould be entailed upon believing rather than upon the Obſervation of the Jewiſh Law, the Apoſtle gives this Account, *ver.* 16. *It is by Faith*, ſaith he, *that it might be by Grace, to the end the Promiſe might be ſure to all the Seed*, to wit, of *Abraham*; *not to that only which is of the Law*, ſuch as the Jews his Seed according to the Fleſh were, *but to that alſo which is of the Faith of* Abraham; to wit, the believing Gentiles, who otherwiſe would have been excluded: So that the Grace of God, and the Good of Men, are beſt provided for in this way, and that's the Reaſon why God hath choſen this, and not the other.

Sect. IX. To draw to a Concluſion of this Matter, which is capable as you ſee of a large Confirmation from Scripture, and to paſs over what might be farther enlarged to the ſame purpoſe from other Paſſages in this Epiſtle, I ſhall preſent you only with a Text or two more elſewhere, *Acts* xv. where this very Queſtion is ſolemnly debated among the Apoſtles and Elders, for that very purpoſe aſſembled at *Jeruſalem*, viz. to reſolve and determine this Caſe, whether it were neceſſary for the Gentiles that believed to be circumciſed, and to keep the Law of *Moſes* or no, *ver.* i. 5, 6. *And when there had been much diſputing* (touching this Queſtion, at laſt) *Peter roſe up and ſaid unto them, Men and Brethren, ye know how that a good while ago God made choice among us, that the Gentiles by my Mouth ſhould hear the Word of the Goſpel and believe. And God which knoweth the Hearts, bear them witneſs, giving them the Holy Ghoſt even as he did unto us, and put no difference between us and them, purifying their Hearts by Faith, ver.* 7, 8, 9. Where he gives this undeniable Reaſon why this Queſtion ſhould be reſolved in the Negative, why Circumciſion and the Law ſhould not be impoſed upon the believing Gentiles in order to their Juſtification and Salvation, *viz.* becauſe God by his giving the holy Spirit to the Gentiles (*Cornelius* and the reſt) *Act.* x. that were uncircumciſed; upon the ſame Terms as he did unto the believing Jews that were circumciſed (*Act.* xi. 17.) did bear them witneſs that he accepted them as well without the Law upon their believing, as he did the Jews with their Law; he bare them witneſs, giving them the Holy Ghoſt, even as he did unto us: And that God made no difference at all between Jew and Gentile, as to give the Jew more becauſe he was circumciſed, and kept the Law, or the Gentile leſs becauſe of his Uncircumciſion; but their Hearts and Lives being purified, reformed by Faith, by their cleaving to Chriſt's Doctrine, God beſtowed the ſame Pledge of his Love upon the one as upon the other; the Law did not ſet the Jew higher in his Favour, nor the want of it keep the Gentile under in his Love; but being equal in Faith, they were equally accepted and beloved of God: *He put no difference between us and them*, ſays St. *Peter*, who was a Jew.

And when St. *Peter* at another time was found by his Brother St. *Paul*, not acting ſo evenly, according to this his preſent Declaration, but contrarily compelling the believing Gentiles to walk as did the Jews, *Gal.* ii. 14. he reproves him for it upon this ground, that St. *Peter* himſelf knew this, that they themſelves who were by Nature and Birth Jews, and not Sinners of the Gentiles, could not for all that be juſtified by the Law, which they as Jews obſerved; but muſt be glad to come by it in the ſame way, and upon the ſame Terms in which the Sinners of the Gentiles did obtain it; to wit, the Faith of Jeſus Chriſt, *Gal.* ii. 14, 15, 16. *If thou being a Jew, liveſt after the manner of the Gentiles, and not as do the Jews, why compelleſt thou the Gentiles to live as do the Jews? We who are Jews by Nature, and not Sinners of the Gentiles, knowing that a Man is not juſtified by the Works of the Law, but by the Faith of Jeſus Chriſt, even we have believed in Jeſus Chriſt, that we might be juſtified by the Faith of Chriſt, and not by the Works of the Law; for by the Works of the Law ſhall no Fleſh be juſtified.* By which the Apoſtle plainly intimates, that it was ſo far from being neceſſary to compel the believing Gentiles to keep the Law of the Jews to make them capable of Juſtification, as that the Jews themſelves who had the Law and the Works of it, muſt needs lay aſide the Conſideration thereof in their coming to God for Juſtification; and muſt be content to receive it upon like Terms of Grace with the Gentiles themſelves, as St. *Paul* himſelf did, *Phil.* iii. 9. who deſired to be found in Chriſt, not having his own Righteouſneſs which was of their Law, as he was a Jew, but that which was through the Faith of Chriſt, as he was a Chriſtian.

CHAP. III.

Shewing how Love, Juſtice, and Mercy, though commanded both in Law and Goſpel, are to be rejected in the Jewiſh ſenſe, and yet embraced in the Chriſtian's, as neceſſary unto Juſtification. Shewing alſo in what ſenſe Works are neceſſary unto Juſtification.

Sect. I. HAving thus far ſhewed what Works they are which the Apoſtle in our Text excludes from Juſtification, as unneceſſary thereunto, *viz.* ſuch Works as were proper to the Jews, in contra-diſtinction to the Gentiles, which are in Scripture uſually called the Works of the Law; for about them did the Controverſie grow, as we have ſeen before: All that I ſhall now add by way of uſe as to this matter, ſhall be for caution: To take heed how we oppoſe Faith to Works, and that when we do ſo, we be ſure to keep the Scripture-road, which I have been now tracing out.

It is true, Faith and Love are often in the New Teſtament diſtinguiſhed, or mentioned, as things diſtinct, in a ſtrict ſenſe, *Epheſ.* vi. 23. 1 *Tim.* i. 14. and ii. 15. 2 *Tim.* i. 13. *Philem.* 5, &c. but I am not without much Confidence, that they are never oppoſed, as Faith and the Works of the Law are: As if a Man that hath no Love might be juſtified by his Faith, as he that worketh not, or which hath no Works, in our Apoſtle's ſenſe, may. It is no where, neither in Words nor Senſe, ſaid, But he that loveth not, but believeth on him that juſtifieth the Ungodly, his Faith is counted to him for Righteouſneſs; but the contrary in ſubſtance is flatly affirmed by the Apoſtle St. *James*, *chap.* ii. beſides other Scriptures, as I ſhall, God willing, come afterwards to ſhew. And therefore I do think that our Proteſtant Writers have given too much advantage to the Papiſts, whilſt in aſſerting Juſtification by Faith alone, without any Works at all, they have in the mean while chiefly, if not only, built this their Aſſertion upon ſuch Scriptures as my Text, with others of like nature, which treat not of all Works in general, but of ſuch as did belong unto the Jews in ſpecial; and therefore are uſually called *the Works of the Law*, or *the Deeds of the Law.* Works of what Law, I pray you? But of that Law which, as the Apoſtle ſaith, *pertained to the Iſraelites*, *Rom.* ix. 4. and which as the ſame Apoſtle ſaith alſo the Gentiles had not, *Rom.* ii. 12, 14. 1 *Cor.* ix. 21.

Sect. II. *Obj.* But when the Apoſtle oppoſeth this Law that was given unto the Jews unto Faith, and when he denies Juſtification to be by the Works of that Law, is it not all one as if he ſhould oppoſe Faith unto Works commanded in the Goſpel? For the ſame Works of Love, Juſtice and Mercy that are enjoyned in the Goſpel, are alſo commanded in the Law.

Anſw. This indeed is an Objection that deſerves Conſideration; but for anſwer take it thus: Though it be very true, that the ſame Works of Love, Juſtice, and Mercy, be enjoyned both in Law and Goſpel, yet it will not follow, that when the Apoſtle oppoſeth the Works of the Law to Faith, that then he oppoſeth Goſpel-works to Faith likewiſe, for theſe two Reaſons:

1. Becauſe thoſe Works, as they were enjoyned the Jews in the Law, were part of the firſt Covenant, but as they are enjoyned in the Goſpel, ſo they are part of the ſecond Covenant. But now the Law, or firſt Covenant, (in the Letter of it) was not of Faith, ſaith the Apoſtle: The things promiſed in it were ſuſpended, not upon the condition of Believing, but of Doing; *but the Man that doth them, ſhall live in them,* Gal. iii. 12. Upon which account, and in reſpect whereof, the Works even of Love, Juſtice and Mercy, as enjoyned under that Covenant, may poſſibly be oppoſed to Faith. Whereas the Goſpel, or new Covenant, which alſo contains in it Precepts of Love, Equity and Mercy, as well as Promiſes of Pardon, Acceptation and Salvation, and not promiſing the Enjoyment of the one, without Obedience in the other; (as is farther to be ſhewed afterwards) I ſay, this Goſpel or New Covenant is ſo of Faith, and all the conditional parts of it ſo relating to, and depending upon Faith, as that it is ſo far from being oppoſed to Faith, as the other Covenant is, as that the whole Goſpel, New-Teſtament of Covenant, both in its Precepts and Promiſes, bears the denomination of

Faith, being ſometimes ſtiled *the Faith*, *Gal.* i. 2, 3. and iii. 23. *Acts* vi. 7. *Rom.* i. 5. *Jude* 3. ſometimes *the Law of Faith*, *Rom.* iii. 27.

And when we ſuppoſe the Duties and Works of Love to be oppoſed to Faith under one Covenant, for reaſons proper to it, and yet the ſame Works not to be oppoſed to Faith in the other Covenant, for reaſons peculiar to it, let it not ſeem ſtrange to any Man; for it is no new thing to affirm and deny the ſame thing, under ſeveral Circumſtances and different Conſiderations: As the Apoſtle St. *John*, for Example, touching this great Commandment of *Love*, of which we now ſpeak; he affirms it to be no New Commandment, but an Old; and yet preſently again ſays the ſame is a New Commandment, 1 *John* ii. 7, 8. *Brethren, I write no new Commandment unto you, but an old Commandment, which ye had from the beginning: The old Commandment is the Word which ye have heard from the beginning. Again, a new Commandment I write unto you, which thing is true in him and in you; becauſe the Darkneſs is paſt, and the true Light now ſhineth.* The Law of Love is an old Commandment, as it is part of the old Covenant; and yet the ſame is a new Commandment, as it is part of the new Covenant, being given anew by Chriſt the Mediator thereof, and now upon new terms too, not as oppoſed to Faith, as in the former, but as in a collateral and ſubſervient way, joined with it in the latter. And beſides this, the ſame Commandment under this new Edition of it, comes out with enlargement, which makes it new: *Which thing* (ſaith the Apoſtle) *is true in him, and in you.* In him, who hath not only given this new Command, *John* xiii. 34. *A new Commandment I give unto you, that ye love one another as I have loved you*; but alſo hath given us the Pattern of it in his own Example, having ſo loved us, as to lay down his Life, and to give himſelf for us, *Gal.* ii. 20. Which thing, as it is true in him, ſo in you, ſaith he, 1 *John* ii. 8. becauſe we ought therefore, not only to love our Neighbour as our ſelves, as before it was commanded; but now even to lay down our Lives for the Brethren, 1 *John* iii. 16. as he hath done for us. Of all which, *viz.* that the ſame Command, though in one reſpect it was old, yet in another it was new, and truly verified both in Chriſt and in the Saints, the Apoſtle gives this Reaſon in the fore-mentioned place, 1 *John* ii. 8. *Becauſe the Darkneſs is paſt, and the true Light now ſhineth*: The different diſpenſing of the ſame thing, hath made this difference in it: It was an old Commandment, as it was once enjoined under the old Covenant, but now the Darkneſs and Obſcurity of that Covenant and Diſpenſation being paſt (as when once it grew old, it was then ready to vaniſh, *Heb.* viii. 13.) and the true and new Light in the Goſpel and new Covenant now ſhining, under which the ſame Duties of Love are enjoined upon other terms than before, it might upon this account be well ſtiled a New Commandment, which yet in ſubſtance was an Old one.

Sect. III. 2. But Secondly and chiefly, The Reaſon why the Works of Love, Juſtice and Mercy, as commanded in the Goſpel, are not oppoſed to Faith by the Apoſtle in the point of Juſtification, though theſe and all other Works commanded in the Law, in the Senſe in which they were aſſerted by the Jews, are oppoſed to Faith in that caſe, is this: Becauſe there is ſo vaſt a difference between the Senſe in which we do aſſert an Evangelical Neceſſity of theſe to Juſtification, and that Senſe in which the Jews did aſſert the Availableneſs of theſe, together with other Works of the Law, unto Juſtification, as that the Apoſtle might well withſtand the one Senſe as damnable, and yet the other in the mean while remain under his full approbation. For our Apoſtle was ſo far from denying the Neceſſity of the Works of the Law unto Juſtification, ſaving in that erroneous Senſe in which the Jews maintained them, as that he did affirm, that during the time in which they were enjoined by God, Juſtification was not to be had without them, (as conjoined with Faith,) *Rom.* ii. 13. *For not the Hearers of the Law are juſtified before God, but the Doers of the Law ſhall be juſtified.* It was no more Men's hearing of the Law, and leaning upon God, (as ſome did, *Mic.* iii. 11.) without ſincere Obedience to the Law in one thing as well as in another, that would render them acceptable to God then, than Men's barren, formal, and dead Faith, under the Profeſſion of the Goſpel, will without an upright and careful Conformity to the Doctrine of Chriſt, render them acceptable to *God* now.

As concerning that Senſe in which the Jews aſſerted, and the Apoſtle denied the neceſſity of the Works of the Law to Juſtification, take it thus: They being ignorant of God's Righteouſneſs, (*Rom.* x. 3.) and of his deſign to teach Men by the Types and Figures of the Law, as by a School-maſter, to expect Juſtification by the Death of Chriſt, and Faith in his Blood, (*For by reaſon of the Vail that was upon their Hearts,* *they could not ſee to the end of that which is aboliſhed*, 2 Cor. iii. 13, 14, 15.) I ſay, they being herein altogether ignorant, were on the other hand highly confident, that God had ordained their Legal Sacrifices to purge them from their Sins, and their Obedience in them and other Points of the Law, to be the only means to inveſt them with all the Good that ever the Lord intended them; not only in things Temporal, but alſo Spiritual and Eternal. So that that which the Goſpel attributes to the New Covenant, to the Blood of it, to the Faith of it, to the Obedience of it; they attributed and aſcribed all of it to the Blood and Obedience of the Old Covenant.

So that the Queſtion between the Apoſtle and them, was but this: Whether Eternal Redemption were to be had upon the firſt Covenant Terms, or the ſecond; whether by the Works of the Law, or the Faith of the Goſpel; the believing in, and ſubjecting to the Lord Jeſus as that only Name, Way and Means, in which Salvation is to be had. The Apoſtle he affirms, that Salvation is to be had by the latter without the former, by the New Covenant Terms without the Old; the Jews on the contrary they held, that Salvation was to be had by the former without the latter, by the Works of the Law without believing in, or obeying of Jeſus. It is moſt evident and certain, that thus and thus, as hath been declared, is the true Sence in which the Jews held the Works of the Law available to Juſtification and Salvation, and it is as clear likewiſe, that in the very ſame Sence the Apoſtle doth deny and reject them, charging the whole ſtreſs of all upon Chriſt, and believing in, and following of him.

Sect. IV. This is eaſie to be diſcerned in the Apoſtles Writings, of which I have given an account in my ſecond Chapter, to which I refer you, and ſhall here add two or three Texts more, *Phil.* iii. 7, 8, 9. *But what things were Gain to me, thoſe I counted Loſs for Chriſt; yea doubtleſs, and I do count all things but Loſs for the Excellency of the Knowledge of Chriſt Jeſus my Lord, for whom I have ſuffered the Loſs of all things, and do count them but Dung, that I may win Chriſt, and be found in him not having mine own Righteouſneſs which is of the Law, but that which is through the Faith of Chriſt, the Righteouſneſs which is of God by Faith.* He had ſhewed before what the Jews truſted in, boaſted of, and which he himſelf alſo whilſt he was as they were, did count his *Gain*, viz. *Circumciſed the eight Day, of the Stock of Iſrael, of the Tribe of Benjamin, an Hebrew of the Hebrews, touching the Righteouſneſs of the Law blameleſs.* But when he became a Chriſtian, he let go all theſe things which he held ſo faſt before; took off and removed that Confidence and Streſs which he had placed in theſe, and now lays all upon Chriſt, and Faith in him. That which he now expected by Chriſt, he did indeed expect by his Righteouſneſs in the Law before; but that which was his Hope and his Confidence, his Joy and his Glory before, is now but Loſs and Dung with him, when once the Excellency of the Knowledge of the way of Salvation by Chriſt, does appear. Now all his Deſire is to be found in Chriſt, rejoycing in Chriſt, truſting in Chriſt, cleaving to Chriſt; not any more to be found in the Dreſs of his own Righteouſneſs which was of the Law, the firſt Covenant Righteouſneſs, that Righteouſneſs in the Law, touching which as he ſays he was blameleſs, *ver.* 6. Which whilſt he expected Salvation by it, was a Righteouſneſs or Way of Juſtification of his own ſetting up, never of God's appointing. In Oppoſition whereto, he deſires now to be found in that Righteouſneſs which is of God through Faith; in that State of Juſtification and Salvation, which God in the Goſpel hath ſetled and eſtabliſhed upon believing in Jeſus. So that here in this Contexture of Scripture, you have the Jews Righteouſneſs or Juſtification, and the Chriſtians; through both which this Apoſtle had paſſed, and of both which he had made Tryal: The Jews claim was by the Law, and the Works thereof, but the Chriſtians by the Goſpel, and the Faith, and Obedience thereof: The Act of his Converſion was his renouncing of the former, and cleaving to the latter.

Rom. ix. 30, 31, 32. *What ſhall we ſay then, that the Gentiles which followed not after Righteouſneſs, have attained to Righteouſneſs, even the Righteouſneſs which is of Faith: But Iſrael which followed after the Law of Righteouſneſs hath not attained to the Law of Righteouſneſs; Wherefore? Becauſe they ſought it not by Faith, but as it were by the Works of the Law; for they ſtumbled at that ſtumbling-ſtone.* Here we have two manner of People, the Gentiles and the Jews; and two ſorts of Righteouſneſs, the one of the Law, the other of Faith, or of the Goſpel. The Gentiles who had not followed after Righteouſneſs, but lived in Idolatry, Sin, and Wickedneſs, and without God in the World, being altogether Strangers to the Common-wealth of *Iſrael*, and that Covenant of Promiſe, yet attained to Righteouſneſs, a State of Juſtification and Acceptation before God, upon their receiving the Goſpel, the Doctrine of Life and Salvation, when it was brought among them. The Jews though they followed after the Law of Righteouſneſs, thoſe Laws wherein a righteous Converſation was commanded by God, and did many of the things that were commanded therein, having a Zeal towards God; yet for all that, did not arrive at that Juſtification and Acceptation with God, which the Gentiles attained; and the reaſon was, becauſe they did not ſeek it in the Goſpel-way in which the Gentiles found it: They ſhould have let go the Doctrine of *Moſes*, and have embraced the Doctrine of Chriſt, and have reckoned themſelves but in the ſame Capacity with the Gentiles for all their Works of the Law, and have ſaid as ſome of them did, *We believe that through the Grace of our Lord Jeſus Chriſt, we ſhall be ſaved even as they*, Acts xv. 11. But inſtead of this *they ſtumbled at the Stumbling-ſtone*, Chriſt Jeſus and him crucified, and the Offer of Salvation by him, and did adhere unto the Works of the Law for all things pertaining to Salvation, and would have Juſtification upon the Law Terms; this ran in their Mind, if a Man do thoſe things he ſhall live in them, and ſo ventured all upon that Score. It was quite beyond their Expectation, that the Meſſiah, whenever he ſhould come, ſhould turn them out of their way of ſacrificing, by becoming a Sacrifice himſelf; or that their Expectation of Remiſſion of Sin ſhould be taken off the former, and placed on the latter: And therefore they cleaving to the Letter of the Law for Eternal Salvation, which ſo far was ordained by God but for a Temporal, and rejecting Chriſt and the Terms of Salvation by him which the Law pointed them to in the Spiritual Signification of it, of which they were wholly ignorant. Hence it came to paſs, that for all their labouring, ſeeking, and ſtriving after Righteouſneſs, Juſtification, and Salvation; yet they miſſed it, as ſeeking it out of God's Way, upon their own Terms, not God's.

Gal. ii. 21. *For if Righteouſneſs come by the Law, then Chriſt is dead in vain.* How could that be? But that they did attribute and aſcribe the ſame attoning Virtue, and Sin-purging Efficacy unto the Works of the Law, which the Goſpel does attribute unto the Blood of Jeſus. And then indeed, if it had been ſo as they ſuppoſed it was, that Sacrifices or any other Works of the Law, could have purged Sin ſo as Chriſt does by his Death and Blood; then the Death of Chriſt would have been in vain, God would never have put himſelf to that Charge, as to give his Son to Death to take away the Sin of Men, if the Works of the Law had been a competent means to bring it about. *If there had been a Law* (ſaith the Apoſtle) *which could have given Life, verily Righteouſneſs ſhould have been by the Law*, Gal. iii. 21. If the Law and the Works therein commanded, could have done the ſame thing towards the conferring of Life and Salvation upon Men which is now brought to paſs by the coming and dying of Jeſus, then Righteouſneſs and Life ſhould have been by that. But now inaſmuch as that God hath given his Son to die, (for here he writes to thoſe that did acknowledge Chriſt and his Death; but withal inclined to that Opinion, *Acts* xv. that except Men kept the Law of *Moſes* they could not be ſaved) ſince God hath given his Son to die, it is (as if he ſhould ſay) manifeſt, that the Law fell ſhort in Ability of doing that for Men; for the doing of which God ſent his own Son, *Rom.* viii. 3. *For what the Law could not do in that it was weak through the Fleſh, God ſent his own Son in the Similitude of ſinful Fleſh, and for Sin*, (or by a Sacrifice for Sin as it is in the Margin) *condemned Sin in the Fleſh.* What the Law could not do in that it was weak through the Fleſh, that is (I conceive) through or by reaſon of the Sins of the Fleſh; the ſinful Condition of Man was ſo great, as that it quite over-topt the purging Power of the Law, the Diſeaſe was too ſtrong to be cured with ſuch a Purge, the Sins of the Fleſh overmatched the Law in this kind, and rendred it weak: And therefore God was fain to ſend his own Son to condemn Sin, to take away the deſtroying Power of Sin by the Sacrifice of himſelf, for that the Law could not do it by its Sacrifice.

In that the Apoſtle writes ſo much, and in ſo many Places (for there are many more beſides theſe) touching the Weakneſs and Diſability of the Law, to do that for Men which God ſent Chriſt to do for them; it is in Oppoſition to thoſe who magnified the Law as if it had been able to do all that for them, which the Apoſtle doth aſcribe to Chriſt as done by him.

By what hath been now ſaid, I think it doth fully appear in what Sence the Jews aſſerted the Works of their Law in the Point of Juſtification, and likewiſe in what Sence the Apoſtle denies them.

Sect. V. And now if any Man ſhall ſay, that *Love*, *Juſtice*, and *Mercy*, yea or the Act of Faith it ſelf, or any other Work commanded in the Goſpel, does juſtifie as Chriſt's Blood juſtifies, by way of Atonement for Sin, let him be accurſed. It is the Prerogative Royal peculiarly and alone belonging to Chriſt, thus to juſtifie, in which no Creature in Heaven or Earth, or any Action of any Creature, bears any the leaſt Share, *Heb.* i. 3. *When he had by himſelf purged our Sins, ſat down on the right hand of the Majeſty on high.* To purge from Sin is the ſelf-work of Chriſt, *Heb.* vii. 27. and ix. 26, 28. and x. 12, 14. When ſome of the *Galatians* were but about to attribute the ſame juſtifying Power unto the Law, which they had acknowledged to be in Chriſt, St. *Paul* teſtifies to them, that in doing ſo they would render Chriſt of *none effect* to them, *and fall from Grace*, Gal. v. 4. So dangerous a thing is it to join any in Competition or Co-partnerſhip with Chriſt in this Work, or to attribute the ſame juſtifying Vertue to any beſide him. And if any among the Papiſts ſhould aſcribe any ſuch Operation or Vertue to any of their Works, though as dipt in the Blood of Chriſt, and receiving their Vertue from that, it would doubtleſs be found a piece of high Preſumption, and a Sin of a daring nature before the Lord.

But alas! How far off are we from aſcribing any ſuch Power, Operation, or Vertue unto any Work which a Chriſtian can do? Nay, Faith it ſelf, though it be ſo neceſſary unto Juſtification, as that without which the Blood of Chriſt will not juſtifie and ſave Men; yet it is far from being neceſſary upon any ſuch account, as if it could in the leaſt operate as Chriſt's Blood does, or add any thing unto the ſaving Vertue thereof: And yet neceſſary it is, becauſe ſuch is the Will of God, as that the ſaving Benefit of that Blood ſhall not be made over unto any Man, but upon condition of his believing. So I ſay of Works (I mean Goſpel-obedience) though we ſay they are ſo neceſſary as that no Man's Faith ſhall juſtifie him that is void of them; or which is all one, that no Man's Faith ſhall juſtifie him without them: Yet we ſay alſo, that they are far from being neceſſary upon any ſuch ſcore as Chriſt's Blood is neceſſary, or as if they could contribute any thing unto its atoning Vertue. Nor is it neceſſary in this caſe, to ſuppoſe them to be formally of the Nature of Faith, nor to be eſſential to the Act of believing; nor that the ſame juſtifying Act, Office, or Power, is placed in them by God, as is in Faith: Yet neceſſary they are unto Juſtification, becauſe ſuch is the Will and good Pleaſure of God, as that though he will have Faith to entitle Men to the juſtifying and ſaving Benefit of Chriſt's Blood; yet he will not intereſs an unprofitable, dead, barren, fruitleſs, formal Faith in that ſaving Benefit and Privileges of the New Covenant, but reſerves this Honour for that Faith only which is an active lively working Faith, and which makes a Man as well ready and deſirous to give Honour and Glory unto the Lord in doing his Will, as to receive Honour and Glory from him in the way of believing his Promiſe. This, God willing, I ſhall make fully evident, when I come to treat of the Doctrine of Faith and Juſtification by it, in the handling of the ſecond part of my Text.

Sect. VI. In the mean while, if this burthen any Man's Mind, how to think or conceive that Faith in its firſt juſtifying Act in cloſing with Chriſt, ſhould be accompanied with Works, whenas that firſt Act is done in an inſtant: But Faith's bearing of Fruit, and producing of good Works, is a Work of Time, and ſhall therefore think that ſure Faith muſt needs be alone and without Works in the firſt Act of its juſtifying Work, whatever it be after. I ſhall eaſe this Burthen, and anſwer this Objection, by diſtinguiſhing of Works.

There are two Sorts of Works.

1. Such as conſiſt in Will, Purpoſe, and Deſire.
2. Such as conſiſt in the actual Execution of thoſe Reſolutions and Deſires.

That thoſe Motions, Reſolutions, and Deſires that are tranſacted in the Will, by way of Preparation of turning them into Actions of another Nature when Opportunity ſhall ſerve; I ſay, that theſe are Works in God's account, who is as well privy to them as to external Actions, is moſt evident, *Mic.* ii. 1. *Wo to them that deviſe Iniquity, and work Evil upon their Beds: When the Morning is light they practice it, becauſe it is in the Power of their Hand.* Their deviſing and reſolving upon Evil in the Night, in order to the Practice of it in the Day, is called a working of Evil upon their Beds. Again, *Pſal.* lviii. 2. *Yea, in Heart ye work Wickedneſs: You weigh the Violence of your hands in the Earth.* The evil Actions and Motions of the Mind and Will, are called a working of Wickedneſs in the Heart; as the *looking on a Woman* *to luſt after her*, is called the *committing adultery with her in his heart*, Mat. v. 28. All which is as true of good Intentions, Reſolutions and Deſires, as of evil; the reſolving upon Good when opportunity preſents, is a working of Good in the Soul, as well as the reſolving upon Evil upon the like terms is the working of Evil.

Now then that Faith which is not accompanied with good Works of this kind in the Soul's firſt faſtening upon Chriſt by Faith for Salvation; I ſay, that Soul that does not come to Chriſt with a ſenſe of ſuch worthineſs in him, as to deſire and reſolve through the ſtrength of his Grace to give up it ſelf to him, and to be commanded by him, that Faith, that Soul, by all the light that I can get from Scripture, is never like to be accepted, or to paſs for currant in Chriſt's account. Nor will ſuch Deſires and Reſolutions do it neither, that are but airy, and of the nature of falſe Conceptions, and which ſpend themſelves, and languiſh and vaniſh in Deſiring and Reſolving, like the Sluggard *Solomon* ſpeaks of, *Prov.* xiii. 4. *Whoſe Soul deſireth, and hath nothing:* No; unleſs they have that Truth and Reality, that Strength and Subſtance, as to be delivered of ſuch Conceptions, and to bring forth Fruit unto Perfection when opportunity comes; and not like that Corn that groweth upon the Houſe-top, that withereth before it come to maturity, they are never like to obtain the Honour and Reputation of ſuch Deſires and Reſolutions as will paſs for good Works in God's account. But if the Soul, in its firſt cloſing with Chriſt by Faith, go armed, and the Faith of the Soul, attended with real, hearty, and unfeigned Deſires and Purpoſes, to render unto the Lord in Love, Honour and Service, according to the benefit it expects to receive from him, and that nothing but lack of opportunity hinders the real acting and executing theſe Deſires and Reſolves with ſuitable Endeavours, doubtleſs that Soul, that Faith, is accepted with the Lord, as well as if all thoſe Purpoſes, Inclinations and Deſires of the Soul, were ſo many viſible Works, ſo many actual Performances. *For if there be firſt a willing mind, it is accepted according to that a Man hath, and not according to that he hath not*, 2 Cor. viii. 12. If it hath but paſſed the Will in good earneſt, it is not the want of more ability, or more opportunity, that will hinder the Man's acceptation; but accepted he is and ſhall be with the Lord, with what he hath in this kind, be it more or be it leſs.

And now having ſhewed you both in what ſenſe the unbelieving Jews did, and in what ſenſe we do hold Works neceſſary unto Juſtification and Salvation; I now pray you to make Judgment upon the whole, and let your own Conſcience ſpeak, whether there be the leaſt or lighteſt probability, that when the Apoſtle rejecteth the Works of the Law from Juſtification, in the ſenſe in which the Jews aſſerted them, that then and therein he ſhould alſo reject the Chriſtian Reſolutions and Endeavours commanded in the Goſpel, upon pain of Damnation, from Juſtification in the ſenſe in which I have ſuppoſed them abſolutely neceſſary thereunto.

Sect. VII. Neither is this any new Doctrine, only it may be I have uſed a little more liberty of Expreſſion, in aſſerting the neceſſity of Works to Juſtification, than many others, who have been over-awed by a miſunderſtanding of St. *Paul*'s Saying in my Text, have adventured to do. Otherwiſe, though there ſeems to be an over-tenderneſs and ſhyneſs in our Proteſtant Authors, while engaged againſt the Papiſts, to ſay in plain Words that any Works are neceſſary to Juſtification, yet in the mean while they confidently and boldly aſſert in other Words that which amounts to as much, and ſignifies the ſame thing. For that they might not be thought, by denying the neceſſity of good Works unto Juſtification, to open a gap unto carnal Liberty, and to lay a Temptation upon Men to be leſs careful in the great Work of Sanctification, they are wont to aſſert over and over, that though they do not hold good Works neceſſary to Juſtification, yet they do hold them neceſſary unto Salvation, ſo that though Men may be juſtified without them, yet they cannot be ſaved without them.

But I demand, what Juſtification is that which will not put Men into an immediate capacity of Salvation, but that there is a neceſſity of Works to do this for Men? Can any call this a Juſtification unto Life, as the Scripture calls that Juſtification which is of the Goſpel-kinds? *Rom.* v. 18. And does it not come to the ſame iſſue to ſay, that Faith without Works will not juſtifie, and to ſay that Juſtification without Works will not ſave? For is Juſtification any thing elſe than a diſcharging or ſetting a Man free from Condemnation, and conſequently bringing him into a condition of Life? So that whether the defect lie in the Faith that ſhould juſtifie, becauſe of the abſence of Works, or whether in the Juſtification it ſelf, becauſe of the abſence of Works, it matters not; for it ſeems there is the ſame neceſſity of Works unto Salvation on which ſide ſoever it fall: With the ſenſe of which neceſſity, to fill the Hearts and Souls of Men, is the thing I drive at in this Diſcourſe.

But that to grant Works neceſſary unto Salvation, is all one in effect as to grant them neceſſary unto Juſtification; and that there is no more danger in the one than in the other; and that the difference between the one and the other is but in a Sound of Words, and not in Subſtance of Matter; and conſequently, that they that deny the neceſſity of Works in the one ſenſe, and yet grant it in the other, do but reſtore with the right hand what they unduly took away with the left, is a thing clear and evident from the Scriptures, as well as from the Reaſon of the thing which I thus declare.

1. Our Apoſtle St. *Paul* uſes theſe two Phraſes, to be *juſtified*, and to *live*, as Words equivalent, and importing the ſame Thing, and reckons it a good Demonſtration to prove, that Men are not juſtified by the Works of the Law, but by Faith, inaſmuch as that the Scripture ſaith, *The juſt ſhall live by Faith*, Gal. iii. 11. *But that no Man is juſtified by the Law in the ſight of God it is evident: for the juſt ſhall live by Faith.* Which would be a defective way of arguing, if to be *juſtified* and to *live* were not the ſame thing with the Apoſtle. So again *ver.* 21. of the ſame Chapter: *For if there had been a Law given which could have given Life, verily Righteouſneſs ſhould have been by the Law.* Here we ſee again that Righteouſneſs and Life are convertible terms by the Apoſtles; if Life, then Righteouſneſs; if Righteouſneſs, then Life by the Law. And ſo to be *juſtified*, and to be *bleſſed*, is all one thing with the ſame Apoſtle, *Gal.* iii. 8, 9. *Rom.* iv. 7, 8, 9. And to be *ſaved*, or to be *juſtified*, is the ſame thing with the Apoſtle St. *James*, according to the tenour of his Reaſoning, *James* ii. from verſe 14. to the 24th.

2. Juſtification and Condemnation are in Scripture put in direct oppoſition one to another, *Rom.* v. 18. and viii. 33. So that he that is juſtified is free from Condemnation; and to be free from Condemnation, and to be in a ſtate of Salvation, is as much one, as not to die, is to live.

3. Salvation, as well as Juſtification, is promiſed to Believing, *John* iii. 16. *Acts* xvi. 31. *Heb.* x. 39. Therefore to be in a ſalvable Condition, is the immediate effect of Faith, as well as to be juſtified; and conſequently that a Man is as ſoon in a ſalvable condition, as in a juſtified condition; and if ſo, then look what is neceſſary to the being of one, is neceſſary to the being of the other alſo, with a neceſſity *ſine qua non*, without which neither will be.

And now what doth all this prove? but that if Men cannot be in a ſalvable condition without Works, (which is the thing granted) then neither can they be in a juſtified condition without them, becauſe there is no ſeparating of theſe. But I ſtill deſire you, that when I thus ſpeak of the neceſſity of good Works unto Juſtification, that you will do me and your ſelves too that right, as to underſtand me in the ſenſe in which I have explained my ſelf before, *viz.* that they are neceſſary ſo, as to render that Faith, by which Men are juſtified, to be of the right kind, and ſuch unto which Juſtification is promiſed. Under which ſenſe I am far enough from complying with the Papiſts, who (if they be not wronged) hold Works to be Satisfactory, Propitiatory, and Meritorious; for that's their Charge; ſee Dr. *Downam*'s Treatiſe *Juſti. lib.* 7. *cap.* 1. *ſect.* 1. And as I am far from complying with them, ſo am I far enough from differing from thoſe that oppoſe them, if their own Conceſſions about the neceſſity of Works may be but fairly conſtrued and argued upon. This, by what I have but newly ſaid, doth plainly appear, and might be farther evinced by other of their Sayings, wherein they do acknowledge, That that Faith which is alone ſevered from Charity, and deſtitute of good Works, doth neither juſtifie nor ſave, but that there is a neceſſity of them, a neceſſity of Preſence, though not of Efficiency; and that they muſt concur with Faith in the Subject or Party juſtified, though not in the Act of Juſtification. And what's all this leſs than that which I have ſaid? I ſay, Faith void of Works will not juſtifie; They ſay, that Faith which is alone ſevered from Charity, and deſtitute of good Works, will not juſtifie nor ſave: I ſay, it's not neceſſary to hold or ſay that the ſame juſtifying Act, Office, or Power, is placed in them, as is in Faith; They ſay, they are not neceſſary by way of Efficiency: I ſay, God denies the juſtifying Privilege unto a barren dead Faith, and reſerves it only for a lively working Faith; They ſay, there's a neceſſity of Preſence, and that they concur with Faith in the Subject or Party juſtified, though not in the Act of juſtifying.

So that a neceſſity of Goſpel-Obedience to accompany that Faith which ſhall juſtifie, is acknowledged on all hands.

And if Men had but laid out themſelves as much to poſſeſs the People with a thorough Senſe of this, as they have to preſerve them from the Errors of the Papiſts on the other hand; it might, I conceive, have been much better with their Souls, than now it is. For while their Eyes and Ears have been filled ſo much with the Doctrine of Juſtification by Faith without Works (when they have meant it only in Oppoſition to the Popiſh Senſe) and ſo little with the Doctrine touching the Unavailableneſs of that Faith unto Juſtification, that does not knit the Soul to Chriſt with ſuch Love, as by which Men deny themſelves of their Luſts and ſinful Pleaſures, and follow after Righteouſneſs and Holineſs with them that call upon the Lord with a pure Heart. Hence, I fear, it hath come to paſs, that the Generality of Men among us have had ſo little Senſe of the Neceſſity of a godly Life, and have preſumed ſo much upon their Faith touching Chriſt (which yet hath been but the dead Faith St. *James* ſpeaks of) as that they have, to the ſad deceiving of their own Souls, thought themſelves in ſafe Condition; although they have lived ſenſual and carnal Lives, and have been Strangers to the Work of the new Creature, the Power of Godlineſs, and the Life of Holineſs, without which, for all their Faith, no Man ſhall ſee the Lord.

But alas! How ſhould it be otherwiſe, whenas it is too manifeſt, that the Leaders and Guides of the People themſelves, except here and there one, have had little of this Senſe and Savour; but have built ſo much upon the Act of believing, and ſo little upon a faithful Subjection to Chriſt's Doctrine (which for ought I can ſee, is as neceſſary to render Faith available in its place, as Faith is neceſſary to render the Blood of Chriſt available in its place, as to a Man's perſonal Juſtification) as if that Subjection were not at all neceſſary unto the being of a Man's Juſtification before God, but uſeful only to declare him to himſelf, and unto Men to be juſtified? And under this Soul-deceiving Apprehenſion, and miſtaken Notion and Principle, the Miniſters, too many of them, have indulged themſelves and People too, in a dull, heavy, cold, partial, flat, and leſs than formal way of profeſſing the Goſpel, to the Hazard of their precious Souls. And O that this might but awaken any of them that take upon them the Care of Souls, to lay this matter more to Heart before it be too late, and the Opportunity paſt.

And thus I have now done with the firſt part of my Text, wherein I have ſhewed in what Senſe St. *Paul* makes no reckoning of Works in the Point of Juſtification. Come we now to the handling of that which remains, touching the Imputation of his Faith for Righteouſneſs, who believeth on him that juſtifieth the ungodly.

CHAP. IV.

Setting forth the Object of juſtifying Faith, and ſhewing the believing in whom, and the believing of what it is, that will be counted for Righteouſneſs.

Sect. I. IN the handling of the latter part of theſe Words, *But to him that worketh not, but believeth on him that juſtifieth the ungodly, his Faith is counted for Righteouſneſs*, I would open theſe three things;

1. The believing in whom, and the believing of what it is, to which the Promiſe of Juſtification or the Imputation of Righteouſneſs is made.

2. What, or what manner of believing it is, that hath the great Promiſe of Juſtification annexed to it.

3. How, or in what Senſe this Faith in Men is counted unto them for Righteouſneſs. Which three things, I conceive, contain the Sum and Subſtance of the Doctrine of Juſtification.

Let us now begin with the firſt of theſe, and ſee from the Scriptures who and what is the right Object of ſaving Faith. *Him*, whom the Apoſtle here in the Text propounds as the Object of this Belief, is ſaid to be *him who juſtifieth the ungodly.* Whether *by him that juſtifieth the ungodly*, we ſhould underſtand God the Father diſtinctly, or his Son Jeſus Chriſt, it will not be ſo needful to enquire; ſince, as both concur in juſtifying the ungodly, ſo both are the Object of juſtifying Faith. For as *in due time Chriſt died for the ungodly*, (*Rom.* v. 6.) that he might juſtifie them by his Blood; ſo God the Father *hath ſet him forth to be a Propitiation through Faith in his Blood*, Rom. iii. 25. And as to underſtand the Apoſtle as meaning the Father, ſeems to ſuit beſt with the precedent Verſes; ſo to underſtand him as not excluding the Son, will well anſwer this general Deſign in aſſerting Atonement, Remiſſion of Sins, or Juſtification by Chriſt for the ungodly Gentiles upon their believing, in Oppoſition to thoſe who appropriated theſe to the Works of *Moſes*'s Law. It's true, there is a great Variety of Expreſſion uſed in Scripture to ſet forth the Object of Faith; ſometimes making God the Father, and his Record concerning his Son, the Object; and ſometimes Chriſt as Meſſiah promiſed, as Son of God, as dying, as riſing again; and ſometimes the Word or Doctrine of Chriſt or his Apoſtles; but all relating to, and depending originally upon the Father. I ſhall touch each of theſe particularly; but with much Brevity, becauſe I hope you are not ſo much unacquainted with theſe things, as I fear you are in that upon which I principally intend Enlargement.

Sect. II. I. Juſtification is aſcribed unto God the Father, as him in whom we muſt believe, and upon whom we muſt depend for it, in many other Scriptures beſide my Text, *Rom.* viii. 33. and iii. 30. *Gal.* iii. 8. Hence Juſtification is called *the Righteouſneſs of God, and the Righteouſneſs which is of God*, as he being the Author and Founder of it, *Rom.* iii. 21. and x. 3. *Phil.* iii. 9.

1. It was found out and contrived by his infinite Wiſdom, *Eph.* i. 7, 8, 11. and therefore Chriſt, whom he ſent to put in Execution that wonderful, profound Contrivance of his, is called *the Wiſdom of God*, 1 Cor. i. 24. *Chriſt the Power of God, and the Wiſdom of God.*

2. God the Father is the Author of it, and Object of our Faith about it; becauſe it iſſues and proceeds out of the Womb of his Grace, where this bleſſed Deſign was firſt conceived, *Rom.* iii. 24. *Being juſtified freely by his Grace.* The Goodneſs and Compaſſionateneſs of his Nature, meeting with the Miſery and Neceſſity of his poor Creature, inclin'd him to ſet ſuch a thing on foot; diſpoſed him to uſe both his Wiſdom and Power to contrive and bring it to paſs. The Creature neither did nor could put any Obligation upon him to do this thing for him, but by Sin and Unworthineſs, provoked him to that which was quite contrary; and therefore the more wonderful, that it ſhould make its way through ſo many, and ſo mighty contrary Provocations which it meets with from Men. This Grace of God is ſo great a Doer, hath ſo mighty a Hand, ſo potent an Influence in the whole and entire Buſineſs of Man's Election, Redemption, Juſtification, Adoption, Sanctification, Eternal Life and Salvation; that all from firſt to laſt, from the beginning to the end, is worthily aſcribed to the Riches of his Grace, both in the things themſelves, and means of their Accompliſhment; as might eaſily be ſhewn from Scripture. But I will haſten on my Way.

3. The means by which this Juſtification is effected and brought to paſs, are of and from God the Father; and their Power to juſtifie depends upon his Will, appointing them to that end. 1. Chriſt is the great means of bringing this about, but yet is given and ſent by the Father for that purpoſe: *Whom God* (ſaith he) *hath ſet forth to be a Propitiation for ſin*, Rom. iii. 25. In that Chriſt becomes Righteouſneſs or Juſtification to Men, it is becauſe God would have it ſo, 1 *Cor.* i. 30. *But of him are ye in Chriſt Jeſus, who of God is made unto us Wiſdom, Righteouſneſs*, &c. Again, *It is God that was in Chriſt, reconciling the World unto himſelf, not imputing Treſpaſſes*, 2 Cor. v. 19. It is *he that hath made us accepted in the beloved*, Epheſ. i. 6. *Then ſaid he, lo, I come to do thy Will, O God: By the which Will we are ſanctified through the offering up of the Body of Jeſus Chriſt once for all*; Heb. x. 9, 10. Though we are ſanctified by the offering up of the Body of Jeſus, yet it is by virtue of the Will of the Father, which the Son came to do, and to fulfil. According to theſe Scriptures, the atoning, purging Power and Vertue of Chriſt's Blood, ſeems to depend upon the Divine Will and good Pleaſure of the Father: Elſe if it did not, why ſhould not the whole World be juſtified? For *Chriſt is the Propitiation for the Sins of the whole World*, 1 Joh. ii. 2. and why then is not the whole World juſtified? Surely it is not becauſe the Sacrifice of Chriſt is not as ſufficient to juſtifie all, as ſome; the whole World, for whom he died, as a few only, which ſhall actually be juſtified and ſaved: But it is becauſe the Father's Will is ſuch, that the juſtifying ſaving Benefit of his Death, ſhall be limited unto ſuch only as do believe, *Joh.* iii. 16. *God ſo loved the World, as that he gave his only begotten Son*, (*viz.* to or for the whole World,

1 *John* ii. 2. but yet ſo, and upon ſuch terms, as) *that whoſoever believeth in him, ſhould not periſh, but have everlaſting Life.* The Will of the Father pitches the Bounds, how far the juſtifying Vertue of his Son's Blood ſhall extend, and determines the Terms upon which it ſhall be actually enjoyed. And ſo, 2. It is in reſpect of Faith, (another, and compared with Chriſt, an inferiour means of Man's Juſtification) it does not juſtifie in its own Name, or by its own Power or Vertue, but its Ability in this behalf to juſtifie and ſave, depends meerly upon the Will of Him that hath appointed it to this Office: But of this afterwards.

So then the Grace, Power and Authority to juſtifie, reſides originally in the Father, and what force or power there is in Faith, or more remotely in Works, to juſtifie, they have it by way of deſignation, and act what they do act in that kind, not out of any intrinſical Worth or Merit, but meerly in the Strength and by the Authority of the Will of God. And however there is in the Blood of Chriſt a richneſs of intrinſical Worth and Vertue of it ſelf to juſtifie, (as is clearly intimated when it's ſaid, *We are bought with a price*, 1 Cor. vi. 20. *Purchaſed with his Blood*, Acts xx. 28, &c.) Yet ſince Chriſt did *not glorifie himſelf to be made an High Prieſt*, and to offer himſelf a Sacrifice, but was made ſo by the Father, (*Heb.* v. 5.) thence it is that the Prieſtly Offering and Sacrifice it ſelf, in the effecting of that thing to which it is appointed by the Father, *viz.* the Purgation of Sins, and Juſtification of Sinners, hath a dependence upon the Father's Will. And therefore when Men do believe in, and depend upon Chriſt for Juſtification, they do ultimately believe in, and depend upon the Father for it. *John* xii. 44. *Jeſus cried, and ſaid, He that believeth on me, believeth not on me, but on him that ſent me.* 1 Pet. i. 21. *Who by him do believe in God that raiſed him up from the dead, and gave him glory, that your Faith and Hope might be in God.* The Father hath the power of Life and Death, hath the power of giving Laws to his Creature, (*James* iv. 12.) it's his Law that is tranſgreſſed by Sin, and againſt him that the Offence is committed, (*Pſal.* li. 4.) and therefore it belongs to him to forgive Sin, (*Iſai.* xliii. 25. *Luke* v. 21.) and accordingly Chriſt directs us to pray the Father to forgive our Treſpaſſes, *Mat.* vi. xii. It's true alſo, that the Son hath the ſame power of Life and Death, of giving Laws, and forgiving Sins, *For all power both in Heaven and Earth is given unto him, that all Men ſhould honour the Son, even as they honour the Father.* But this he hath according to the Order of his Being from the Father, *Mat.* xxviii. 18. *John* iii. 35. and xvii. 2.

Faith acts its ſelf upon the Father, as its Object, in three reſpects eſpecially: Firſt, by believing him to be the true God, in oppoſition to Idols and all falſe Gods, *John* xvii. 3. *This is Life Eternal, to know thee the only true God, &c.* 1 Cor. viii. 6. *But to us there is but one God, the Father, of whom are all things, and we in him.* Eph. iv. 6. *One God and Father of all.*

Secondly, by believing, that notwithſtanding the Sin of Men, that he (having received an atonement in his Son's Blood) is moſt willing to be favourable and gracious, not only in forgiving, but alſo in rewarding ſuch who duly and diligently ſeek his Favour, Grace and Love, in ſuch ways and by ſuch means as he himſelf hath appointed for that end. *Heb.* xi. 6. *But without Faith it is impoſſible to pleaſe him: for he that cometh to God muſt believe that he is,* (there's the former act of Faith touching the truth of his Being,) *and that he is a rewarder of them that diligently ſeek him.*

Thirdly, by truſting in and relying on his Might, Mercy, Grace and Love, for Pardon, Juſtification, and Eternal Salvation, *Pſal.* lii. 8. *But I will truſt in the Mercy of the Lord for ever.* Rom. iv. 5. *But believeth on him that juſtifieth the ungodly*, John v. 24. But all this (at leaſt ſince God was manifeſted in the Fleſh) in and by Chriſt, there being no coming to, or believing in the Father but by him, *John* xiv. 6. 1 *Pet.* i. 21. Though formerly he was worſhipped and ſerved under the Name and Title of the God of *Abraham*, the God of *Iſaac*, and the God of *Jacob*; yet now in the New Teſtament, under the Name and Title of the God and Father of our Lord Jeſus Chriſt, *Eph.* i. 17. and iii. 14.

Sect. III. I might here ſhew alſo, that the Word, Promiſe, or Record of the Father concerning his Son, is the Object of Faith: Yea, *Abraham*'s Juſtification is caſt upon his believing this Word of God; *So ſhall thy Seed be. For Abraham believed God, and it was counted to him for Righteouſneſs*, Gen. xv. 6. *Rom.* iv. 3, 18. *Gal.* iii. 6, 8. *James* ii. 23. Now the Record which the Father hath given of Chriſt in the New Teſtament, as the Object of Faith, is two-fold: 1. That he is his beloved Son in whom he is well pleaſed, and that he ought to be heard and obey'd, *Mat.* iii. 17. and xvii. 5. And,

2. That in him is Life, and that Salvation is now offered to the World by believing in, and obeying of him, 1 *John* v. 9, 10, 11, 12. *If we receive the Witneſs of Men, the Witneſs of God is greater: For this is the Witneſs of God, which he hath teſtified of his Son. He that believeth on the Son, hath the Witneſs in himſelf: He that believeth not God, hath made him a Lyar, becauſe he believeth not the Record which God gave of his Son. And this is the Record that God hath given to us, Eternal Life; and this Life is in his Son. He that hath the Son, hath Life; and he that hath not the Son of God, hath not Life.* This Teſtimony which the Father gave of his Son, was partly by Voice from Heaven, 2 *Pet.* i. 17, 18. and partly by thoſe Works which he gave him to finiſh, by which Men ſaw his Glory, as the Glory of the only Begotten of the Father; *John* v. 36. *I have greater Witneſs than that of John; for the Works which the Father hath given me to finiſh, the ſame Works that I do, bear witneſs of me, that the Father hath ſent me.* John x. 37, 38. *If I do not the Works of my Father, believe me not: But if I do, though ye believe not me, yet believe the Works; that ye may know and believe, that the Father is in me, and I in him.*

Sect. IV. II. As the Father, ſo alſo Chriſt the Son, is in Scripture ſet forth as the more immediate Object of Faith: *Acts* xvi. 31. *And they ſaid, Believe on the Lord Jeſus Chriſt, and thou ſhalt be ſaved, and thy houſe.* Now ye muſt know, that Chriſt is propounded as the Object of Faith in ſeveral Reſpects, and under ſeveral Conſiderations.

Sect. V. 1. As he is the Meſſias, of which *Moſes* and the Prophets wrote, and ſaid ſhould come. And therefore is Chriſt called the *He that ſhould come*, Mat. xi. 3. *Art thou He that ſhould come, or do we look for another?* John xiii. 19. *Now I tell you before it come, that when it is come to paſs, ye may believe that I am HE.* It was one thing to believe in general, according to the Prophets, that Meſſiah ſhould come, (which was the common Faith of the Jews, and as it ſhould ſeem of the Samaritans too, *John* iv. 25.) and another thing to believe in particular, that Jeſus, which is come, is the Chriſt. This was the Faith of ſuch as did receive him, and cleave to him, when he did come, *John* xi. 27. *She ſaid, Yea, Lord, I believe that thou art the Chriſt the Son of God which ſhould come into the World.* The want of which is the deſtroying Sin that lies ſo heavy upon the Jews, *John* viii. 24. *For if ye believe not that I am He, ye ſhall die in your Sins.*

2. Chriſt, as he is the Son of God, is made the Object of Faith, *John* xx. 31. *But theſe are written, that ye might believe that Jeſus is the Chriſt the Son of God, and that believing, ye might have Life through his Name,* Acts viii. 37. 1 John v. 1, 4, 5. and iv. 15. By Faith he is believed to be the Son of God, not as *Adam* was the Son of God, *viz.* by Creation, *Luke* iii. *ult.* in which ſenſe we are all his *Off-ſpring*, *Acts* xvii. 28. Nor yet as the Saints are the Sons of God, to wit by Adoption, *Gal.* iv. 5. but that he is the Begotten, yea the only Begotten Son of the Father; ſo the Son, and ſo begotten of the Father, as none elſe is among all the Creation of God, *John* i. 14. and iii. 18. *He that believeth on him, is not condemned; but he that believeth not, is condemned already, becauſe he hath not believed in the Name of the only begotten Son of God.*

Sect. VI. 3. Chriſt, as dying and ſhedding his Blood, is the Object of Faith, and that by which Sinners become juſtified, *Rom.* v. 9. *Much more then, being now juſtified by his Blood, we ſhall be ſaved from Wrath through him.* Rom. iii. 25. *Whom God hath ſet forth to be a Propitiation through Faith in his Blood.* Faith eyes the Blood of Chriſt as its Object, under a three-fold Conſideration.

Firſt, it believes that Chriſt did die and ſhed his Blood for our Sins, 1 *Cor.* xv. 2, 3. *If ye keep in memory what I preached unto you, unleſs ye have believed in vain. For I delivered unto you firſt of all, that which I alſo received, how that Chriſt died for our ſins, according to the Scriptures.* Mat. xxvi. 28. *For this is my Blood of the New Teſtament, which is ſhed for many for the Remiſſion of Sins.*

Secondly, that this Death, and ſhedding of this Blood of Chriſt, is both the only and the all-ſufficient means appointed by God to make an atonement for, and to purge away Sin, *Heb.* i. 3. *When he had by himſelf purged our ſins, ſat down on the right hand of the Majeſty on High.* Rev. i. 5. *Unto him that loved us, and waſhed us from our ſins in his own Blood,* &c. Heb. x. 14. *For by one Offering hath he perfected for ever them that are ſanctified.* Heb. ix. 14. *How much more ſhall the Blood of Chriſt, who through the eternal Spirit, offered himſelf without ſpot to God, purge your Conſcience from dead Works to ſerve the living God.*

Thirdly, as it believes the Blood of Chriſt to be it, and it alone, that is in it ſelf, and by the ordination of God, fully ſufficient to take away Sin, the Guilt of it, or the condemning Power, or deſtroying Nature of it; ſo accordingly does it rely upon this Blood of Chriſt, under the gracious appointment of the Father, to do this great thing for him in particular, in whom this Faith dwells. *Rom.* iii. 25. *Whom God hath ſet forth to be a Propitiation through Faith in his Blood.* In this Scripture there are three things that are eſpecially to be marked in relation to the point in hand. 1. That Chriſt's Blood is the Blood of Propitiation, or that Chriſt himſelf is the Propitiation by means of his Blood, *i. e.* the Reconciler, the Procurer of Favour, in Pardon or Remiſſion. 2. That God hath ordained him in his Blood thus to be, and accordingly hath propoſed and offered him to all the World as a publick Propitiation; but yet ſo, and upon condition, that Men have Faith in his Blood; *i. e.* do believe it to be of it ſelf, and by the appointment of the Father, of ſufficient efficacy, force and vertue, to purge them from their Sins. Which Faith alſo muſt be of the right kind, or elſe it will not intereſt any Man in this great Benefit. 3. That which is moreover implied, is, That the Faith of a Man, feeling ſo good a foundation and ground under it, as is the Blood of Chriſt in conjunction with the Father's Will, as by which to be confident of a plenary Purgation from all Sins, how great, or how many ſoever they have been, does accordingly ſafely and ſecurely build thereupon.

Sect. VII. 4. Chriſt, as being riſen from the dead, is the Object of juſtifying Faith, *Rom.* x. 9. *If thou ſhalt confeſs with thy mouth the Lord Jeſus, and ſhalt believe in thy heart, that God raiſed him from the dead, thou ſhalt be ſaved.* Rom. iv. 25. *Who was delivered for our Offences, and was raiſed again for our Juſtification.* And no marvel that the Reſurrection of Chriſt ſhould be the Object of ſaving Faith, inaſmuch as in it is included the Belief of the main Foundation-Doctrines of the Goſpel, and without it Faith could have no firm footing to reſt upon touching other great Goſpel-truths. As,

1. The believing of him to be the Son of God (which is an Ingredient abſolutely neceſſary in the Goſpel-Faith) doth at leaſt in great part depend upon the Faith of his Reſurrection. For Faith can ground its Belief, touching his being the Son of God, upon nothing elſe than that which declares him to be ſo. But now *he is declared to be the Son of God with power, according to the Spirit of Holineſs, by the Reſurrection from the Dead,* Rom. i. 4.

2. The keeping Promiſe and Covenant with the holy Patriarchs and their Seed, (which Faith muſt needs eye) did depend upon God's raiſing Chriſt from the Dead, *Acts* xiii. 32, 33. *And we declare unto you glad tidings, how that the promiſe which was made unto the Fathers, God had fulfilled the ſame unto us their Children, in that he hath raiſed up Jeſus again, as it is alſo written in the ſecond Pſalm, Thou art my Son, this day have I begotten thee.* And again, *Acts* ii. 30, 31. *Therefore being a Prophet, and knowing that God hath ſworn with an Oath to him, that of the fruit of his loins, according to the fleſh, he would raiſe up Chriſt to ſit upon his Throne; he ſeeing this before, ſpake of the Reſurrection of Chriſt, that his Soul was not left in hell, neither his fleſh did ſee corruption.*

3. The Reſurrection of Chriſt is ſo neceſſary to Juſtification, and to the Faith of it, that take away this, and Juſtification, and the Belief of it, are all laid in the duſt; 1 *Cor.* xv. 14. *And if Chriſt be not riſen, then is our Preaching vain, and your Faith is alſo vain.* And again, ver. 17. *And if Chriſt be not raiſed, your Faith is vain, ye are yet in your ſins.* Without believing, is no Juſtification; and if there had been no Reſurrection of Chriſt, there could have been no Faith touching that Atonement that is now made by his Death. For could Men have believed that the Death of Chriſt had been of ſufficient force and vertue to expiate Sin, had it not been manifeſted by his Reſurrection? Surely no. For ſo long as he was under the power of Death, he was under the power of Sin, of which Death is but the Wages; *For in that he died, he died unto ſin,* (ſaith the Apoſtle) *Rom.* vi. 10. *The ſting of Death* (to wit, that which gives it power of prevailing over the Creature) *is ſin,* 1 *Cor.* xv. 56. And the time when that Saying, *O death, where is thy ſting? O grave, where is thy victory?* ſhall be brought to paſs, is not till the day of Reſurrection, *When this corruptible ſhall have put on Incorruption, and this mortal Immortality,* 1 Cor. xv. 54. And therefore, as the Saints ſhall not actually and perfectly be delivered from all the effects of Sin till the day of their Reſurrection; ſo neither was Chriſt delivered from the Burthen of other Men's Sins, which he bore in his own Body, until he roſe from the dead. And

if Sin had been too hard for him in keeping him under the Power of Death, it would much more have been too hard for us.

But in that God raiſed Chriſt from the dead, he did as it were thereby acknowledge Satisfaction for the Debt of Mens Sins; which he by his Death, as a Surety had diſcharged. While he lay in the Grave he was detained as a Priſoner for other Mens Debts; but when the Priſon Doors were opened and he let out, the Father acknowledged Satisfaction, and did as it were ſeal him on the behalf of thoſe for whom he undertook a Releaſe and Diſcharge. By his entring into Suffering, he took the Sins of the World upon him; but by his Reſurrection, by which he came out of his ſuffering-ſtate, he put them off. As in his ſuffering he was made Sin for us, and dealt with as if he had been a Sinner; ſo by his Reſurrection he was juſtified from thoſe Sins which were imputed to him: And unleſs he had been firſt juſtified from our Sins, which were imputed to him all the while he ſuffered, we could not have been juſtified from them our ſelves. And therefore no marvel that the Apoſtle ſhould attribute our Juſtification with a *Rather*, unto the Reſurrection of Chriſt, than to his Death, as he does, *Rom.* viii. 33, 34. *Who is he that condemneth? It is God that juſtifieth: It is Chriſt that died, yea rather that is riſen again.* He ſeems to feel a firmer footing for his Faith in the Reſurrection of Chriſt, than in his Death; more to bear him out againſt the Accuſations of any that had a mind to condemn him: *The Anſwer which a good Conſcience makes, it is by the Reſurrection of Chriſt from the dead*, 1 Pet. iii. 27.

4. I might here add, that the Belief of the Reſurrection of our Bodies at the laſt Day, and the Eternal Judgment that will follow thereupon, (which are two great Articles of the Chriſtian Faith, and fundamental Doctrines, *Heb.* vi. 2.) does depend upon our Belief of the Reſurrection of Chriſt. For if Chriſt, the Son of God's Love, him in whom his Soul delighteth more than in any Man, ſhould not have been raiſed by the Glory of the Father; there would have been little reaſon for any other Man to expect ſo great a Favour. *But now is Chriſt riſen from the dead, and is become the firſt fruits of them that ſlept*, 1 Cor. xv. 20. as a Pledge of their Reſurrection alſo. In that any have *a lively hope* of being raiſed again to an Inheritance uncorruptible and undefiled, and that fadeth not away, they are thereunto *begotten by the Reſurrection of Jeſus Chriſt from the dead*; ſo ſaith the Apoſtle, 1 *Pet.* i. 3, 4. And again, *ver.* 21. In that *God raiſed him up from the dead, and ſo gave him Glory; it was that our Faith and Hope might be in God*, that he will do ſo to us likewiſe. *For God hath both raiſed up the Lord, and will alſo raiſe up us by his own Power*, 1 Cor. vi. 14. *For if we believe that Jeſus died, and roſe again, even ſo them alſo which ſleep in Jeſus, will God bring with him*, 1 Theſ. iv. 14. *Becauſe I live, ye ſhall live alſo*, ſaith he who is the Reſurrection and the Life, *Joh.* xiv. 19. and xi. 25.

And that there ſhall be a righteous Judgment following the Reſurrection, and that Chriſt Jeſus ſhall be the Judge, is ſuch a thing of which the Father *hath given Aſſurance, or offered Faith unto all Men, in that he hath raiſed him from the dead*, Acts xvii. 31.

Sect. VIII. 5. The Word, Goſpel, or Doctrine of Chriſt, and of his Apoſtles, is ſo the Object of Faith, as that Salvation is promiſed unto the right Belief thereof, *Mark* xvi. 15, 16. *Go ye into all the World, and preach the Goſpel to every Creature: He that believeth, and is baptized, ſhall be ſaved.* 2 Theſ. ii. 13. *Becauſe God hath from the beginning choſen you to Salvation through Sanctification of the Spirit, and Belief of the Truth.* 2 Theſ. i. 10. *When he ſhall come to be glorified in his Saints, and to be admired in all them that believe, (becauſe our Teſtimony among you was believed) in that Day.*

The Doctrine of Chriſt and of his Apoſtles, may well be counted the Object of Faith: Inaſmuch as to believe it, is all one as to believe that the Father hath ſet forth his Son to be a Propitiation for Sin, through Faith in his Blood; and ſo it is to believe that Chriſt died for our Sins, according to the Scriptures, and that he roſe again the third Day, according to the Scriptures; becauſe the Doctrine of the Goſpel is a Teſtimony and Declaration of theſe things; and he that believes the one, believes the other alſo. God's giving his Son to die, and Chriſt's dying, and riſing again, without a Declaration of the Mind and Counſel of God thereabout; as *viz.* for what Cauſe, upon what account, and for what end he did ſo: As alſo upon what Terms and Conditions, Men ſhall reap the Fruit of his Death, Reſurrection and Interceſſion; I ſay, the one without the other does not ſeem to be the adequate Object of Faith, but both together are. For which Cauſe the Doctrine of the Goſpel in its Enunciations, Precepts, and Threatnings, as well as in its Promiſes, is the Object of Faith. And becauſe the Doctrine

ctrine of the Goſpel contains, declares, and amply ſets forth all theſe things, together with thoſe things which are to come, *viz.* the Reſurrection of the dead, and Eternal Judgment, in order to which the former firſt take place, as being all of them Matters about which Faith is buſied; therefore is it, that the Doctrine of the Goſpel, is frequently called *the Faith*, Gal. i. 23. and iii. 2, 5, 23. *Acts* vi. 7. *Rom.* i. 5. 1 *Tim* iv. 1. *Jude* iii. And ſo now I have done with my firſt Point touching Faith, *viz.* the Object of it, or the believing of what it is, that ſhall be imputed for Righteouſneſs.

CHAP. V.

Shewing, That that Faith which conſiſts only in aſſenting unto the Truth of that Report which the Goſpel makes touching Chriſt his being the Son of God, and of his coming into the World to ſave Sinners by dying for them, will not avail to Juſtification and Salvation, as a Goſpel-Faith of the right kind will do.

Sect. I. HAving briefly ſhewed from the Holy Scriptures the Belief of what it is objectively, that hath the Promiſe of Salvation annext to it; I ſhall now in the next place come to enquire what, and what manner of believing it is ſubjectively, that hath the ſame Promiſe: Or, whether every Act of believing that is placed on a right Object, hath this great Privilege of Juſtification entailed to it. And upon due Enquiry, it will be found, that not any Act or Acts of Faith, one or more, be they never ſo many of them, that fall ſhort of engaging the Soul in true Love and ſincere Obedience unto the Lord Jeſus, will avail the Man in whom they are, unto the ſaving of the Soul.

If I miſtake not, all the Acts of a ſaving Faith may be reduced to, and comprehended under theſe three Heads: The firſt I call an Act of Credence, the ſecond an Act of Adherence; and the third an Act of Confidence: In the Exertion of which three Acts of Faith, having Chriſt for their Object; the whole Soul, Mind, Will and Affections are engaged, which make up the believing with all the Heart, which the Goſpel calls for, *Acts* viii. 37. By that Act which I call an Act of Credence, I mean the Aſſent of the Mind unto the Truth of what the Goſpel reports, eſpecially touching Chriſt, (and God's Love to Mankind in him) as that he is the Son of God, and Saviour of the World; that he was ſent of God the Father to ſhew unto Men the way of Salvation; and then to die, riſe again, and after his Aſcenſion, to make Interceſſion to bring that Salvation about, and that Remiſſion of Sins is to be had through his Name.

By that Act of Faith which I call an Act of Adherence, I underſtand the Soul's faſt cleaving unto the Lord Jeſus in Affection and Subjection, as counting him more worthy of both, than any Creature or thing in all the World; as alſo taking hold of that Grace and Strength which is in Chriſt, for Deliverance from the Power of Sin, and of bringing the Soul back again to God in point of Holineſs.

And laſtly, by an Act of Confidence, I mean the Soul's Reliance, Reſt, or Dependence upon Chriſt, or on the Father through Chriſt, for Remiſſion of Sins, Acceptation, and Eternal Salvation; the committing of the Soul to his Mercy, the throwing it upon his Grace.

Theſe three Acts of Faith relate to each other by way of Dependence; the ſecond depending upon the firſt, as the Acts of the Will do upon the Underſtanding; and the third upon both the former, and all acted upon the ſame Object. Now that which I ſhall endeavour, is, to ſhew that the firſt and laſt of theſe Acts, the Aſſent of the Mind unto the Truth of things that are to be believed; and the Confidence of the Soul to meet with Salvation from the Lord, may be found in ſuch Men in whom the middle Act of a Loving and Loyal Adherence to the Lord, is not found; and that the other two without this, will not avail to Juſtification and Salvation.

Sect. II. Firſt, that Men may, by way of aſſent unto the truth of that by which Jeſus hath been manifeſted to be the Chriſt of God, believe him to be ſo, or believe on him as ſuch, and yet that believing of theirs not avail them to Salvation, will appear firſt of all by *John* xii. 42, 43. compared with other Scriptures. The words are theſe: *Nevertheleſs among the chief Rulers alſo many believed on him; but becauſe of the Phariſees they did not confeſs him, leſt they ſhould be put out of the Synagogue; for they loved the praiſe of Men more than the praiſe of God.* That theſe Men did believe Jeſus to be the Meſſiah, the Chriſt of God, is moſt evident, in that upon Conviction by his Miracles and Doctrine, which declared him ſo to be, they believed on him; and conſequently muſt believe in the general his Doctrine to be true: And yet, that whilſt they did thus believe, they were in an unſafe condition, as touching the Salvation of their Souls, will appear by two material Circumſtances in the Words. The firſt is this: That for all their Faith, they durſt not confeſs him, leſt they ſhould be put out of the Synagogue; which unworthy deportment of theirs put them under that Threatning of Chriſt, *Mark* viii. 38. *Whoſoever therefore ſhall be aſhamed of me, and of my words, in this adulterous and ſinful Generation, of him alſo ſhall the Son of Man be aſhamed, when he cometh in the glory of his Father, with the holy Angels.* And St. *John* ſaith, That *every ſpirit that confeſſeth not that Jeſus Chriſt is come in the fleſh, is not of God,* 1 John iv. 3. And confeſſing with the Mouth is as well required unto Salvation, as believing with the Heart, *Rom.* x. 10.

The ſecond is this, That while they thus believed, *they loved the praiſe of Men more than the praiſe of God:* Which whoſoever does, cannot believe ſavingly, according to Chriſt's own words, *John* v. 44. *How can ye believe, which receive honour one of another, and ſeek not the honour that cometh from God only?*

Such Believers likewiſe ſurely were they, *John* ii. 23, 24. who when *they ſaw the Miracles which Chriſt did, they believed in his Name: But Jeſus did not commit himſelf to them, becauſe he knew all Men;* He knew that for all their Faith of Aſſent that he was indeed the Meſſias, of which they were convinced by his Miracles, yet there was not in them the Faith of Adherence, in a conſtant and affectionate ſticking to him, and therefore would not truſt himſelf with them. Which is Argument enough, that their Faith was not ſaving, nor ſuch as would denominate them faithful Diſciples unto Jeſus, whoſe Property it is to forſake all, rather than to forſake Chriſt, (*Luke* xiv. 33.) which, had it been their caſe, Chriſt would not have been ſhy of betruſting himſelf with them.

It's probable that *Simon Magus* was a Believer of this kind, one whoſe Faith was right, as touching the Object of it, and as touching this firſt Act of it alſo; for the Scripture ſaith, *Then Simon himſelf believeth alſo,* Acts viii. 13. And what did he believe? That's expreſs'd in the former Verſe, where it's ſaid, That *when they believed Philip preaching the things concerning the Kingdom of God, and the Name of Jeſus Chriſt, they were baptized both Men and Women.* Then *Simon himſelf believed alſo;* that is, as well as they, or the ſame things which the others believed, viz. *Philip's* Doctrine concerning the Kingdom of God, and the Name of Jeſus. And yet, for all his Perſuaſion of the Truth of the Doctrine of the Goſpel preached by *Philip*, his Heart was not purified by his Faith, (as the Hearts of all are by Faith of the right kind, *Acts* xv. 9.) For St. *Peter* told him: Firſt, *That his Heart was not right in the ſight of God,* ver. 21. Secondly, *That he was in the gall of Bitterneſs, and bond of Iniquity,* ver. 23. and conſequently was in danger of periſhing, as the Apoſtle intimated to him, ſaying, *Thy Money periſh with thee,* ver. 20. There was in him the Faith of Credence, but not of Adherence; the Aſſent of the Mind unto the truth of *Philip's* Doctrine, but not the powerful Conſent of the Will unto the ſuperlative Goodneſs of the Way to the Kingdom, taught by him.

Sect. III. That this Faith, of which we now ſpeak, which conſiſts only in the general Aſſent of the Underſtanding unto the Truth of Divine Revelation, is not that Faith to which the great Promiſes of the Goſpel are made, I ſhall endeavour farther to manifeſt, by adding two or three Reaſons to the Scripture-Teſtimonies already alledged.

1. This Aſſent, as it is but one ſingle Act of Faith, and therefore comprehends not the whole general Nature of that Grace, ſo it is but the Act of one ſingle Faculty of the Soul, the Mind or Underſtanding; and ſo is not that believing with all the Heart, which is the right Chriſtian Faith, (*Acts* viii. 37.) which conſiſts as well in the Conſent of the Will touching the Goodneſs of the thing Believed, as the Aſſent of the Mind to the Truth of its Being. For as the Object of the Chriſtian Faith (the Goſpel) bears the

relation, and carries as full a proportion of Goodneſs as of Truth in it; ſo does the believing Soul accordingly by the faculty of the Mind aſſent to it as true, and by the faculty of the Will accept of it as a ſovereign Good. And under this twofold Conſideration is the Goſpel propounded as the Object of Faith. 1 *Tim.* i. 15. *This is a faithful ſaying, and worthy of all acceptation, that Chriſt Jeſus came into the world to ſave ſinners.* It's a Saying faithful in reſpect of its Truth, and worthy of all acceptation in reſpect of its Goodneſs.

Sect IV. 2. The Devils themſelves have ſuch a Faith, as by which they aſſent to this Truth, that Chriſt is the Son of God: And it is the firſt-born of Improbabilities, that ever the Devils ſhould have that Faith abiding in them, by which Men ſhall be ſaved. That the Devils do not only believe that there is one God, and tremble, according to St. *James* ii. 19. but that they alſo believe Chriſt to be the Son of God, the Chriſt of God, is evident, *Luke* iv. 41. *And Devils alſo came out of many, crying out and ſaying, Thou art Chriſt the Son of God.* If any ſhall here object and ſay, That we have but the Devil's own word for it, who was a Lyar from the beginning: The anſwer is, That we have more than their word for it, we have this Evangeliſt's word for it, as appears by the latter part of the fore-cited Verſe, where he ſays, That they (*viz.* the Devils) knew that he was Chriſt. If any ſhould think that poſſibly the Devils may have the ſame Faith that would juſtifie Men if it were in them, though it will do them no good, as not being in the like capacity of Grace as Men are; yet that paſſage in St. *James* ii. 19. will oppoſe ſuch a thought. For wherefore does the Apoſtle mention the Faith of Devils there, but to diſparage the unprofitable and dead Faith of ſome Chriſtians, and to give them to know, that if their Faith reſted only in the Belief of things, and did not carry out the Soul in love both to God and Men, it was even no better a Faith than is in the Devils, and conſequently would ſave them no more than it would ſave the Devils?

Sect. V. 3. The Faith of Aſſent, as it is the Act of the Underſtanding, is frequently forced, the Mind compelled to believe the truth of Divine Things, by the ſtrength of Conviction, which ſometimes is ſo great, that it is not in the power of Men to diſbelieve them; which I conceive is the plain caſe touching that Faith which the Devils have, and the Faith which ſome wicked Men under deſpair have of the Judgment to come, who would be glad if they knew how to believe otherwiſe than what they do believe; they would be glad if they knew how to believe that there is no God, no Heaven, no Hell; and it is their torment to believe there is: The Devils believe and tremble, and ſo do ſome Men. And it is very like that thoſe Believers, of which we heard before, *John* ii. 23. and xii. 42. had that Faith which they had concerning Chriſt, forced upon them by the hand of thoſe Miracles of Chriſt, in conjunction with his holy Life and Doctrine, which were too hard for their Conſciences, and evinced with power him that wrought them to be the Son of God. And it may be they might have a deſire to have ſtifled that Light, and to have overcome that Conviction which they had, as that which did oppoſe that carnal Intereſt of Praiſe which they had with Men, which it ſeems they loved more than Chriſt, and therefore would not let it go for his ſake. And is not this the caſe of ſuch *who hold the Truth in Unrighteouſneſs? (Rom.* i. 18.) When the Light of Divine Truth breaks into the Mind, and cannot be kept out, but convinces the Conſcience that things have been ſo and ſo done by the Father, and by his Son Jeſus Chriſt, in favour to Mankind; and that therefore Men ought to love the Lord, and in love to obey him, and that it is the way to be happy ſo to do; and yet for all that, this Truth, which hath thus far compell'd the Conſcience to aſſent to it, is detained and held as Priſoner in the Mind by the power of Luſt, ſo that it does not walk abroad in the Life of ſuch a Man; the Thorns ſpring up with the Seed and overtop it; the Seed ſprings up in the Mind by its power of Conviction, ſhewing what ſhould and ought to be, but the Thorns of Luſt ſpring up in the Affection, and determine what ſhall be, and what ſhall not be in ſuch a Man's Life. Such a Man indeed hath received the Truth, as he aſſents to it to be Truth, but hath not received the Love of the Truth, by conſenting to, and affectionately embracing what it enjoyns.

And ſhall we think that God will reward with the great and unſpeakable Bleſſing of Juſtification and Salvation, ſuch an act of the Creature as is not voluntary, but forced from him whether he will or no? Surely he will not. 2 *Theſſ.* ii. 10. *Becauſe they received not the love of the truth, that they might be ſaved,* &c. No other receiving of the Truth then will be rewarded with Salvation, but the receiving it in Love; and what's more voluntary than Love? *If a Man had all Faith*, never ſo ſtrong a Perſuaſion touching the Vertue and Power of Chriſt, *So that he could remove Mountains, and have not Love, it would profit him nothing*, 1 Cor. xiii. 2. *If there be firſt a willing Mind, it is accepted*, &c. 2 *Cor.* viii. 12. that's ſurely a neceſſary Ingredient to render any Act of the Creature acceptable to God, and conſequently rewardable by him, 1 *Cor.* ix. 17. *For if I do this thing willingly I have a Reward.* Take heed then of venturing your precious Souls upon this Faith, that lies but in a naked and bare Aſſent to the general Truth of the Goſpel.

CHAP. VI.

Farther diſcovering, that neither the Act of Reliance or Dependence upon God or Chriſt for Salvation, without the Concurrence of a loving and loyal Adheſion to him, will avail to Salvation.

Sect. I. Having already ſhewed, that Faith by the firſt of thoſe three Acts mentioned in the former Chapter, will not juſtifie without the Addition and Concurrence of more; I ſhall now likewiſe ſhew you, that neither will this Act of Truſt, Confidence, Dependence or Reliance upon the Lord for Salvation, though added unto the former of aſſenting to the Truth of that Report which the Goſpel makes of Chriſt's being the Son of God, his dying for Sinners, *&c.* prove effectual to juſtifie and ſave; unleſs it be found in Conjunction with an obediential cleaving to Chriſt, to be delivered by him from the Power and Dominion of Sin, as well as the Guilt and Condemnation of it.

That there may be found in Men a preſumptuous leaning upon the Mercies of the Lord, and his Promiſes, and Acts of Grace, and an Expectation of being thereupon ſecured by God from Deſtruction; while in the mean time they cut off their Claim and Title to thoſe Promiſes and Acts of Grace, by loving of and cleaving to their inward Luſts, or outward Enormities, inſtead of cleaving to thoſe Precepts and Promiſes touching Holineſs, which would carry them out of thoſe Sins, is a thing very viſible in the Scriptures, as well as obvious to Experience.

It was ſo with Men under the Old Teſtament, *Micah* iii. 11. *The Heads thereof judge for Reward, and the Prieſts thereof teach for Hire, and the Prophets thereof divine for Money, yet will they lean upon the Lord and ſay, is not the Lord among us? None Evil can come unto us.* The Lord had indeed made many gracious Promiſes to that People of his being their God, of his dwelling and walking among them, of ſaving them from thoſe Evils which he would bring upon their Enemies; but all upon condition that they would be to him a People, in Love, Loyalty, and Obedience, as he to them a God, in Protection and Bleſſing. (*Levit.* xxvi *Deut.* xxviii.) but theſe Men, Judges, Prieſts, Prophets, Sinners of ſundry ſorts, eye the Promiſes, over-looking the Condition upon which they were made, and would needs lean upon theſe, as if God were obliged to them by theſe, to ſecure them from thoſe Evils which the faithful Prophets of the Lord threatned them with, for tranſgreſſing the Covenant of the Lord, and living in Diſobedience thereto. Juſt as fooliſh Men now do, who becauſe they find by the Scriptures, that Chriſt died for Sinners, and hath commanded that Remiſſion of Sins and Salvation be preached in his Name to every Creature, and hath given many precious Encouragements for Sinners of all ſorts to look unto him from all the ends of the Earth and be ſaved; but with this *Item*, That *they repent and be baptized every one of them in the Name of the Lord Jeſus for the Remiſſion of Sins, that they be born again of Water, and of the Spirit; that they deny themſelves, take up their Croſs, and follow him, and forſake all that they have for his ſake* (if they cannot faithfully obey him upon cheaper Terms) *without which they cannot be his Diſciples*; and that they diligently hearken to, and carefully obſerve whatever Jeſus that great Prophet hath ſpoken and commanded; upon pain of being cut off from the Number of the Lord's redeemed ones; they little minding or regarding the Terms and Conditions of the Grace offered; or thinking a few outward Performances (as the Jews aforeſaid did of Circumciſion, Sacrifices, and the like) will ſerve for all: When indeed the main of the matter (the renewing them to God in the diſpoſition and frame of their Hearts, and a faithful labouring to pleaſe the Lord in all things, and ſtriving againſt all contrary Motions and Temptations) is wholly wanting; yet as if all the Grace in the Goſpel were theirs, and deſigned for all thoſe that will lay hold of it, right or wrong, they confidently perſuade themſelves, or endeavour ſo to do, that they are built upon a ſure Foundation, that Chriſt, Remiſſion of Sins, and Salvation, are all theirs, and that they do them a great deal of wrong that offer but a word to ſhake this Confidence of theirs.

Again, ſee the like in another paſſage, *Iſai.* xlviii. 1, 2. *Hear ye this, O houſe of Jacob, which are called by the name of Iſrael, and are come forth out of the waters of Judah; which ſwear by the Name of the Lord, and make mention of the God of Iſrael, but not in truth, nor in righteouſneſs. For they call themſelves of the holy City, and ſtay themſelves upon the God of Iſrael, the Lord of Hoſts is his Name.* This People you ſee mention the Name of the Lord, as being called by it, look upon themſelves as his People, call themſelves of the holy City, and thereupon ſtay themſelves upon the God of *Iſrael*, depend upon him for all good, as their God, and upon his Promiſes, as if made to them; and thus they did, but not in Truth nor in Righteouſneſs; for this Profeſſion and this Confidence of theirs was accompanied with Unfaithfulneſs in the main, and therefore their dependence upon God was irregular and deceitful, God having no where engaged to ſtand under ſuch a Truſt but the contrary, *Job* viii. 13, 14, 15.

Sect. II. And as it was thus with thoſe under the Old, ſo is it likewiſe after the ſame manner with too many now under the New Teſtament; who becauſe they have ſome knowledge and belief of God's gracious Intention to ſave Sinners by the Death of his Son, and the general Promiſes of the Goſpel, eſpecially if together herewith they have but a form of Godlineſs, and ſomething of Devotion towards the Ordinances of God, they perſuade themſelves that they are the Believers to whom the Promiſes of Remiſſion of Sin, and Salvation of the Soul are made; though in the mean time they are under the power of ſome known Sin or other, either Covetouſneſs, or Cruelty, and Hard-heartedneſs, or Pride, or Uncleanneſs, or Intemperance in Word or Deed, or ſome other Sin, and are unrenewed in Will and Affections; or if there be any change, it is not ſo much as will turn the Scale, and give the main of the Victory againſt the Fleſh, on the Spirit's ſide: But though there be ſo much Light as that they can talk of good things, and ſo much Conviction as in the general to approve of them, yet the Intereſt of the Fleſh clearly carries it, when things come to be done, and when temptation is upon them.

And the main Reaſon, I conceive, why Perſons upon their general Belief of the Goſpel, have this confidence of Salvation, though otherwiſe they are as yet but in the Fleſh, and ſo cannot pleaſe God, (*Rom.* viii. 8.) is this, becauſe they are partial in the Scriptures, and do not give one Scripture as well as another room in their Judgments and Affections: Their Minds run upon ſuch Scriptures as declare *Chriſt Jeſus to have come into the world to ſave Sinners: That God ſo loved the world, that he gave his only begotten Son, that whoſoever believeth in him ſhould not periſh, but have everlaſting Life: That he that confeſſeth with his mouth the Lord Jeſus, and believeth in his heart, that God raiſed him from the dead, ſhall be ſaved*, and the like; and ſo far they do very well: But then there are other Scriptures that declare, That *except men repent, they ſhall periſh: That except they be born again, they cannot ſee the Kingdom of God: That without holineſs no man ſhall ſee the Lord: That the Lord will come in flaming Fire, rendring Vengeance to thoſe that obey not the Goſpel: That thoſe that live after the fleſh ſhall die: That if any man love the World, the love of the Father is not in him: That tribulation and wrath ſhall be upon every ſoul of man that doth evil*, with many the like; which they ſlightly paſs over, and are not thorowly poſſeſs'd with an apprehenſion, that thoſe other Scriptures, that entail the Promiſe of Life to be Believing, are ſo to be underſtood, as that theſe others muſt ſtand with them, or to be underſtood of ſuch a kind of Believing, as hath the ſubſtance of theſe other Scriptures working in the Bowels of it, which they muſt believe that will not deceive themſelves in their Faith: And is there not the ſame reaſon to believe the one as well as the other? Doth not the Water of both ſorts of Scriptures proceed out of the ſame Hole, from the ſame Fountain? But now the carnal Believers, of whom I ſpeak, fancying to themſelves, that the Promiſe of Salvation is made to Believing indefinitely, not conſidering that it is tyed up to that ſpecial kind of Believing which works by Love, as other Scriptures

tures interpret; and they, knowing in themſelves that they do believe in one ſenſe, (for ſo indeed they do, with that general Faith of Aſſent) thence they conclude confidently, that they are Heirs of Promiſe, and Heirs of Salvation as well as any, and do as verily think they are going to Heaven; whereas indeed they are in the way to Hell, as ever the Syrians thought they were going to *Dothan*, while they were blindly led to *Samaria*, 2 *Kings* vi. 19.

Sect. III. The Men of this formal and dead Faith, of which I ſpeak, that have confidence of Salvation, becauſe they believe, though they do not indeed believe with that Belief unto which Salvation is promiſed, do directly tread in the ſteps of ſome in the Apoſtles days, who would needs be confident of Salvation, though all the Faith they had was not of that Power as to produce a holy Life: And the Apoſtles, knowing the danger of ſuch a Confidence, laboured exceedingly to take them off it, and to build them upon a better bottom.

This is the buſineſs in which the Apoſtle St. *James* labours ſo mightily in his Epiſtle. And we may eaſily perceive what Diſeaſe was among the Chriſtians, by the Remedies which this Servant of the Lord applied for their cure, *viz.* an inordinate Love of the World, which manifeſted it ſelf in an adulterous and too near a complyance therewith, *chap.* iv. beginning. And thereupon they deſpiſed the poor Saints, and preferred Men leſs worthy if they were rich, *chap.* ii. Their want of the true Chriſtian Humility and Love, brake out into bitter Envying and Strife, and an undue Judging and Cenſuring one of another, *chap.* iii. throughout. And yet for all theſe unchriſtian and unſaint-like Deportments, they were ready to glory as if they were the knowing Men, and Men of the right Religion, wherein Salvation was to be had, and that it did belong to them. In oppoſition to which vain Confidence, and confident Boaſting, he expreſſeth himſelf thus: Chap. iii. 14, 15. *But if ye have bitter envying and ſtrife in your hearts, glory not, and lie not againſt the Truth: this Wiſdom deſcendeth not from above, but is earthly, ſenſual, deviliſh.* For them to glory of their Religion, and of their Wiſdom and Knowledge, and yet to be Men of ſuch an Unchriſtian Carriage, they did but lie againſt the Truth, which they pretended to have on their ſide, but indeed was point blank againſt them. But if any Man would approve himſelf a wiſe Man indeed, endued with the Chriſtian Knowledge of the right kind, the Apoſtle tells them, it muſt be, by *ſhewing out of a good Converſation his Works with meekneſs of Wiſdom*, ver. 13.

Again, *chap.* i. 26. he had likewiſe encountred that vain Confidence that was built upon a form of Knowledge, Faith and Profeſſion, without the Life and Power of it, ſaying, *If any man among you ſeem to be religious, and bridleth not his tongue, but deceiveth his own heart, this man's religion is vain.* Men that ſhould give way to the Fleſh, though but in one thing; as for inſtance, A licentious liberty to the Tongue, not endeavouring by watchfulneſs, heed, and circumſpection, to conform to the Doctrine of the Lord, which forbids not only Lying, Reviling, Back-biting, Slandering, corrupt and unclean Communication, but alſo fooliſh Talking and Jeſting, yea every idle Word; how Religious ſoever they might otherwiſe ſeem to themſelves upon account of their formal Knowledge and Faith, of external Devotion to the Ordinances, yet the Apoſtle teſtifieth, as from the Lord, that ſuch do but deceive their own Hearts, befool themſelves with a vain Confidence of being Religious Men, and of being accepted with God as ſuch, and that ſuch Men's Religion is vain, that is, as to the end for which the true Religion ſerves. Not as if all their Religion were made up of vain Notions, but though they had never ſo ſound a Knowledge and right Belief of many excellent Goſpel-Truths, and though they added thereto the doing of many things; yea, how ſeemingly Religious ſoever they were, upon what account ſoever, yet the want but of this one thing, a care to bridle the Tongue, would render all a Man's Religion, and all his Confidence of Salvation built thereupon, but vain and unprofitable, touching the end of Religion, the end of Faith, which is the Salvation of the Soul, as if he had never had any Religion, nor ſeeming ſhew of it at all.

Yet once more, *James* ii. 14. to the ſame purpoſe thus: *What doth it profit, my Brethren, tho' a Man ſay he hath Faith, and have not Works? can* Faith *ſave him?* That is, can ſuch a Faith ſave him? a form of Speech emphatically denying the thing interrogated, like unto that afterwards, *chap.* iii. 11, 12. *Doth a fountain ſend forth at the ſame place ſweet water and bitter? Can the Fig-tree, my Brethren, bear Olive-berries? either a Vine Figs?* Why no it cannot: No more can that Faith ſave that hath not Works. Though a Man may ſay, and ſay truly, though a Man be able to ſay he hath

Faith, yet if he have not Works, can his Faith ſave him? do you think it can? He is not blaming their Faith, as if not placed upon a right Object, or as if there were not a real cloſing with that Object in point of Aſſent. In the beginning of this Chapter he clearly ſuppoſeth them to have the *Faith of our Lord Jeſus Chriſt*, only there cautions them not to yoke or couple their Faith with an unchriſtian Carriage, aſſuring them by the tenour of his Diſcourſe throughout this Chapter, eſpecially from the fourteenth Verſe to the end, that a Faith ſo yoked, and wanting its true yoke-fellow and companion, the Goſpel-Converſation, which he calls by the name of Works, will not profit him that hath it: Which Unprofitableneſs of that Faith which hath not Works, he farther illuſtrates by way of Compariſon, ver. 15, 16. *If a Brother or Siſter be naked, or deſtitute of daily food, and one of you ſay unto them, Depart in peace, be ye warmed and filled: notwithſtanding ye give them not thoſe things which are needful to the body: what doth it profit?* Nothing at all; that is to the filling or warming of the neceſſitous Perſon. Even ſo, ſaith he, ver. 17. *Faith, if it hath not Works, is dead, being alone.* Though a Man ſhould give God, Chriſt, never ſuch good words, though he ſhall be able to ſpeak at never ſo high a rate of the Grace of God, of the Love of Chriſt, of the Power of his Death, of the Efficacy of his Blood, and Prevalency of his Interceſſion, and ſhall have ſome kind of Belief of what he ſays; yet if it do not ſincerely engage the Soul to ſerve the Intereſt of the Glory of God in a vertuous Life, anſwerable to ſuch a Profeſſion and Faith, it will no more profit to the Juſtification of the Soul in the ſight of God, than a parcel of good Words would feed and cloath, fill and warm the needy Brother, and indigent Siſter, when a Contribution of a real Relief is wanting. *Though I could ſpeak with the Tongue of Men and Angels, and had all Faith, ſo that I could remove Mountains, and have not Love, it would profit me nothing*, 1 Cor. xiii. 1, 2. And whereas he ſaith, that *Faith is dead, being alone*, he plainly ſuppoſeth, that Faith may be alone without the company of Works; a Faith that is truly ſo in its kind; a Faith that is acted on a right Object. But whereever it is alone, there it is dead, that is, it is unprofitable as to the end for which Faith is appointed, *viz.* to juſtifie, or (as he had ſaid, *ver.* 14.) to ſave. For that clearly is the ſenſe of Faith's being dead, in this place, and not its barrenneſs of good Works. Though that's true likewiſe, that Faith's being dead in another ſenſe, *i. e.* void of Spiritual Vigour, Force and Power, is the cauſe why it is alone, and not accompanied with the goodneſs of Converſation; yet here in this place, the deadneſs of Faith is the Effect of its being alone, and not the Cauſe of it: The deadneſs of Faith proceeds from the abſence of Works, as here ſpoken of, and not the abſence of Works from the deadneſs of Faith. *Faith is dead being alone* (ſaith he) that is, becauſe it is alone; for ſo it is plain, that its being alone carries the force of a Reaſon why it is dead. And therefore Faith's being dead, here notes its utter inability to juſtifie or ſave; which anſwers the ſcope of the Apoſtle, which is, to convince the carnal Profeſſor that his Faith without Works would not ſave him, as is manifeſt by the 14th Verſe, upon which the following Diſcourſe to the end of the Chapter depends. He ſays after, ver. 26. *That as the Body without the Spirit is dead, ſo Faith without Works is dead alſo.* In which Compariſon or Similitude, as the Body anſwers Faith, ſo the Spirit anſwers Works; and as the abſence of the Spirit from the Body is the cauſe why the Body is dead, and does not the ſervice unto which a living Man is appointed; ſo the abſence of Works from Faith is the cauſe why Faith is dead, and does not him in whom it is the Service unto which the true Faith is appointed, to wit, to juſtifie or ſave him that hath it.

Sect. IV. And here, by the way, we have clearly ſet before us the true Senſe in which Works are neceſſary to Juſtification as well as Faith; and that is, as they do qualifie Faith for that Work or Office of Juſtifying, unto which God of his meer Grace hath deſigned it. For ſo is the Will of God, that tho' he will ſo magnifie his Grace in the Salvation of Men, as to juſtifie and ſave them by Chriſt upon, or upon condition of their believing in him; yet hath he therein made ſuch Proviſion to magnifie his Holineſs, and his Love of it in his Creature, as that he will not confer the Grace of Juſtification upon any other Faith, or entitle any other Believing unto that Atonement which Chriſt hath made by his Blood, than ſuch as hath its fruit unto Holineſs, the end of which will be everlaſting Life. In which ſenſe I conceive it is, that Faith is ſaid to be made perfect by Works, *James* ii. 22. that is (as I underſtand) put into a compleat capacity of attaining its end, which is to juſtifie: As a Houſe is then ſaid to be perfected, when nothing is wanting in it, as to the end and ſervice for which it is built, 2 *Chron.* viii. 16. So is Faith, when nothing is wanting to it, to anſwer the end whereto it is to ſerve. But now as long as Faith is alone, or by it ſelf, without Works, it is dead, (as we heard before) and ſo in no Capacity to juſtifie, or reach its end. Nor does it come under the ſaving Influence of the Promiſe, till it work by Love, that being the only kind of Faith that hath the Promiſe to avail, (*Gal.* v. 6.) and therefore Works added to Faith, as Children are added to their Mother, being the ſame thing that makes the difference between that Faith that will juſtifie, and that which will not; and which brings that kind of believing under the Promiſe, without which all other believing is excluded. Hence it is, I conceive, that Works may well and truly be ſaid to perfect Faith, as putting it into a right Capacity of reaching its end. But thus much on the by in this place.

Sect. V. As St. *James*, ſo St. *John* oppoſeth the vain Confidence that is built upon the dead Faith, 1 *Joh.* i. 6. *If we ſay that we have Fellowſhip with him, and walk in Darkneſs, we lie, and do not the Truth.* This doubtleſs he wrote in Oppoſition to ſome Profeſſors of the Chriſtian Faith, who though they walked in Darkneſs, led Lives diſagreeing to the Light of Chriſt's Doctrine; yet ſaid, profeſs'd, and were confident that they had Fellowſhip, Partnerſhip with God, and with his Son Jeſus Chriſt in his Love, Saving-mercy, and Promiſes of Grace; as if, as theſe were God's to give, ſo they were all theirs to enjoy. But as he would take them off their vain Confidence in this, ſo he directs them how to be better built, in the next Verſe, ſaying, *But if we walk in the Light as he is in the Light, we have Fellowſhip one with another; and the Blood of Jeſus Chriſt his Son, cleanſeth us from all Sin.* Meaning, I ſuppoſe, that if that Perſuaſion which they had of Fellowſhip with God, Intereſt in his Grace, Love, and Mercy, and Share in Chriſt's Blood, were but accompanied with an upright endeavour of purifying themſelves as he is pure, and of being holy in all manner of Converſation, as he that had called them is holy, (which I think is the ſame thing as to walk in the Light, as he is in the Light) then they might be confident indeed, that they had Fellowſhip with God in his Grace and Love, and Share in Chriſt's Blood to cleanſe them from all Sin. But otherwiſe and without this, whatever their Opinion, Pretence, or Confidence was of their good Condition, they did but lie, and falſifie the Truth.

Of which Deluſion and dangerous Deceit he admoniſheth the Chriſtians, *Chap.* iii. 7, 8. ſaying, *Little Children, let no Man deceive you; he that doth Righteouſneſs is righteous as he is righteous, he that committeth Sin is of the Devil.* By which Saying he ſuggeſts, that there were ſome amongſt them of another Opinion and Perſuaſion, and that they were in danger of being deceived by them, to think that though they did indulge themſelves in ſome Sin, yet they might be counted and dealt withal as righteous Perſons, as being in Chriſt, and knowing of him as they ſuppoſed. In Oppoſition to which vain Conceit, and lying Imagination, he had ſaid in the Verſe before, *Whoſoever abideth in him ſinneth not, whoſoever ſinneth hath not ſeen him, neither known him.*

The like Admonition miniſtred by St. *Paul* to the *Epheſians*, implieth like Danger from Men of the ſame Profeſſion, *Eph.* v. 6. *Let no Man deceive you with vain words; for becauſe of theſe things cometh the Wrath of God upon the Children of Diſobedience.* Implying, that there were ſome among them that were otherwiſe perſuaded, than that thoſe unholy ways from which he had newly before dehorted them, would expoſe them to the Wrath of God, who truſted in Chriſt for Salvation. For of ſuch he propheſied, whilſt he was yet with them, *Acts* xx. 30. *That of their own ſelves ſhould Men ariſe, ſpeaking perverſe things*; wreſted or ſwerving things, *to draw away Diſciples after them.* Men profeſſing the ſame Faith, and expecting Salvation by the ſame Chriſt, ſhould make ſuch ſwerving Inferences from the Doctrine of Grace that offers Salvation upon believing in Jeſus, as tended to Looſneſs of Life; and that they would labour to propagate their diſtorted Notions, and to make a Party of the ſame Mind with them. Againſt whoſe dangerous Inſinuations he faithfully now again in his Epiſtle warns them to take heed of being deceived with ſuch Mens vain Words, and impure Pretenſions; as if any Faith they had in the Grace of God, or Merit of Chriſt's Blood, could ſecure them from the Wrath of God, whilſt they lived in Uncleanneſs and Covetouſneſs, and indulged themſelves in a way of fooliſh talking and jeſting, for of ſuch Sins he had ſpoken before.

Sect. VI. Of this very ſort of Men ſurely it is, of whom St. *Paul* ſpeaks, 2 *Tim.* iii. concerning whom he informs us of theſe three things amongſt others.

Firſt, That they had a Form of Godlineſs, *ver.* 5. and therefore were Profeſſors of the Chriſtian Faith and Worſhip, the Doctrine of Grace, and Ordinances of the Goſpel, Baptiſm, Supper of the Lord, *&c.*

Secondly, that in themſelves they were Men of an Un-goſpel-like Temper and Behaviour, *Lovers of their own ſelves, covetous, boaſters, proud, blaſphemous, diſobedient to parents, unthankful, unholy, without natural affection, truce-breakers, falſe accuſers, incontinent, fierce, deſpiſers of thoſe that are good, traytors, heady, high-minded, lovers of pleaſures more than lovers of God,* ver. 2, 3, 4. Some of theſe bearing ſway in ſome of them, and ſome in others: And that they were induſtrious to increaſe their Party, and to draw Diſciples after them appears, in that they *crept into Houſes, and led captive ſilly Women that were laden with Sins, and led away with divers Luſts*; who doubtleſs were glad of any Notion about free Grace that would put them under Hope of Salvation, though under the Power of divers Luſts, which probably thoſe Men did inſtruct them in.

And Thirdly, That from which this ill Life under a Form and Shew of Godlineſs did proceed, was their great Miſtake about the Doctrine of Faith, either as touching the Nature of the Grace, or the Terms upon which Salvation was promiſed to it: For he ſays, that they were *reprobate concerning the Faith*; or as the Margin reads it, *Of no Judgment concerning the Faith*, ver. 8. they made no right Judgment of the Goſpel's promiſing Salvation upon believing, but as St. *Peter* expreſſeth it, *ſtumbled at the Word, and wreſted it to their own Deſtruction*, 1 *Pet.* ii. 8. 2 *Pet.* iii. 16. thought the Promiſe of a larger Extent than it was; were not aware it was ſuch a kind of believing only, as gave a Man Victory over ſuch Luſts and Pleaſures as in which they lived, unto which the Promiſe of Life was made.

Theſe things may well make the moſt of Men called Chriſtians to look about them, who by their Lives proclaim themſelves to be Believers but of the ſame Rank with thoſe marked out by the Apoſtles of our Lord, as Men whoſe Religion is vain; whoſe Faith is dead, whoſe Confidence of Salvation is built upon Miſtakes of the Doctrine of Grace, whilſt deſtitute of the Life and Power of Godlineſs (which ſubdues the Heart and Life to God) to anſwer that Form of Profeſſion which they make of the Chriſtian Faith. But becauſe it is a Matter of ſuch Moment, and ſo little laid to Heart by thoſe whom it ſo much concerns; therefore do I dwell upon it the more, if peradventure any may be awakened by it. And therefore, having heard ſomething of that which the Apoſtles of our Lord have ſaid to this important Point, for a cloſe of this Matter; let us alſo a little weigh a Paſſage or two ſpoken by the Lord himſelf relating to this Buſineſs.

Sect. VII. Our Lord Jeſus reſembles the ſeveral Sorts and Tempers of Men that hear the Goſpel, unto four ſeveral ſorts of Ground upon which the Sower caſts his Seed, *Luke* viii. And begins with the loweſt and worſt ſort, and from them proceeds gradually to the beſt of all. The firſt ſort reſembled by the Seed that fell by the ways ſide, are ſuch as neither underſtand nor believe the Goſpel, *Luke* viii. 12. *Mat.* xiii. 19. The ſecond ſort go beyond theſe, for they do believe the Word, but it is but for a time; for in time of Perſecution for the Word's ſake they fall away, having no Root, *ver.* 13. Now the third ſort, as they are placed in the middle between ſuch as do receive the Word, and believe and rejoice in it only for a Seaſon; and ſuch who with an honeſt Heart having heard the Word, keep it, and bring forth Fruit with Patience, ſo they do accordingly go beyond the temporary Believer, and yet fall ſhort of the honeſt-hearted Doer of the Word, reſembled by the good Ground. And that wherein they do exceed the ſtony-ground Hearers that believe only for a time, is this, that they perſevere in their believing, ſuch as it is, unto the end of their Lives. And that wherein they fall ſhort of the good-ground Hearers is this, that they do not with Honeſty or Integrity of Heart keep or do the Word, and patiently bring forth the Fruit of it, as do the good-ground Hearers. For they when they have heard, go forth, and are choked with Cares, and Riches, and Pleaſures of this Life, and ſo bring no Fruit to Perfection, *ver.* 14. It's ſaid, *ver.* 7. that *the Seed falling among Thorns, the Thorns ſprang up with it, and choked it:* By which it's evident, that the Seed of the Word, doth in a Senſe grow up in theſe Men, they may grow to have a great deal of Knowledge of the Word, and ſome Faith in it, and they may bring forth ſome Fruit too, do many things as *Herod* and others did; but the only fault is, that they do not bring forth Fruit to Perfection, they do not carry it quite through: If they have a Blade of Profeſſion, yet they have not the Ear of Practice; or if ſomething of that, yet they have not the full Corn in the Ear, a ſincere Reſpect unto all the Lord's Commands; but the Thorns of ſome Luſt or other grow up with the Word, and choke it, and over-top it, have more Intereſt in the Heart than the Word hath, draw the Affections of the Soul more to them than the Word doth, as the Thorns many times draw the nouriſhing Moiſture of the Ground, more to them than the Corn doth that ſprings up with them, and ſo prevents the perfect Growth of the Corn. The Word does grow in ſuch Men to a certain degree; the Word as it brings glad Tidings of Salvation to Sinners by the Death and Reſurrection of Jeſus Chriſt, hath ſome rooting in the Heart, and is received with Joy; and as it promiſeth Salvation upon Believing, as they underſtand Believing, ſo it is a welcome Word, which they will by no means let go; and as it enjoins eaſier and cheaper Duties, ſo far it hath the Heart too: And thus far the Word may grow up, and the Thorns, Luſts, and ſinful Affections may grow up too, and dwell together in the ſame Man. But then there are other Words of the ſame Lord, and of the ſame Goſpel of Salvation, which put Men upon denying themſelves to pleaſe the Lord, and croſſing their own ſinful Inclinations and Wills, that they may fulfil the Will of the Lord; there are Words that enjoin us to crucifie the Old Man with the Affections and Luſts, to mortifie our Members which are upon the Earth, to cut off the right Hand, and pluck out the right Eye; to put our ſelves to the utmoſt Extremity of ſuffering and diſtaſting the Fleſh, rather than to harbour any Gueſt in the Soul to diſtaſte our dear Lord. But now here the Word is encountred by ſinful Affections, the Love of Mens own ſelves; their Eaſe, their Pleaſure, their Reputations with Men, and for the Maintenance and Support of theſe, the Love and Deſire of Riches takes place with them, and their Deſire and Love to theſe puts them upon many unlovely Strains to compaſs them. In a word, they love to pleaſe and to be pleaſed of Men, and to have all things go on ſmoothly with them; and here the Word of Chriſt and their Wills fall croſs; his Honour to be by them upheld in a cloſe following of him, and the upholding of their own Honour among Men claſh; Chriſt's Spiritual Intereſt, and their Carnal Intereſt, will not conſiſt, but one muſt give way. If they will pleaſe the Lord, they muſt many times diſpleaſe themſelves and others too; and to enjoy his Love and a good Conſcience, muſt be content to be without much, and ſometimes to loſe all thoſe Worldly Accommodations which the Fleſh prizeth very much. And however the other part of the Word and Luſt might grow up together, yet this part of the Word and Luſt cannot remain in any Power and Operation in the ſame Subject but will be fighting; and if the Affections, as a third Party ſide with Luſts againſt the Word, or if more cordially adhere to them than to the Word, the Word is preſently choked and over-born by the Power of the Fleſh, as the Corn by Thorns, and brings no Fruit to Perfection.

Theſe are the Men, and this their Character, who are the Hearers and Profeſſors of the Word of the Goſpel reſembled by the thorny Ground; which, as I intimated before, go a Step farther than thoſe that do believe for a time only, and conſequently muſt not only be ſuch as do in a Senſe believe as the others did, but alſo ſuch as hold out and perſevere in their Faith unto the End. Neither probably is that the reaſon why their Faith holds out rather than the others, as if it were a Faith of a better kind of Conſtitution, or ſtronger than theirs, but rather becauſe it is not put to that Streſs and Tryal which the others Faith could not endure; 'tis very like that if the Faith of the thorny-ground Hearer ſhould be put to it by Perſecution, as the Faith of the ſtony-ground Hearer is ſaid to be, his Faith might give in and fail as well as the other's. For the Reaſon why the ſtony-ground Hearer's Faith fail'd him, is becauſe it is not rooted and grounded in Love; he loves his Honour, his Eſtate, his Relations, or at leaſt his Life more than Chriſt, (which whoſoever does, cannot be his Diſciple, or be deemed worthy of him, whatever his Knowledge or Faith otherwiſe may be) and therefore when by the Tryal of Perſecution he is put to his Choice, to renounce his Faith, or his Life, or other Enjoyments, he adheres to that which he loves moſt; to wit, his outward Enjoyments, and declines the Lord, in his Word, Worſhip, and Ways, which he loves leſs. Though it does not always follow, that thoſe who upon a carnal account will not publickly own the Lord, when the confeſſing of him and his Truth proves ſo coſtly to them, do at the ſame time let go that inward Perſuaſion which they had of him and his Truth before the Tryal came; the Rulers at the ſame time while they durſt not confeſs Chriſt openly, yet then inwardly believed on him, *John* xii. 42. A Practice ſet on foot by ſome in the Apoſtles times, and as it ſeems, avouched as lawful by ſome, outwardly to deny Chriſt in time of Perſecution, if they did in the mean time inwardly believe in him, which ſurely is one of thoſe damnable Hereſies St. *Peter* ſpeaks of, privily brought into the Church by falſe Teachers, 2 *Pet.* ii. 1. *There ſhall be falſe Teachers among you, who privily ſhall bring in damnable Hereſies, even denying the Lord that bought them, and bring upon themſelves ſwift Deſtruction.* If they had taught Men not to believe at all on Chriſt, it would not have been called Hereſy, but either Infidelity, or Apoſtacy; nor could they lightly have privily brought ſuch a Doctrine into the Church, but would eaſily have been diſcerned by all Chriſtians to be Enemies to Chriſt; beſides, thoſe that followed their pernicious Tenents and Ways, did occaſion the Way of Truth to be evil ſpoken of, *ver.* 2. Which would not have been, if they had been profeſs'd Enemies to it; the pernicious Ways of a Man, after he is turned Jew or Turk, though once a Chriſtian, does not cauſe the Chriſtian Religion to be evil ſpoken of. But however, whether Men fall away totally, both from the inward Perſuaſion, and outward Profeſſion of the Faith they had once embraced; or only in part from the publick Profeſſion of it, ſo far as to ſecure themſelves from Perſecution, it proceeds from the ſame Cauſe, and that is the want of that Ingredient in their Faith, which is the peculiar Property of the Faith of God's Elect; to wit, an affectionate cleaving to Chriſt, as more deſirable than Life.

There's the ſame reaſon as to the internal Cauſe, why the Faith of the Thorny-ground Hearer falls ſhort of Salvation, and that is the want of that Mixture of Love I ſpeak of. For though they may believe Chriſt to be the Saviour, and expect Salvation by him, and for that Cauſe bear ſome good Affection to him; yet their Love working ſtronger to Riches, Honours, and Pleaſures, and for their ſakes, to Ways and things by which theſe may be enjoyed; thence it comes to paſs, that the Luſts of theſe things carry it againſt Chriſt and his Word, who draw another way. Now becauſe this ſort of Men may hold that dead Faith which they have, and the Profeſſion of it too, and yet retain their Worldly Luſts alſo, yea and make an outward and fleſhly Advantage of ſuch a Faith and Profeſſion many times; thence it comes to paſs, that they do not fall away as the other, but perſevere herein unto the end: The difference of the one's falling, and the other's ſtanding, does not lie in the difference of their Faith, but in the different Nature of their Temptations; the one is neceſſitated to part with his Faith or Luſts, the other is not.

This latter ſort of Ground therefore clearly reſembles the State and Condition of ſenſual and carnal Chriſtians, who live in ſuch Times and Places as we now do; in which Men may believe in Jeſus Chriſt, and publickly own their Faith, eſpecially if it put them upon no extraordinary Strains of Self-denial, without running any hazard of Perſecution, but ſhall rather expoſe themſelves to ſuffering in caſe they ſhould not own the Faith, which is the Religion of the Country: And in ſuch places Faith, ſuch as it is, is as common as Silver was in the Days of *Solomon*. All Men, in a manner, do believe that Chriſt died for Sinners, and that Salvation is to be had by believing in his Name; and that their believing will juſtifie them, and without Works too, as they have been generally taught, which is their Snare. Hereupon they live, they die in hope of Salvation, upon this very account that they do believe; though there is too much cauſe to fear, that the Converſations and Tempers, I would I could not ſay of far the greateſt part, even of theſe, do give too loud a Teſtimony that their Faith is but the dead Faith, they being not renewed to God, and born again by it; and conſequently that their Confidence of Salvation by Chriſt, is but a vain Confidence, and ſuch as will deceive them. I profeſs it is a very ſad thing ſo to ſay, and that which occaſions many a ſorrowful thought to my Soul: And my Love to Men, and my Deſire after their Salvation exceedingly inclines me to hope better things concerning theſe Men of whom I ſpeak, if I had but any Scriptural Ground to relieve ſuch a Hope. But I am either quite miſtaken in the Nature of Holineſs, and of the New Creature, or elſe ſuch Scriptures as do poſitively affirm, that *without Holineſs no Man ſhall ſee the Lord*; and that *except a Man be born again he cannot ſee the Kingdom of God*, that *neither Circumciſion nor Uncircumciſion avail, but a New Creature*, with many the like, I fear do faſt bar the Door of Life againſt the Confidence of a vaſt Multitude of Profeſſors of Belief in Jeſus, unleſs the Generality of thoſe I know not, be better than very many of thoſe I know.

Sect. VIII. Not to multiply more Scriptures to demonſtrate that Mens Belief in Chriſt, and Reliance upon him for Salvation, will not avail them, unleſs it draw the Soul in Love and Reverence to him, carefully to obey him, and to avoid ſuch things as he hates; for a Cloſe, ſeriouſly lay to heart thoſe piercing Words of Chriſt, which are worthy our utmoſt Conſideration hereabout, *Mat.*vii. 21, 22, 23. *Not every one that ſaith unto me, Lord, Lord, ſhall enter into the Kingdom of Heaven, but he that doth the Will of my Father which is in Heaven. Many will ſay to me in that day, Lord, Lord, have we not propheſied in thy Name, and in thy Name caſt out Devils, and in thy Name done many wonderful Works? And then will I profeſs unto them, I never knew you: depart from me ye that work Iniquity.* By St. *Luke* thus, chap. xiii. 23, 24, 25, 26, 27. *Then ſaid one unto him, Lord, are there few that be ſaved? And he ſaid unto them, Strive to enter in at the ſtrait gate: for many, I ſay unto you, will ſeek to enter in, and ſhall not be able. When once the maſter of the houſe is riſen up, and hath ſhut to the door, and ye begin to ſtand without, and to knock at the door, ſaying, Lord, Lord, open unto us; and he ſhall anſwer and ſay unto you, I know you not whence you are: Then ſhall ye begin to ſay, We have eaten and drunk in thy preſence, and thou haſt taught in our ſtreets. But he ſhall ſay, I tell you I know you not whence you are, depart from me all ye workers of Iniquity.*

That which I firſt obſerve from theſe wakening Words of our Lord, as to this preſent occaſion, is, that the Perſons, of whom Chriſt here ſpeaks, had Faith; which appears by this, in that (as they themſelves will plead) they caſt out Devils in the Name of Chriſt, and in his Name did many other wondrous Works; which, according to Chriſt's words, were ſigns which he promiſed ſhould follow thoſe that ſhould believe, *Mark* xvi. 17. Tho' all that did believe did not do ſuch Wonders, yet none but ſuch as did believe, did. Neither is it anywiſe likely, but that they whoſe Faith was ſo ſtrong, as in the Name of Chriſt to do ſuch Wonders, had a particular knowledge and belief, that Chriſt was the Son of God, and Saviour of the World. Neither was this Faith of theirs wholly deſtitute of Works, you ſee, they made ſuch a Profeſſion of Chriſt, as that they inſtructed others in his Religion; they propheſied in his Name, and did Works which cauſed Men to wonder; they heard Chriſt preach, and had ſo much familiarity with him, as to eat and drink in his preſence; greater matters than I fear thouſands of thouſands will have to plead for themſelves, who now bear the Name of Chriſtians, and profeſs Belief in Chriſt, and Hope of Salvation by him.

Secondly, That which I farther note hence is this, that theſe Men, of whom Chriſt ſpeaks, becauſe of this Faith they had, and thoſe Works which proceeded from it, take unto themſelves a kind of Confidence that they ſhall be admitted by Chriſt into his Kingdom. For though they are brought in by Chriſt here, as pleading for admittance at the laſt Day, and not taking Chriſt's firſt denial, but following him with earneſt, vehement Solicitations, backed with Arguments and Pleas from what they had received from him, and done for him, as if they wonder'd that Chriſt ſhould refuſe them; yet it is not to be thought, but that in their Life, and at their Death, they were poſſeſſed with hopes of being owned by Chriſt at the laſt Day, upon theſe very grounds upon which they are brought in as building their Plea. For ſurely they do not meet with any new confidence or grounds of Hope in the Grave, or ſtate of Death! Methinks theſe words of Chriſt give a kind of caſt, as if many Men ſhall die with ſo ſtrong a confidence of being owned and received by Chriſt at the Reſurrection and Judgment-day, as that they ſhall exceedingly wonder, and ſtand amazed to find themſelves ſo ſtrangely deceived and diſappointed as they will be, when they ſhall be turned off by Chriſt with, *I tell you, I know you not; I profeſs, I never knew you.* As if Chriſt could hardly poſſeſs them with ſuch a thought, that he ſhould not acknowledge and own them; and therefore he is fain, not only once, plainly to tell them, *I know you not*; but again, with more earneſtneſs, to affirm the ſame thing, and to ſay, *I tell you I know you not whence you are:* As if he ſhould ſay, Will you not believe me? I tell you again, *I know you not whence you are.* Yea, as St. *Matthew* hath it, he will then profeſs unto them that *he never knew them*; which ſtill argues how hard a matter it will be to beat them out of their Confidence of being owned by him, that he will be fain not only to tell them again and again, *I know you not*; but at laſt to *profeſs* to them, that *he never knew them*, no not then in your Life-time, (as if he ſhould ſay) when you thought your ſelves cock-ſure of my Approbation, I then knew you not to be any true Friends of mine; but you loved your ſelves and Relations, and loved the World more than me; you loved your own Wills more than mine, and your own Honour more than mine; and entertained motions from the Fleſh, and from the Devil, ſooner than from me; and therefore now, without any more ado, Depart from me all ye Workers of Iniquity! A ſad parting! Who ſhall not ſay with *David*, whilſt he is under the Contemplation hereof, *My Fleſh trembleth for fear of thee, and I am afraid of thy Judgments*, Pſal. cxix. 120.

That which I farther note in the third and laſt place, from this Doctrine of Chriſt, (which, with the reſt, aſtoniſhed thoſe that heard him preach it, *Mat.* vii. 28.) is this; that the true Reaſon why theſe Men's Confidence, and all that upon which it is built, and all their Pleadings, Beggings, and mournful Supplications added thereto, will all fail them, and fall to the ground, is in ſhort this, They were workers of Iniquity; as Men work at their Trades to bring them in what they lack and love, ſo theſe Men work Iniquity, that is, commit Sin, do and ſpeak things contrary to the Laws and Inſtructions of Chriſt, to bring them in that preſent carnal Content, which they love and prefer before that future Happineſs, upon thoſe ſelf-denying terms, without which it is not to be had. That Faith which they had was not of that kind, which purifies the Heart, and renews the Soul to God; but for all it, the Fleſh ſtill retained the commanding Intereſt in the Soul; and therefore as they had in their Life-time *ſowed to the Fleſh, ſo of the Fleſh they muſt now reap Corruption.* They were told, *That if they lived after the Fleſh they ſhould die*, as well as they were told, that *Chriſt came into the World to ſave Sinners*; but they would not believe the one, though they did the other: But now they muſt find and feel that which they would not before believe. Theſe things conſidered, I heartily beſeech all thoſe, into whoſe hands this ſhall come, to take warning now it is given, and not to deal ſlightly in the buſineſs of their Faith, or to dally with their precious Souls: Take heed of that vain Confidence of many, which you ſee will be all turned into Diſappointment, and Confuſion of Face, when the Day of Tryal comes; and be working out your Salvation with fear and trembling: With fear, leſt you ſhould be miſtaken about the ground of your Confidence, and evidence of your Hope. It's a thouſand pities that Men ſhould be ſo wary and ſolicitous, leſt they ſhould be deceived with a crack'd Title in their outward Eſtates, and ſo preſuming and careleſs about their Title to the next World as generally they are; as if the eternal Eſtate of their Souls were but a trifle to the momentary enjoyment of a little ſpot of this World. If the inconvenience of a miſtake herein could be born without any conſiderable breach upon one's comfort, or could afterward be rectified, though with ſome loſs, as in externals it may well be, a Man's folly would be the leſs; but to be ſlight, yea not to be exceeding curious, ſollicitous and thoughtful to prevent a miſchief, that for Nature is intollerable, and for Duration eternal, and the Loſs irreparable, argues the extremity of ſottiſh Madneſs; which yet, O that it were not the caſe of all Men, a few only excepted, *Mat.* vii. 13, 14.

CHAP. VII.

Shewing, That that Belief unto which the Promiſe is made, though indefinitely expreſs'd, is to be underſtood of Belief of a ſpecial kind: And that it is no ways ſafe to notion it in the loweſt, narroweſt, and meaneſt ſenſe of the Word, but to frame our notion of it according to that reſult which the Scriptures compared do give of it; under which notion of it, it will be hard for any Man to retain a confidence of Salvation without an holy Converſation.

Sect. I. AND becauſe Men are oft betrayed into that vain Confidence of Salvation, which I have ſpoken of, by miſtaking ſome Scriptures which they wreſt to their own deſtruction; therefore, to prevent that miſchief for the future as much as may be, as I have in the former part of my Diſcourſe been labouring to deliver ſome from their miſtakes of ſuch Scriptures as promiſe Juſtification upon Believing without the Works of the Law, ſo I ſhall here alſo add a few words, to ſave them from the danger of an undue Underſtanding of ſuch Scriptures, as repreſent the believing Chriſt to be the Son of God, and that he died and roſe again, and the like, to be that Faith that carries Life and Salvation in it. For whereas I have aſſerted in the two former Chapters, that neither the aſſenting to the Truth of that Report which the Scriptures make, touching Chriſt his being the Son of God, and Saviour of the World, &c. nor yet the relying on him as ſuch for Salvation, will indeed avail a Man unto Salvation, without a loving, loyal, and obediential cleaving to him; it may be ſome will be ready to object and ſay, Does not the Scripture plainly ſay, *That theſe things are written that ye might believe that Jeſus is the Chriſt the Son of God, and that believing ye might have Life through his Name,* John xx. 31. and was not the acknowledging of this the very Form of the Saints Faith in the firſt times of the Goſpel? *John* iv. 42. and vi. 69. and xi. 27. *Acts* viii. 37. *Mat.* xvi. 16. and does not the Scripture alſo expreſly ſay, *That if thou ſhalt confeſs with thy Mouth the Lord Jeſus, and ſhalt believe in thine Heart that God raiſed him from the dead, thou ſhalt be ſaved?* *Rom.* x. 9. And again, *every Spirit that confeſſeth that Jeſus Chriſt is come in the Fleſh, is of God,* 1 John iv. 2. *And whoſoever ſhall confeſs that Jeſus is the Son of God, God dwelleth in him, and he in God,* ver. 15. *And whoſoever believeth that Jeſus is the Chriſt, is born of God,* 1 John v. 1. Theſe things being ſo, if I do both believe and confeſs Jeſus to be the Chriſt, and Chriſt to be the Son of God, and that he died and roſe again, why may I not be confident of Salvation? Can I have any better Security than the plain Letter of the Scripture, that promiſeth Salvation upon theſe Terms?

Sect. II. To all which I anſwer; firſt, that it is very true that this is the Faith of the Goſpel, and that to which Eternal Life is promiſed: And that if thou doeſt ſo believe theſe things as that thy Faith doth but anſwer the Latitude of theſe Scripture-Expreſſions, thou mayſt be confident of Salvation, and needeſt no better Security for it than the Scriptures. And God forbid, that I ſhould make the *ſtrait Gate* ſtraiter than it is; or the *narrow Way to Life,* narrower than it is; all my Deſign is to preſerve my ſelf and others from conceiting this ſtrait Gate to be wider, and this narrow Way to be broader than indeed God hath made them; as knowing an Error herein, is of a dangerous Tendency, and ſuch as in all Likelihood hath betrayed many a Man into the broad Way of Death, whilſt he hath ſtrongly fancied himſelf to be in the Path of Life.

The ſafeſt and beſt Way therefore to be kept from *ſtumbling at the Word,* and from *wreſting* theſe Promiſes of Grace to our own Deſtruction, will be, to underſtand all Scriptures that promiſe Juſtification and Life to believing indefinitely, as ſtill meant of ſuch a Faith for kind, as does directly fall in with, and not croſs God's general Deſign in offering Salvation to Men by Jeſus Chriſt. For it is not to be imagined, that the Lord will prevaricate his own Scope and Drift, or clog his Deſign by any the leaſt Overture that may leave Men under hope of attaining Salvation in any way, or upon any Terms, which do not directly comport with his Deſign: That Reverence which we owe to the Wiſdom of God, does with a high hand prohibit any ſuch Thought. All the Words of God in the Scripture, in all the Variety of Expreſſion, whether they be Promiſes, or Precepts, or Threatnings, they all wait on God's great Deſign towards Man, and they all march on the ſame way; like the living Creatures in *Ezekiel*'s Viſion, who went *every one ſtraight forward whither the Spirit was to go, and turned not when they went*; (*Ezek.* i. 12.) they do neither juſtle nor hinder, nor turn one upon another, but ſtrengthen each other in ſeeking the Prize for which they run: The Word of God in the ſeveral parts of it, as relating to the Lord's Deſign, is *not yea and nay,* (2 *Cor.* i. 18, 19.) but all agreeing to ſerve the great purpoſe of God. And what is this general Deſign of God I ſpeak of? Surely ultimately it is his own Glory in the Salvation of Men; his Honour, and the Creatures Good in Conjunction. And if his Deſign had been to provide only for the magnifying of his Grace and Mercy, without reſpect unto his Holineſs, it's like he would have ſaved all Men without any more ado; for the ſame Ranſom, to wit, Chriſt Jeſus would have been, and is ſufficient for all: But then would not wretched Sinners have thought God to be like them? According to that in *Pſalm* l. 21. *Theſe things haſt thou done, and I kept Silence; and thou thoughteſt that I was altogether ſuch a one as thy ſelf.* Would they not have thought that he could endure Wickedneſs well enough in his Creature, and hold Fellowſhip with the Workers of Iniquity? And what then would have become of the Glory of his Great Name? How would he have been known to be *glorious in Holineſs* as well as in Grace and Power? And therefore that he might bring ſuch a People unto himſelf, in whom he might delight, and whom he might prefer to glory with himſelf without Diſparagement unto his Holineſs; he hath in his infinite Wiſdom ſo contrived the Method and Terms of bringing Men to his Salvation and Glory, as that thereby his Love of Holineſs in the Creature might be conſpicuous and viſible, as well as his Love of the Happineſs of the Creature. And therefore all the means ſet on foot by God to bring about the Salvation of Men, do all tend to promote Holineſs in Men, as well as the Happineſs of Men. The whole and entire Body of means of Man's Salvation, is called the *Myſtery of Godlineſs*, 1 Tim. iii. 16. Chriſt the principal Agent, or rather Author of Eternal Salvation, *the holy One*, *Acts* iii. 14. The Goſpel, which is the Word of Life, or Glad-tidings of Salvation, is called *the Doctrine according to Godlineſs*, 1 Tim. vi. 3. *Tit.* i. 1. The Covenant of Grace, an *holy Covenant*, *Luke* i. 72. The Faith by which Men imbrace the Prince of Life, the Promiſe of Life, and Word of Salvation, is called *the moſt holy Faith*, *Jude* 20. The Calling of Chriſtians, an *holy Calling*, 2 *Tim.* i. 9. for they *are called unto Holineſs*, 1 *Theſſ.* iv. 7. The Spirit, by which the Means are made effectual, and through which by his Workmanſhip Men are formed into Veſſels of Glory, is the *holy Spirit*, *Epheſ.* iv. 30. In a word, the very End and Scope of Chriſt his giving himſelf for his Church, and vouchſafing all the means of Salvation, is, *That he might preſent it to himſelf a glorious Church, not having ſpot or wrinkle, or any ſuch thing, but that it ſhould be holy and without blemiſh*, Epheſ. v. 27. meet for the company of the holy God, and the holy Angels, in the moſt holy Place, *the holy Jeruſalem*, as it is called *Rev.* xxi. 10. Now this is that which I ſay then, that ſeeing God's deſign is to magnifie his Holineſs, as well as his Mercy, in Men's Salvation, and to ſhew that he as well deſires and loves their Holineſs as their Happineſs, and that all ſubordinate means are appointed and ſhaped to reach the one as well as the other: Hence we may well conclude, that the Believing unto which God hath made Promiſe of Life, however indefinitely expreſs'd, is yet no other than *a moſt holy Faith*, and ſuch as does diſpoſe that Soul where it is unto Holineſs; becauſe Salvation being the great motive to perſuade Men unto Holineſs, God would loſe that part of his deſign, if he ſhould make promiſe of Life unto any other than the *moſt holy Faith*.

And therefore it is neither prudent nor ſafe for any Man to underſtand or take the word Believing (to which the Promiſe is made) in the narroweſt and ſtricteſt ſenſe, or loweſt ſignification of the word, as it imports a naked, bare and barren aſſent; for if it might, the Faith of the Rulers that durſt not own Chriſt, the Faith of *Simon Magus*, yet ſuch a Faith as the Devils have (of which you heard before) would carry Salvation before it. But if you would lay a ſure Foundation, then underſtand the word Believing, or the phraſe *Believing Chriſt to be the Son of God*, in a more copious and comprehenſive ſenſe, for ſuch an aſſent of the Mind as carries the Will and Affections along with it, to reverence and love him as ſuch; as a Wife, who believes her Husband to be her Husband; or as a Child, who believes his Father to be his Father. For whoſoever believes Chriſt to be the Son of God, if his Faith be not contradictious in it ſelf, does believe all his Sayings as certain Verities, whether Precepts, Promiſes, or Threatnings; and conſequently his Faith does diſpoſe the Soul to love and fear him, and hearken to him. In this large ſenſe, I conceive, Chriſt is to be underſtood, *John* v. 44. when he ſays to the Jews, *How can ye believe which receive honour of one another, and ſeek not the honour that cometh from God only?* For in that lower ſenſe, which imports only a bare and barren aſſent, they might, and ſome of them did believe, and yet did receive honour one of another, and did not ſeek that honour that comes from God only; for ſome did believe, and yet *loved the praiſe of Men more than the praiſe of God*, John xii. 43. But by this ſaying of our Saviour it appears, that when Men do believe rightly and ſavingly, that Belief of theirs carries the Affections more to Chriſt than to Men, as valuing and preferring his Approbation before theirs, and conſequently engaging the Man to pleaſe Chriſt rather than them. In which better ſenſe the Apoſtle *John* is alſo to be underſtood, when he ſays, *Whoſoever believeth that Jeſus is the Chriſt, is born of God*, 1 John v. 1. That is, whoſoever believes effectually and affectionately, is thereby turned into another Man; which is done, not by an idle and an opinionative Aſſent, but by an operative Belief.

Sect. III. But to make it yet farther evident, that the Faith to which Salvation is promiſed, is not to be underſtood in ſuch a reſtrained ſenſe as ſometimes it's uſed among Men, and in the Scriptures too, for a bare Act of the Mind, without the concurrence of the Will and Affections, but in a moral and more comprehenſive Senſe, for ſuch a believing Chriſt to be the Sonof God, as unites and ſubjects the Soul to him as ſuch, I ſhall offer theſe few things, as moſt worthy your Conſideration.

1. To Believe and to Obey the Lord, or the Goſpel, are in the Goſpel-account ſo much of the ſame general and common Nature, as that they are frequently indifferently put the one for the other, and ſo are their contraries, Unbelief and Diſobedience. Hence it is that thoſe words, which the Tranſlators of our Bible have in ſundry places rendred Belief or Unbelief, the Dutch Tranſlation Engliſhed renders Obedience or Diſobedience: Yea, our own Tranſlators, finding the Original Words ſo indifferently to import either, have accordingly in ſeveral places given us both, in the double Reading of Text and Margin, as you may ſee *Rom.* xi. 30, 31. and xv. 31. *Acts* v. 36. *Heb.* iv. 11. and xi. 31. When the Apoſtle would ſhew, that the Prophecy of *Iſaiah* was fulfilled in the unbelieving Jews, which ſaith, *Lord, who hath believed our report?* he does it by ſaying, *They had not obeyed the Goſpel*, Rom. x. 16. *But they have not all obeyed the Goſpel, for Eſaiah ſaith, Lord, who hath believed our report?* So that with this Apoſtle, *not to believe*, and *not to obey the Goſpel*, is the ſame thing. And St. *Peter*, another Apoſtle of our Lord, puts Believing and Diſobedience in direct oppoſition one to another, as if the word *Diſobedient* were as much the contrary to Believing, as the word *Unbelieving* is, 1 *Pet.* ii. 7. *To you that believe he is precious, but unto them which be diſobedient, the ſtone*, &c. 2 Theſſ. ii. 12.

Sect. IV. 2. Again, it's worthy Conſideration, that the two Evangeliſts, St. *Matthew* and St. *Luke*, recording the ſame Saying of Chriſt for ſubſtance, yet ſo far vary the Expreſſion, as that that which the one calls *Faith*, the other calls the *Love of God.* See the paſſage, *Mat.* xxiii. 23. *And have omitted the weightier matters of the Law, Judgment, Mercy and Faith.* Luke xi. 42. thus, *Ye tithe Mint and Rue, and all manner of Herbs, and paſs over Judgment, and the Love of God.* That which Chriſt here charges the Phariſees with, that whilſt they were zealous for the leſſer, they neglected the weightier matters of both Tables of the Law, Judgment and Mercy towards Men, the great Duties of the Second Table; and Faith in, and Love to God, the great Duties of the Firſt Table, and which are more than all whole burnt Offerings and Sacrifices, which yet were Duties of the Firſt Table alſo, *Mark* xii. 33. I know that ſome are of opinion, that the Faith mentioned *Mat.* xxiii. 23. is meant of Fidelity to Men, and ſo a Duty of the Second Table; but conſidering that the Phariſees and Scribes were not only guilty of the neglect of the weightier matters of the Second Table, but of the Firſt alſo, much of their Hypocriſie lying in this, that they would be deemed great Friends to God upon account of their zeal for ſome leſſer matters of the External and Ceremonial part of his Worſhip, when in the mean while they faultered with God, and groſly neglected the Spiritual, Internal, and Subſtantial part thereof, it cannot reaſonably be thought, but that Chriſt's Charge and Reproof muſt reach them in this neglect, as well as the other; which yet cannot be, unleſs by Faith, which they were charged to omit, we underſtand Faith towards God; for that Judgment and Mercy, the other part of their omiſſion, are by general agreement underſtood of Duties towards Men commanded in the Second Table: So that they muſt be taxed with their neglect toward God in this behalf in that Reproof for omitting Faith, or elſe not at all. But beſides, that which I think puts the matter out of doubt, is this, That St. *Luke*, inſtead of St. *Matthew*'s ſaying that they omitted *Faith*, affirms that they paſſed over the *Love of God*, which according to Chriſt's own words, is the firſt and great Commandment, *Mat.* xxii. 38, 39. And ſo in this, as in many other particulars, St. *Matthew* is expounded by St. *Luke.*

This Paſſage of our Saviour, mentioned by theſe two Evangeliſts, being thus underſtood, there is one thing as to my preſent purpoſe which I would have obſerved from hence, and that is: That the right Faith commanded by God, in the nature of it, is a fiducial loving of the Lord, ſuch a Believing him to be what he is, and ſuch a Depending upon him as ſuch, as is accompanied with, or which carries in it unfeigned Love, or true Affection to him; which interpreted, is the keeping of his Commandments, 1 *John* v. 3. According to 1 *Tim.* i. 5. *The end of the Commandment is Love, out of Faith unfeigned.* If that Love, which is the end and ſcope of the Law, be ſuch as proceeds out of an unfeigned Faith, then the unfeigned Faith muſt, in the Nature of it, in the Womb of it, needs comprehend and contain that Love which is the end and ſcope of the Commandment; it could not proceed out of it, if it were not firſt in it. It's true indeed, this Act, or this Ingredient of Faith, which affectionately carries the Soul to God, bears another Denomination different in ſound from that of *Faith*, and is called *Love*; as the different Operations of one and the ſame Soul give a different denomination of Faculties; and as the ſame Body of Waters which make the

Sea, receive other Names when they come to be diſtributed into ſeveral Rivers; but it will no more follow, that Faith does not originally contain a Divine Love in the Nature of it, becauſe when produced into Act it's called by another Name, than it will follow, that the different Acts of the Will and of the Underſtanding, are not Acts of the ſame Soul; becauſe they paſs under different Denominations, or that the Waters in Rivers are not the ſame which were in the Sea, becauſe now called by another Name. When the Apoſtle ſpeaks thus concerning the Communication of *Philemon*'s Faith, *Phil.* vi. *That the Communication of thy Faith may become effectual, by the acknowledging of every good thing which is in you in Chriſt Jeſus:* Does he not plainly ſuppoſe, that every good thing was in his Faith before it was communicated? Though when communicated, called by as great a Diverſity of Names, as the things themſelves were divers. But every good thing, and every good thing acknowledged, was but his Faith effectually communicated, diſtributed into Acts: All the good things of his Life, were but the Births of his Faith; as Waters iſſuing out of a Fountain, ſome running one way, and ſome another; ſome ſerving for one Uſe, and ſome for another. All which conſidered, it need ſeem no ſtrange thing that St. *Luke* ſhould call that Love, which St. *Matthew* calls Faith: For Love is but Faith once removed as it were; Faith drawn out into Act, as Faith alſo is diſpoſitively and in the firſt Habit, Love.

Sect. V. 3. Believing in Chriſt, and receiving of him are Terms equivalent, and import the ſame thing, *John* i. 12. *As many as received him, to them he gave Power to become the Sons of God, even to thoſe that believe in his Name:* The former Expreſſion of receiving him is expounded by the latter, of believing in his Name. By which we may gather, that it is the Nature and Property of the true Faith to receive Chriſt, which is the Act of Adherence I ſpake of before. Men by the firſt Act of Faith believe Chriſt Jeſus to be what he is, and to be ſo and ſo related both to God and unto Men; but by this ſecond Act which always accompanies the firſt where the Faith is ſaving; they receive and embrace him, and cleave to him as ſuch. And in this lies the formal Act of Man's ſtriking Covenant with the Lord, and intereſſing himſelf in the Grace and Bleſſing of the Goſpel. For all Good, preſent and future, is entailed on Chriſt, as being Heir of all things, and as having all things put into his Hand by the Father; ſo that *he that hath the Son, hath Life; and he that hath not the Son hath not Life,* 1 *John* v. 12. receive him, and receive all; the whole Inheritance goes along with the Heir, but nothing ſhort of this will inveſt us with the Inheritance.

What is the meaning then of receiving Chriſt?

I. To receive, whether underſtood of Mens receiving the Lord, or the Lord's receiving of Men, or of Mens receiving of one another, is ſtill in Scripture taken in the beſt Senſe for receiving with Affection and Acceptation, 2 *Cor.* vi. 17. *Rom.* xiv. 1. and xv. 7. *Gal.* iv. 14. *Philem.* xii. 17. And ſo in this place of *John* i. 12. Thoſe that receive Chriſt, receive him with Affection and Acceptation; yea, with ſuch Affection and Acceptation, as by which they prefer him above all other, both Perſons and Things; for otherwiſe they will not be deemed worthy of him: A wiſe Man will not beſtow himſelf upon a Woman that he knows loves another better than himſelf; and I am ſure the Lord in this Senſe will not give himſelf to any Man that loves any thing more than him. *Mat.* x. 37. *He that loveth Father or Mother, Son or Daughter more than me, is not worthy of me;* much leſs he that loves any ſinful Luſt or Way more. It is true, to give Men and Women a Proof of his good Will to them, and as an Argument to draw their Affections to him, Chriſt hath given himſelf a Ranſom for all, his Fleſh for the Life of the World; but he having done this, thoſe that ſhall not hereby be moved and drawn to forſake all to follow him, cannot be his, and conſequently he not theirs; *They ſhall not taſte of his Supper,* Luke xiv. 24, 26, 27, 33. That's one thing then which is to be underſtood by Mens receiving of Chriſt.

2. Another is this; he that receives Chriſt indeed, receives him for ſuch as indeed he is, and in that Capacity in which he is ſent, offered, tendred by the Father, and given by himſelf: And that is, not only as a Saviour, but alſo as a Lord; and as a Saviour, by delivering him from the Dominion of Sin, and bringing him under his own Rule and Government, as King and Lord, as well as by delivering him from the Guilt of Sin by the Sacrifice of himſelf. How oft does the Scripture call him our *Lord and Saviour Jeſus Chriſt?* 2 *Pet.* i. 11. and ii. 2. and iii. 18. with many more. And again, *Him hath God exalted with his right hand to be a Prince and a Saviour,* Acts v. 31. The Father *gave him to be Head over all things to the Church, and to be a Ruler of his People, Eph.* i. 22. *Mat.* ii. 6. And whoſoever does not receive him as ſuch, does

not receive that Gift of God. For Chriſt is not, nor cannot be divided, (1 *Cor.* i. 13.) you cannot ſeparate the Lord from the Saviour, and take the one and leave the other. Among all other Lords and Rulers, which in Scripture are alſo called Saviours, (*Nehem.* ix. 27.) Protection and Subjection go together: Does any rational Man expect Protection from the chief Magiſtrate upon any other Terms than his due Obedience to all his lawful Commands? And ſhall any Man be ſo mad as to expect Protection, and Deliverance by Chriſt from the Wrath to come, upon any other Terms? Will not Chriſt ſay to ſuch as ſhall cry to him, Lord, Lord, open to us, who yet never made Conſcience to do all his Commands, as the Lord ſaid unto a People that cried after him in their Diſtreſs, and yet ſerved other Lords in the time of Peace? *Go cry unto the Gods which ye have choſen, let them deliver you in the time of your Tribulation, Judges* x. 14. *Jer.* ii. 28. Where they yielded Subjection, thither they are ſent for Protection: If Sin can ſave thoſe that ſerve Sin, they ſhall have Salvation, and if Chriſt can ſave thoſe that ſerve him, they ſhall have Salvation; *Where I am, there ſhall my Servant alſo be*, ſaith he, *John* xii. 26. Chriſt is, and will be, the Author of Eternal Salvation; but to whom? *To all thoſe that obey him*, (*Heb.* v. 9.) *but to thoſe that be diſobedient, and which ſtumble at his Word, he is and will be a Stone of ſtumbling, and Rock of Offence*; the ſame to them as a Rock is to a Ship, a means of ſwift Deſtruction, 1 *Pet.* ii. 8. He will be ſo far from ſaving them, as that he will ſay, *But thoſe mine Enemies that would not that I ſhould reign over them, bring hither and ſlay them before me*, Luke xix. 27. A Folly it is then for any Man to think, that he can take hold of Chriſt as his Saviour, and ſo receive him and Salvation by him that does not willingly embrace him as his dear Lord, in which Capacity he is given as well as that of Saviour: In a moral Senſe, he does not at all receive him, that does not receive him in that Capacity which is proper to him; no publick Ambaſſador would judge himſelf received by him to whom he is ſent, in caſe he ſhould be received in the Capacity of a private Perſon only, when he is not ſent as ſuch.

Neither let any deceive their own Souls, and think that they do receive him as their Lord, becauſe they are wont to call him ſo as frequently as any, unleſs they make it their Deſign, and the Care and Buſineſs of their Lives to *wait for his Counſel*, promote his Intereſt, faithfully to do his Buſineſs, fulfil his Will, and do his Commands. *Why call you me Lord* (ſaith he to ſuch) *and do not the things which I ſay?* Luke vi. 46. As if he counted himſelf but wronged and diſgraced by ſuch a Claim: What he to be their Lord that have this vile Sin, and that baſe Luſt to be their Lord; yea, more their Lord than Chriſt, and more obſerved and obeyed than he; He only their Titular Lord, but their Worldly and Fleſhly Luſts their real; And is not that a horrible Diſparagement to Chriſt, for him to be joined with ſuch Maſters, and to be made one of the Number, yea inferior to them, as having leſs command over ſuch Perſons than their Luſts have? Do you not know that the Father deſigned as well the Glory and Honour of his Son in your Salvation, and in the way of bringing you to it, as your Salvation it ſelf? *That all Men might honour the Son, even as they honour the Father*, John v. 23. and do you think then, that he will ſuffer his Son to be diſhonoured and diſgraced by you, while you do but mock him in calling him Lord, but denying him your faithful Obedience, and yield your Subjection to his utter Enemies; Like thoſe that crucified him, who indeed bowed the Knee before him, and cried, *Hail King of the Jews*, as well as you? Do you think it will ſerve your turn to neglect Chriſt all your Days (as you do if you do not ſerve him in Holineſs and Righteouſneſs) and then think he ſhould ſave you when you can ſerve his Enemies no longer? O I beſeech all ſuch to conſider it betimes, for God will not be ſo mocked by you.

3. A receiving of Chriſt clearly implies in it a receiving of his Word and Doctrine, for whoever doth not receive that, does not receive him; but whoever does receive that, does receive him, 2 *John* ix. *Whoſoever tranſgreſſeth and abideth not in the Doctrine of Chriſt, hath not God; he that abideth in the Doctrine of Chriſt, he hath both the Father and the Son. John* xii. 48. *He that rejecteth me, and receiveth not my Word, hath one that judgeth him:* Where not to receive the Word of Chriſt, and to reject him, is conſtructively the ſame thing. Whereto that alſo agrees, *Pſalm* lxxxi. 11. *But my People would not hearken to my Voice, Iſrael would none of me:* In refuſing his Voice, God took himſelf to be refuſed, as any King would do, whoſe Laws and Commands ſhould be refuſed. Look then into the Scriptures, the 5th, 6th, and 7th Chapters of St. *Matthew*, and elſewhere; and ſee what holy and ſtrict Injunctions the Lord hath laid upon his Diſciples, and then look into your Hearts, and ſee if you

can find them there, not only in the notional Knowledge of them, but as having begotten Principles, Diſpoſitions and Affections in their own likeneſs, and from thence proceed to your Converſations, Words and Ways, and ſee how they anſwer the Pattern in the Mount; and if World and Luſt abide there with more Authority and Command than the Doctrine of Chriſt, you may be confident you have not yet received Chriſt; for he is King, and his Laws in chief regard where-ever he dwells. And thus you ſee what Receiving of Chriſt that is, which is interpreted to be a Believing in his Name; and conſequently what a true and ſincere Belief in Chriſt's Name carries in it, to wit, a loving and loyal cleaving to him, and an embracing of him and his Word.

Sect. VI. 4. Remiſſion of Sin and Salvation are ſuſpended upon Repentance from dead Works; and therefore when Pardon of Sin and Salvation is promiſed unto Believing indefinitely, it may not ſafely be underſtood of any other Faith than ſuch as actually turns the Soul to God, from ſerving of Sin to ſerve Him, from the Love of Vanity to the Love of Piety, wherein the Work of Repentance does conſiſt. Remiſſion of Sin is the next and immediate Effect of a ſound Faith, *Acts* x. 43. and ſo is it the next and immediate Effect of true Repentance, *Luke* xxiv. 47. *Acts* ii. 38. and v. 31. and iii. 19. Yea, Pardon does ſo depend upon Repentance, that it's not to be had without it, *Luke* xiii. 3, 5. *Except ye repent ye ſhall all periſh.* And ſo actual Salvation, which is the laſt and compleating Effect of Faith, (1 *Pet.* i. 9.) is likewiſe the finiſhing Effect of Repentance, and therefore called *Repentance unto Life*, *Acts* xi. 18. and *Repentance unto Salvation*, 2 *Cor.* vii. 10. If then Repentance begins and ends with Faith, ſets out with it, and runs along with it to the end of its Race in the Effects produced by both, impoſſible it is that any Faith ſhould juſtifie or ſave, but ſuch as hath the Nature of Repentance in it, or which does inſeparably accompany it. By which Conſideration alone their Faith is detected of Invalidity and Unavailableneſs, whatever the Object of it may be, whoſe Hearts and Lives are not reformed by it, but ſtill remain under the power of ſomething or other condemned by the Word of the Lord, and their own Conſciences enlightned by it; yielding themſelves rather unto the Impoſitions of fleſhly Luſts in ſome way of Pride, Covetouſneſs, or carnal Pleaſure, than unto the ſweet Motions of the Holy Spirit calling to Humility, Sobriety, Temperance, Love, Mercy, ſerious Devotion, and Holineſs towards God. As it is true, that Men ſhall be ſaved by Chriſt, and juſtified by Faith; ſo it is as true, that that Faith by which they ſhall be juſtified, does *purifie the Heart*, (*Acts* xv. 9.) *i. e.* work out evil Affections, ſinful Motions, and unclean Inclinations; as Nature, where it is not overcome by the ſtrength of a Diſeaſe, by degrees works out thoſe malignant Humours which do ill affect the Body, and which otherwiſe would be the overthrow of it, as the other of the Soul: And therefore where Faith doth not work this way, there's the ſame reaſon for a Man to be confident that that Faith is not right, as there is to be confident that a right Faith will ſave, having the ſame word for the one as for the other.

Sect. VII. 5. The ſame is true of unfeigned Love to the Lord, the ſame Promiſe of Life is made to that as is to Faith, *James* i. 12. and ii. 5. 1 *Cor.* ii. 9. Nay the want of this does as well render a Man unworthy of Chriſt, and that which comes by him, and lays him as open to the Curſe, as Infidelity it ſelf does. *Mat.* x. 37. 1 *Cor.* xvi. 22. *If any Man love not the Lord Jeſus, let him be Anathema, Maranatha.* By which it's evident, that all the while this Love is wanting, he is under the Curſe that wants it, whatever his Belief otherwiſe may be; and conſequently that no Faith in Chriſt, but ſuch as knits the Soul in unfeigned Love to him, will deliver a Man from the Curſe of God, and conſequently nor juſtifie. And alas, how many's Faith is hereby manifeſted to be meerly counterfeit! *Who are lovers of Pleaſures more than lovers of God*; which appears, in that they follow them rather than God; Lovers of the World more than the Lord, which appears in that they chuſe to pleaſe the Men of the World rather than him, and are more intent and thoughtful about getting the World, than honouring of him, and will rather run the hazard of diſpleaſing him, in holding faſt the things of the World, than part with them upon his Call. For it is not every degree of Love to Chriſt that will denominate a Man a true Lover of him; but Love in ſuch proportion, and to ſuch a degree, as prevails againſt all other Objects that ſtand in competition with Chriſt, and carries away the Soul from them all to Chriſt. *Math.* x. 37. *He that loves Father or Mother more than me, is not worthy of me; and he that loves Son or Daughter more than me, is not worthy of me.* It's not only Lawful for a Man to love his Father and Mother, his Son and Daughter, but it is his

Duty ſo to do, yea and to love them much more than others that are not ſo related; and yet for all that, if his Love to Chriſt do not exceed in proportion that Love and ſtrong Affection which he may and ought to bear to ſuch Relations, Chriſt you ſee hath already judged him unworthy of him. A Man, though he love his Wife better than moſt other Women, yet if he love but one Woman more than his Wife with that Affection that is proper to his Wife, will be judged by ſober Men no true Lover of his Wife. In like manner, though you ſhould love Chriſt more than many other Enjoyments, or many other Sins which you have parted with for his ſake; yet if you retain but any one Sin, or ſinful Luſt, and are tender of it for the profit or pleaſure that comes in to you by it, and will harbour it to the offence and provocation of the Lord, and chuſe rather to run the hazard of loſing his Company, and all the Comforts of it, than to turn ſuch an offenſive Gueſt out of doors, aſſuredly the Lord, who doth always judge according to Truth, will judge himſelf deſpiſed and unworthily rejected by you. He, you ſee then, that wants this prevailing degree of Love to Chriſt, is ſtill under the Curſe; and therefore no Belief in Chriſt whatſoever, that hath not this Love in it, or is not certainly accompanied with it, can be any ſufficient ground for any Man to be confident of his Salvation. Nothing leſs availeth, than that Faith which thus worketh by Love, *Gal.* v. 6.

By all theſe Conſiderations then you may ſee, that when Promiſe of Life is made unto Believing in Chriſt indefinitely expreſs'd, it is no wiſe ſafe to underſtand the Scriptures as intending any other lower kind of Faith than that definitively, which is of power and force to change the Heart and Life of him that hath it, and to renew him to God in Holineſs: Jeſus Chriſt himſelf, in his words to St. *Paul*, having plainly declared this to be the true Nature of the Faith that is in him, *Acts* xxvi. 18. *That they may receive forgiveneſs of ſins, and inheritance among them which are ſanctified by Faith that is in me.* And therefore St. *John*, the Boſom-Diſciple of Chriſt (as was noted before) ſaith, *Whoſoever believeth that Jeſus is the Chriſt is born of God*, 1 John v. 1. which as you ſee muſt be underſtood of that vigorous Belief that gives a Man a new Being, furniſhes him with new Principles of Motion and Action, new Thoughts, new Affections, a new Life; that gives him Victory over the World, as it follows, *ver.* 4. *Whoſoever is born of God, overcometh the World; and this is the Victory that overcometh the World, even our Faith.* Chriſt's Proffers and the World's Proffers, Chriſt's Threats and the World's Threats, ſtriving which ſhall carry the Man to follow their ways; Faith ſteps in, by which the Man believes, that as Chriſt is the Son of God, ſo he is more worthy to be followed, and his Proffers infinitely more worthy to be regarded, and his Threats dreaded, than the World with all that ſhe can do or ſay, and ſo delivers the Man out of the World's hand, that he is at liberty to attend the Lord.

Sect. VIII. And whereas, among other Scriptures objected in the beginning of this Chapter, one promiſeth *Salvation to ſuch as believe with the Heart, and confeſs with the Mouth the Lord Jeſus Chriſt*; and others affirm, *that whoſoever confeſſeth that Jeſus Chriſt is come in the Fleſh, and is the Son of God, are of God, and dwell in God, and God in them*; they are to be underſtood as ſpoken according to the Exigences of thoſe times, wherein a Man confeſſing Chriſt expoſed himſelf to Perſecution, (*John* ix. 22. and xii. 42.) and conſequently manifeſted his effectual Faith in an unfeigned Love to the Lord Jeſus: And thus to *call Jeſus the Lord*, no Man could do *but by the Holy Ghoſt*, and his ſpecial aſſiſtance, 1 *Cor.* xii. 3. But now in times wherein to deny him to be the Lord, would ſooner expoſe a Man to Suffering, than the Confeſſing of him ſo to be, the bare Confeſſing of him will not inveſt him with the great Privileges that then were promiſed unto the Confeſſing of Chriſt, according to that *Mat.* vii. 21. *Not every one that ſaith Lord, Lord, ſhall enter into the Kingdom of Heaven, but he that doth the Will of my Father which is in Heaven.*

Sect. IX. The truth is, if a Man do but take the Scriptures together, and ſhape his Judgment according to their Reſult when compared, as it's every Man's Wiſdom to do, as it is not ſafe, ſo it is impoſſible for him then to be confident of his Salvation meerly upon account of his Believing Chriſt to be the Son of God, unleſs this Faith of his be proved to him to be the Faith of God's Elect, by ſome good degree of thoſe holy Affections, and that Chriſtian Demeanure which the holy Word and Doctrine of the Lord calls for. And the reaſon hereof is, becauſe ſuch Scriptures as I have been now inſiſting on, that *curſe all thoſe that do not love the Lord Jeſus*, that *ſentence with Eternal Death all thoſe that live after the Fleſh*, that *exclude all ſuch the bleſſed Viſion* *of the Lord that have not Holineſs*, that *ſhut the Gates of Heaven againſt all ſuch as do not make Conſcience to do the Will of the Father*; I ſay, ſuch Scriptures ſtand up to oppoſe ſuch a Man in his Confidence of Salvation, like as the Cherubims with the flaming Sword kept the Way of the Tree of Life againſt *Adam:* Though he have never ſuch a Deſire to be confident, he cannot; ſuch Scriptures meet him, and will not let him; they knock him off from taking hold of Eternal Life; this Confidence it is not able to ſubſiſt in any other Element than that of Holineſs, 1 *John* iii. 18, 19, 20, 21. *Little Children let us not love in Word and in Tongue, but indeed and in Truth. And hereby we know that we are of the Truth, and ſhall aſſure our Hearts before him. For if our Heart condemn us, God is greater than our Heart, and knoweth all things. Beloved, if our Heart condemn us not, then we have Confidence towards God.* That by which the Apoſtle ſaith, Men know themſelves to be of the Truth, one in Heart and Deſign with it, of the ſame Party as it were, in Friendſhip and Fellowſhip with it, is this, *viz.* their loving, *not in Word and Tongue only, but in Deed and in Truth:* When Men do not only talk, but act and live the things of the Goſpel. *And hereby* (ſaith he) *we ſhall aſſure our Hearts before him, or perſuade our Hearts before him*, (as in the Magin.) Implying that without this, for a Man that knows and conſiders the Terms of the Goſpel, it's impoſſible to perſuade his Heart before God, to appear before God with any Confidence. For, ſaith he, *if our Heart condemn us*, viz. of Unfaithfulneſs and faultering with God in the main, that our Love and our Religion hath been but in Word and in Tongue, have contented our ſelves to talk of, and ſpeak well of good things, but have left the doing of them to other Folks; like the Phariſees, that by their Doctrine would bind heavy Burthens upon other Mens Shoulders, and yet themſelves not touch them with one of their Fingers; if our Heart condemn us of ſuch a thing as this, *God is greater than our Heart*, both in Knowledge and diſcerning of this Deceit, and in Righteouſneſs of Sentence, and proceeding againſt it, and therefore he will condemn much more. But if our Heart condemn us not in this behalf, but bears us witneſs, that it hath been our earneſt Deſire, Care, and faithful Endeavour to be that which the Truth teacheth us to be: Then have we Confidence towards God of our Acceptation with him, all the Scriptures being on our ſide to abet and back us in this Confidence; but on the contrary, all againſt us.

The Apoſtle ſaith, *He that cometh to God, muſt believe that he is, and that he is a Rewarder of them that diligently ſeek him*, Heb. xi. 6. Mark, it's Matter of a Man's Faith, as well to believe that the Men whom God will reward are ſuch as diligently ſeek him, as it is to believe that God is, and that he is a Rewarder of Men. So that where this diligent ſeeking of the Lord is wanting, there's no place for any Man to be confident of receiving that Bleſſedneſs from God which is called the *Recompence of Reward*, and *the Reward of the Inheritance.* And what is it for a Man diligently to ſeek the Lord, but earneſtly to ſeek his Favour and Love by a diligent and careful endeavour to pleaſe him always, and in all things? By Sin and Unrighteouſneſs Man loſt God, and loſt his Love: And however it is by the Blood of Chriſt, that a new and living Way is now prepared and made for Man to come to God again, and to regain his Love; yet he is not actually poſſeſs'd of it, but by going back again to God, by returning to him in the ſame Way in which he departed from him. All the while Man was in the Way of Righteouſneſs, he was with God, and enjoyed the Comfort of his Company and Preſence; but he no ſooner left that Way, but he loſt God; and there's no finding him again without getting into that Way again, and there you may meet with him, find him, walk with him, and enjoy the Comfort of his Love and Preſence again through the Mediation of our good Friend his holy Son Jeſus. Only here's the Difference indeed, the Way of Righteouſneſs is now new made, a new Covenant ſtruck, new Terms propounded of coming into Poſſeſſion of God again as a happy Portion, a diligent ſeeking of him by believing in him, ſincerely loving of him, and faithfully endeavouring to pleaſe him; being the Condition of this new Covenant, and the new Way of Righteouſneſs in which God is to be found, if therein diligently ſought. *And we deſire that every one of you do ſhew the ſame Diligence to the full Aſſurance of Hope unto the end*, Heb. vi. 11. This Diligence you ſee is the *Medium* of this confident Aſſurance.

Men can have no other Foundation for their Confidence than what God himſelf hath laid, I mean propoſed; It is not of him that willeth in this kind, nor of him that runneth, but of God, that ſheweth Mercy; he gives the Reward, and he gives the Laws and Terms of obtaining of it: And therefore as long as the Declarations of

God's Mind in the Scriptures compared touching the Qualifications of ſuch whom he receives into Covenant and Deſigns unto Life, do oppoſe Mens Confidence, ſo long they have no Foundation to build upon, and conſequently no Confidence of Salvation at all, or as good as none. For that which is not built upon God's Ground, which is all Rocky and Subſtantial, but upon Mens own deceivable Thoughts and Imaginations, and Miſtakes of God's Mind and Declaration, as upon the Sand, will fail them, and fall in that very Hour in which it ſhould do them Service, and they have moſt need of it. *Job* viii. 13, 14, 15. *So are the Paths of all that forget God, and the Hypocrites Hope ſhall periſh: Whoſe Hope ſhall be cut off, and whoſe Truſt ſhall be a Spider's Web: He ſhall lean upon his Houſe, but it ſhall not ſtand; he ſhall hold it faſt, but it ſhall not endure: Their Hope* (Job xi. 20.) *ſhall be as the giving up of the Ghoſt*; like a Man, who though he have never ſo great a deſire to live, yet muſt yield up his Breath when Death comes: And ſo muſt Men be forced to part with thoſe Hopes which they have made to themſelves, but not received from God; and inſtead thereof embrace everlaſting Deſpair, to the horrible Confuſion of their miſerable Souls when the time of Tryal comes; their Houſe of Confidence that was built upon the Sand, will then fall, and the Fall of it will be great, *Matth.* vii. 27. It may ſtand, and do them the Service of a Houſe of Hope, protect them from many ſad Fears till the Storm ariſes and beats againſt it; but then down it comes, and the poor Soul is then to ſeek, and there is no Shelter to be found. And does it not then concern Men to be often prying into the Grounds of their Hope, and to view them over and over with a jealous Eye? To the end, that if a Man have but cauſe to ſuſpect thoſe he hath, he may provide himſelf of better before it is too late: It will be no time for the fooliſh Virgins to ſeek to provide themſelves of Oyl for their Lamps, when the very Pinch of time comes that they ſhould uſe it.

CHAP. VIII.

Shewing, That the Faith which ſhall juſtifie as Abraham'*s did, is a Faith that walks in the Steps of the Faith of* Abraham. *Shewing alſo, what thoſe Steps were, and that* Abraham *was juſtified by the latter of them as well as the former; and that the Juſtification of his Spiritual Seed ſtands upon the ſame Terms: Contrary to the* Antinomian *Doctrine, and* Libertine *Principles.*

Sect. I. Although I have through the Lord's Aſſiſtance, in ſome meaſure already opened the Nature of Goſpel-Faith of the right kind, in comparing it with, and thereby diſcovering the Nature of the feigned, dangerous and dead Faith, and wherein it falls ſhort of the true; yet to the end you may have a fuller View of the Nature, Properties, and genuine Operation of the Faith of God's Elect, I ſhall through the ſame Aſſiſtance now proceed to ſhew you farther, how it hath from time to time wrought in them. And thereby I ſhall give you opportunity to try your own Faith of what kind it is: For if it be that Faith which the Scripture calls *the Faith of God's Elect*, (*Tit.* i. 1.) then it will work after the ſame manner as theirs generally hath been wont to do; but if you cannot find your Faith to be of that kind by working as theirs did, you will have ſmall reaſon as yet to conclude your ſelf one of their Number.

I ſhall begin with *Abraham*, who as the Scripture ſaith, was *Father of all them that believe*; and ſo he was, becauſe all true Believers do partake of the ſame kind of Faith that dwelt eminently in him, and are thereby juſtified and ſaved as he was: He is the great Inſtance, Pattern, or Example, both in his Faith and Juſtification; of God's reſolved Method of ſaving all Men that ſhall be ſaved, whether Jews or Gentiles. As a Son who ſucceeds his Father comes to enjoy the ſame Inheritance and

Privilege as his Father did; ſo he that ſhall ſucceed *Abraham* in his Faith, ſhall enjoy the ſame ſpiritual and eternal Inheritance which was entailed on his Faith: So ſaith the Apoſtle, *Gal.* iii. 9. *So then they which be of Faith, are bleſſed with faithful* Abraham. The ſame Apoſtle in another place declares them to be his *ſpiritual Children*, and he a *Father* to ſuch as walk in the ſteps of his Faith. *Rom.* iv. 12. *And the Father of Circumciſion to them who are not of the Circumciſion only, but alſo to thoſe that walk in the ſteps of that Faith of our Father* Abraham, *which he had, being yet uncircumciſed.* Where note, firſt, That the Faith which *Abraham* had, and by which he was juſtified, was a Faith which had ſteps in it: It did not conſiſt in one tranſient Act only, but of a *ſeries* of Acts, one following another; and that he was juſtified by the latter of theſe, as well as the former, I ſhall (God willing) afterwards ſhew. That which I would farther note in the ſecond place, is, That the Faith which will render them that have it *Children of Abraham*, and Inheritors of the ſame Bleſſing with him, is ſuch for kind as is found walking in the ſteps of his Faith, influencing the Life, and diſpoſing the Heart in particular Occurrences as his did. It may well be indeed that every Child of *Abraham* may not be able to keep pace with their Father, in this Walk of Faith, nor to follow him cloſe at the heels; nor are all his Children of the ſame growth or ſame ſtrength, but yet all following their Father in the ſame way, tho' at ſome diſtance; all treading in his ſteps. It is moſt certain that the true Faith, by which they become his Children, will guide them into the ſame way, put them upon the ſame Behaviour for kind in which he was found. *John* viii. 39. *Jeſus ſaith unto them, If ye were* Abraham's *Children, ye would do the Works of* Abraham.

For a tryal of our Faith therefore, whether it be of the right Breed, and of the ſtock of *Abraham*, let us a little trace out the Walk of *Abraham*'s Faith, and ſee what the footſteps of it were, as we have the print of them in the Scriptures, and then ſee whether our Faith walk in the ſame path, or tread in the ſame ſteps or no.

Sect. II. 1. This was one of the Footſteps of his Faith, it gave God the Glory of his Truth, Power and Goodneſs, in being confidently perſuaded that what he promiſed he was both able, willing, and faithful to perform, how contrary ſoever to humane probability. *Rom.* iv. 18, 19, 20, 21. *Who againſt hope, believed in hope, that he might be the Father of many Nations; according to that which was ſpoken, ſo ſhall thy ſeed be. And being not weak in Faith, he conſidered not his own Body now dead, neither yet the deadneſs of* Sarah's *Womb: He ſtaggered not at the Promiſe of God through Unbelief, but was ſtrong in Faith, giving Glory to God; and being fully perſuaded, that what he had promiſed he was able alſo to perform.* The word *Promiſe*, or Saying of God, carried it in his Soul againſt all contrary Reaſonings. *Sarah* being old, and it ceaſing to be with her after the manner of Women; and *Abraham* himſelf alſo being as good as dead, (*Heb.* xi. 12.) this incumbred the Belief of the Promiſe in *Sarah*, and at firſt ſet her Faith, *Gen.* xviii. 11, 12. But the Text ſaith, *Abraham* conſidered neither the one nor the other; he conſidered not his own Body now dead, nor yet the deadneſs of *Sarah*'s Womb; God's Promiſe did ſo wholly take up his Soul, and was of ſo great Authority with him, as that he did not judge the great Improbabilities in Nature worthy in this caſe to be ſo much as conſidered, nor at all to be heard when God had ſpoken. Afterward God tries his Faith again: He had not only in general promiſed him a numerous Poſterity, *like unto the Stars for multitude*, as before, *Gen.* xv. 5. but now more particularly had told him, *that in Iſaac ſhould his Seed be called*, *Gen.* xxi. 12. and yet for all this, commands *Abraham* to ſlay and offer in Sacrifice to God this Son of his; and how then ſhould God make good his Promiſe, might *Abraham* think? *Abraham* here again meaſures God's Word and Promiſe, not by this and that Difficulty, but by his irreſiſtible Power, *Accounting that God was able to raiſe him up even from the dead; from whence alſo he received him in a figure*, Heb. xi. 19. You ſee he had ſo high an eſteem of the Goodneſs and Truth of God, that if he had but Power enough to make good his Word, he made no queſtion of his Performance; and thought ſo much of the ſufficiency of his Power to go through with whatever he had a mind to, or had undertaken to do; as that though one difficulty after another roſe up to encounter his Faith, yet they could not ſo much as make him to ſtagger; ſo mighty was God's Word in his Soul! And therefore was this Faith of his imputed to him for Righteouſneſs. *Now this was not written for his ſake alone, that this Faith of his was imputed unto him, but for us alſo, to whom it ſhall be imputed, if we believe on him that raiſed up Jeſus our Lord from the dead*, ſaith the Apoſtle, *Rom.* iv. 23, 24. It was written to give us to underſtand, That if God be ſo magnified in the Soul, as that no difficulty or unlikelihood whatſoever can ſtand before, or carry it againſt the Word or Promiſe of God there; but believing firſt, that God raiſed Chriſt from the dead for our Juſtification, after he had been delivered for our Offences; and then believing alſo, that God by the ſame Power and Grace by which he did that, will certainly fulfil and perform all his Words and Promiſes in due time, and according to his own terms: And that this Faith do but diſpoſe the frame of the Heart God-ward, as it did in *Abraham*, that then this Faith of ours ſhall as aſſuredly be imputed to us for Righteouſneſs, as his was to him. Hath God then promiſed a free and full Pardon of all your Sins upon your unfeigned Repentance, and turning from them to God, and taking hold of his Grace in Chriſt, how great or many ſoever they have been, and how unworthy ſoever they have rendred you of ſuch a favour? Hath he promiſed to ſuch as have begun thus truly to turn to God, that he will give them his Spirit to help in the Work, to make them new Hearts, and to write his Law there, and that humbly waiting and depending upon him in his own way and means, he will keep them from falling, and preſerve them to his heavenly Kingdom? See then whether you do ſtedfaſtly believe theſe great and precious Promiſes, and are encouraged and enabled by your Belief of them to turn again to God from all your Tranſgreſſions, and in thus turning, confidently to expect by degrees a real and faithful performance of them all, notwithſtanding the great diſtance you may poſſibly for the preſent perceive your ſelves to be from much of what is thus promiſed; and notwithſtanding thoſe great, mighty and violent Oppoſitions, which you do and are like to meet with from Fleſh, World, and Devil, to encounter your Confidence of theſe things. Though Difficulties in this kind are many, great, and ſorely threatning your falling ſhort of the Enjoyment of theſe mighty Promiſes; yet if your Faith be but firmly bottomed and built upon them, and that the Faithfulneſs and Power of God to make them good, be ſo eyed by you, and your Souls ſo centered therein, as that all the Difficulties and Unlikelihoods that riſe up in your way from what quarter ſoever, cannot prevail in your Soul againſt the Word of God; but that you do indeed believe, that the Might and Power of his Grace will make its way through them all, and perform to a tittle what he hath promiſed, and that this Confidence of yours does but engage you ſtill to be following of God ſtep by ſtep in his way, method, and means of fulfilling his Word, as *Abraham*'s Faith did; then you may confidently aſſure your ſelves, that your Faith is of the right Breed and Kind, and of the ſame Nature with *Abraham*'s, and walking in the ſame ſteps, and ſuch as will entitle you to, and poſſeſs you of the ſame Bleſſing which he attained by his Faith.

Sect. III. 2. Another ſtep of his Faith was this: As by it he ſtedfaſtly believed God's Promiſes, ſo by it he faithfully obeyed his Precepts, Call and Counſel, *Heb.* xi. 8. *By Faith* Abraham, *when he was called to go out into a place which he ſhould after receive for an Inheritance, obeyed, and he went out not knowing whither he went.* An excellent Grace indeed, that is moulded and caſt in the Will of God, and receives its Form and Figure from thence! The Word of God had the ſame force upon *Abraham*'s Soul, by means of his Faith, as the Wind hath upon a Weather-cock, it ſtill made it to ſtand with it: If he promiſed him any thing, his Soul did ſecurely acquieſce in his Word; if he commanded him any thing, he readily obeys; the Word of the Lord carries him before it. He only depended upon the divine Will by his Faith; what that gave him, he received; what that would have him do, that he did. He believed, it's like, That the Lord was ſo Good in himſelf, and ſo much a Friend to him, as that he would not put him upon any thing, command him any thing, but what in the iſſue ſhould clearly tend to his good; and therefore upon this perſuaſion reſolves to deliver up himſelf wholly to the Will of God, and to be an abſolute Servant thereunto, and to wait upon it, whither-ever it would carry him. He knew his Happineſs was in God's hand, and was confident that the way to be poſſeſſed of it, was ſtill to wait upon God in believing what he ſaid, and in doing what he bade him. The Will and Command of God then, was the conſtant Walk of *Abraham*'s Faith.

Sect. IV. 3. And Thirdly, The Nature of that Obedience, which proceeded from his Faith, was this: It was an Obedience of *Self-denial*, wherein he croſſed his own Will to comply with the Will of God, therein doing God that right (which but few in the World do) as actually to acknowledge the Lord and his moſt holy Will to be abſolutely Sovereign and Supreme, and that his own Will muſt ſtoop to his, without all diſputes, how contrary ſoever thereunto. The Command of God comes to *Abraham*, Gen. xii. 1, 2, 3. ſaying, *Get thee out of thy Country, and from thy Father's houſe,* *unto a Land that I will ſhew thee: And I will make of thee a great Nation, and I will bleſs thee and make thy Name great, and thou ſhalt be a Bleſſing. And I will bleſs them that bleſs thee, and curſe him that curſeth thee: And in thy Seed ſhall all Families of the Earth be bleſſed.* Here are great things promiſed indeed, as an Argument and Motive to perſuade him to obey this Call and Command of God, which he confidently depended upon; but in the mean time he muſt quit his Country, bid adieu to his Kindred, depart from his Father's Houſe, make himſelf a Laughing ſtock (it's like) to Neighbours, Friends, and Acquaintance, as if ſome ſtrange *Chymera* had ſtruck his Brain, and muſt go he knew not whither; ſo ſaith the Apoſtle, *He went out not knowing whither he went*, Heb. xi. 8. Let's make it our own caſe, and we ſhall eaſily perceive that thus to do was a piece of great *Self-denial:* And yet his Faith led him out from amidſt theſe ancient Enjoyments; the Command and Promiſe of God went before, and he followed cloſe after. And this wonderful piece of Obedience is attributed to his Faith, *Heb.* xi. 8. *By Faith, Abraham when he was called to go out unto a place which he ſhould afterward receive, obeyed.*

Another like, or rather more wonderful piece of Self-denying Obedience, which was acted by the Power of his Faith, was his Carriage about the offering up of his Son *Iſaac* in Sacrifice unto God at his Command, *Heb.* xi. 17, 18. *By Faith Abraham when he was tried, offered up Iſaac: And he that had received the Promiſes, offered up his only begotten Son; of whom it was ſaid, That in Iſaac ſhall thy Seed be called.* Behold *Abraham*'s Will, Deſire and Delight, ſwallowed up in the Will and good Pleaſure of God by means of his Faith! His Son that had been ſo much deſired and longed for before he had him, that all he enjoyed in this World ſeemed little to him in the Abſence of ſuch a Mercy: *Lord God, what wilt thou give me, ſeeing I go Childleſs?* (Gen. xv. 2.) That Son whom he ſo much loved when he had him, yea, and his only Son too; and that Son in whom the Promiſe was made of the great things which God would do for *Abraham*; this Son does God command him to offer for a Burnt-offering; this Son of his Hopes; this Son of his Delights: An Action than which, what lightly could be imagined more harſh and highly repugnant to his own Will? And yet notwithſtanding all Debates and Reaſonings of Fleſh and Blood about this Matter, which one would think ſhould be many and high, and ſuch which one ſhould have much ado to get over; yet ſo mighty was his Faith in God, and Confidence of a good Iſſue of whatever he ſhould do at the Appointment and Command of God, as that he appears as forward in it, as if it had been the moſt acceptable Service which God could have put him upon: For the Text ſaith, That *Abraham roſe up early in the Morning* to go about it, *Gen.* xxii. 3.

And upon account of this very thing was he eſteemed the Friend of God, (*Jam.* ii. 23.) one that would forſake all, and part with the deareſt Friend he had in all the World, rather than not ſtick cloſe to him in whatever he would have him do; a true ſign indeed of Friendſhip to the Lord, *John* xv. 14. *Ye are my Friends, if ye do whatſoever I command you.* Mark, *whatſoever I command:* Not only Commands which it may be may bear little upon the Fleſh, eaſie and cheap Duties, but ſuch as will try a Man's Affection to the uttermoſt, as this to *Abraham* did; ſuch as call for the cutting off the right Hand, and plucking out the right Eye; the parting with things that are as grateful to the Fleſh, as theſe Members of the Body are to Nature. And not only ſo, but ſuch things alſo as are as uſeful and deſirable as the right Hand and right Eye are, as *Iſaac* was to *Abraham*, when the holding and enjoying of them will not conſiſt with our entire Love to the Lord, to be expreſt in the moſt difficult and moſt ſelf-denying piece of Service, when he calls for it. *He that loves Father or Mother, Son or Daughter, yea, or his own Life more than Chriſt, is not worthy of him*, (Matth. x. 37, 38.) as he does which chuſes rather to diſpleaſe Chriſt, and diſhonour his Truth in keeping theſe, than to diſpleaſe himſelf or them in parting with them.

This Task which was put upon *Abraham* was indeed very hard, and directly of the Nature of that in the Goſpel mentioned before, and yet as hard and as difficult as it was, if *Abraham* had ſtuck at it, he could not have approved his Faith to God, no more than ſuch as love Son or Daughter more than Chriſt; and thereby prove themſelves unworthy of him, can approve their Faith in him to be right, or their Love to him to be true. And therefore if you mark it, *Abraham* was ſaid to be *juſtified by Works when he had offered Iſaac upon the Altar*, James ii. 21. Implying, that as this high Act of his Obedience proceeding from his Faith, rendred him highly approved in the Sight of God, *Gen.* xxii. 16. So by the Rule of Contraries, had he bogled at this Command, his neglect herein would not only have deprived him of that high Approbation of God, which by his fiducial Obedience he had now obtained; but alſo have gone very far in contributing towards the Loſs of thoſe Degrees of God's Approbation, whereto he had before attained, if not wholly bereaved him thereof until he had repented and done his Duty.

Sect. V. But here I muſt make a ſtand a little, and anſwer an Objection, which is this; That though this Act of *Abraham*'s offering *Iſaac*, was an Act of that Faith by which he was juſtified, yet it was not that Act of Faith by which he was juſtified; it was an Act of his Faith it's true, but not ſuch a one as was eſſential to his Juſtification: And the reaſon hereof ſeems to be this, becauſe *Abraham* was juſtified, by or upon his Believing long before this: It's ſaid, *Gen.* xv. 6. *And Abraham believed in the Lord; and he counted it to him for Righteouſneſs.* And this was before *Iſhmael* was born unto *Abraham*, at whoſe Birth *Abraham* was but eighty ſix Years old, *Gen.* xvi. 16. But when *Iſaac* was born he was an hundred Years old, *Gen.* xxi. 5. which clearly proves it to be fourteen Years, or more, from that time in which Righteouſneſs was imputed to him upon his Believing, to the time of *Iſaac*'s Birth. And yet this Act of his Faith did not take place till ſome Years after the Birth of *Iſaac* neither, for the Lad by that time *Abraham* was called upon to offer him, was ſo far grown in Years, Stature, and Strength, as that *Abraham* made him carry the Wood for the Burnt-offering, *Gen.* xxii. 6. Now then if *Abraham* were juſtified by that Act of his Faith which was found in him, it may be twenty Years before, how could it be that he ſhould be juſtified by another Act of his Faith, *viz.* This by which he offered *Iſaac*, ſo long after?

To which I anſwer; *Firſt*, That this Act of his Faith by which he offered *Iſaac* did concur to his Juſtification, is very plain and manifeſt by that of *James* ii. 21, 24. *Was not Abraham our Father juſtified by Works when he had offered Iſaac his Son upon the Altar?* As if he ſhould ſay, Is it not manifeſt he was? Do you not know this? And after he had amplified this Inſtance a little, concludes upon it thus, *ver.* 24. *Ye ſee then how that by Works a Man is juſtified, and not by Faith only.* By which it is manifeſt, That this was not only an Act of that Faith by which he was juſtified, but that this Act of his Faith was, that by which he was juſtified as well as that precedent Act before mentioned, and was not irrelative to his Juſtification, as the Objection ſuppoſeth.

Sect. VI. But then *Secondly*, as to the Reaſon of the Objection, which ſuppoſeth that this collateral Act of *Abraham*'s Faith could not do that for him which was done long before by a former and precedent Act. To this I likewiſe anſwer, That Juſtification taken in a large Senſe, for a Man's conſtant ſtanding in an acceptable Condition before God, depends not only upon the firſt Acts of a Man's Faith, when he begins to believe, but upon the Continuation and Reiteration of the ſame, and Multiplication of the like; and ſometimes higher Acts all along a Man's Life unto the end of his Days; which being a Point of much Conſequence, I pray you mark how I make it good:

1. This clearly appears in *Abraham*'s Caſe; for neither was that Believing of *Abraham*, of which we read, *Gen.* xv. 6. which was counted to him for Righteouſneſs, the firſt Act of his effectual Faith, and conſequently not that which began his Juſtification: For this Act of his Faith was the cloſing with a Promiſe which God made him, after he had dwelt ſome Years in the Land of *Canaan*, probably near upon ten Years, as you will have cauſe to conceive, if you compare the Proceſs of the Hiſtory touching his leaving *Charan* and ſojourning in the Land of *Canaan*, with *Gen.* xvi. 3. where a Period of Time is mentioned, at which he had dwelt ten Years in the Land of *Canaan*; and which ſo far as appears, extended it ſelf very little beyond that time when God appeared to *Abraham* after his Slaughter of the Kings, and made that Promiſe to him; the Believing of which, is ſaid to be counted to him for Righteouſneſs. But *Abraham* had a great Meaſure of Faith before ever he left his Native Country, *Ur of the Chaldees* firſt, and *Charan* after, to come at God's Call into *Canaan*; as we heard before from *Heb.* xi. 8. where it's told us, That it was by his Faith that he obeyed God therein: And by Faith he after ſojourned in the Land of Promiſe, *Heb.* xi. 9. wherein by Vertue of his Faith he devoutly worſhipped and ſerved that God which had called him thither, building Altars for his Worſhip at ſeveral Places where he pitched his Tent, and there called on the Name of the Lord, *Gen.* xii. 7, 8. and xiii. 4, 18. And all this before that particular Act of his Faith, mentioned *Gen.* xv. 6.

which is there ſaid to have been counted to him for Righteouſneſs. And can any Man ſo much as imagin, that *Abraham* having ſuch a Faith ſo long before, and making ſuch proof of the Life and Power of it in his Love, Obedience, and Devotion to God, as he did; and God back again declaring his high approbation of him, by a frequent appearing to him, and making, repeating, and enlarging his Promiſes of the great things he was reſolved to do for him, that yet he all this while ſhould not be juſtified and accepted with God upon his Believing? I ſay, Can any ſuch Thought poſſibly enter into any Man's Heart? If not, then it is manifeſt that that Act of *Abraham*'s Faith, *Gen.* xv. 6. which was counted to him for Righteouſneſs, was but an after-act, not the beginning-act of his Juſtification; and conſequently that a Man's Juſtification does not depend only upon one tranſient Act of Faith when he begins to believe, but upon a continuation, renewing, and multiplication of the ſame, or like Acts. *Abraham*, though he believed in God before, and was accepted with God before, yet his after-Faith is imputed to him for Righteouſneſs as well as his former: And if he ſhould not have believed God upon this renewing of his Promiſe, as well as at the firſt making of it, I ſee not how Righteouſneſs could at this time have been imputed to him upon account of his former Believing: No, it was imputed upon his preſent Believing.

And ſeeing that we find that *Abraham*'s Juſtification is here in *Gen.* xv. 6. attributed to an after-act of his Faith, there's the ſame reaſon why his Juſtification ſhould again be aſcribed unto that Act of his Faith by which he offered up his Son, tho' it be ſuppoſed to follow twenty Years after the other, as that did many Years after the firſt. Theſe things conſider'd, it need not be look'd upon as any Paradox or Wonder, that St. *James* ſhould attribute *Abraham*'s Juſtification before God unto an Act of his Faith, which took not place till many Years after he had been in the Faith of God. We heard before from *Rom.* iv. 12. that the Faith by which *Abraham* was juſtified, was a walking Faith, and had ſteps; and now we ſee that the latter ſteps of the ſame Faith were neceſſary to his Juſtification, as well as the former, he having and enjoying means, motives, and opportunities of exerting theſe latter Acts as well as of the former.

And it's of ſpecial note to this point, That the Lord caſts the performance of a Promiſe, which he had made to *Abraham* many Years before, upon that act of his Faith and Obedience which took place but now when he would have offered *Iſaac*, Gen. xxii. 16, 17, 18. *By my ſelf have I ſworn ſaith the Lord, for becauſe thou haſt done this thing, and haſt not with-held thy Son, thine only Son; that in bleſſing I will bleſs thee, and in multiplying I will multiply thy Seed as the Stars of Heaven, and as the Sand which is upon the Sea-ſhore: and thy Seed ſhall poſſeſs the gate of his Enemies; and in thy Seed ſhall all the Nations of the Earth be bleſſed, becauſe thou haſt obeyed my Voice.* Mark how God grounds this Promiſe, noted in theſe two Expreſſions, *Becauſe thou haſt done this thing*; and, *Becauſe thou haſt obeyed my Voice.* And yet this Promiſe for ſubſtance had been made him more than once before he had done that thing, and before he had herein obeyed his Voice, as is evident *Gen.* xii. 2, 3. and xiii. 15, 16. and xv. 5, 6. From which I gather, That collateral or after-acts of Faith and Obedience, are as neceſſary to continue and make good a Man's Intereſt in the Promiſes for the future, as the firſt acts of his Faith and Obedience were to entitle him to them at the firſt.

The Lord at the firſt makes his Promiſe to *Abraham* conditionally, that in caſe he would get him out of his own Country, and from his Kindred, and from his Father's Houſe, unto a Land which he would ſhew him, that then he would make him a great Nation, and bleſs him, and make his Name great, and make him a Bleſſing, and bleſs them that ſhould bleſs him, and curſe them that ſhould curſe him, and that in him ſhould all Families of the Earth be bleſſed, *Gen.* xii. 1, 2, 3. Afterward when *Abraham*, upon Belief of this Promiſe, had actually obeyed God, and was come into the Land to which he led him, then God renews the ſame Promiſe to him once and again, without expreſſing that Condition, becauſe he had now ſo far fulfilled it: This we may ſee *Gen.* xiii. 15, 16. and xv. 5, 6. As if he renewed his Promiſe now by way of Reward unto his former Faith and Obedience; juſt as in this caſe of his offering of *Iſaac*, the Lord renews the ſame Promiſe, with the addition of his Oath to bind it, by way of Reward to this eminent Act of his Faith and Obedience: And when *Abraham* renews his Faith, as God did his Promiſe, *Gen.* xv. 5, 6. this was counted to him for Righteouſneſs, as well as his firſt Faith was. And ſo again, when God by another Command of his to offer his Son, as hard as the firſt, tries his Faith whether it would hold out to carry him through all Difficulties to follow and obey him, and finds his Faith enabling him to depend upon him ſtill, and to obey his Will in this as in his former Commands: Hereupon he counts this to him for Righteouſneſs, as well as his former Faith, and graciouſly grounds his approbation of him from that act of his Faith which laſt occurred, *James* ii. 21.

Sect. VII. 2. This may be made farther manifeſt in *Noah*'s caſe, as well as *Abraham*'s. *Noah*, we know, was a righteous Man before God admoniſhed him to make an Ark for the ſaving of him and his Houſhold. For the Scripture ſaith, *That Noah was a juſt Man, and perfect in his Generations; and that Noah walked with God*, Gen. vi. 9. And becauſe he was ſo, therefore God directed him to make the Ark for the ſecuring of him and his Family, *Gen.* vii. 1. *And the Lord ſaid unto Noah, Come thou and all thy houſe into the Ark; for thee have I ſeen righteous before me in this generation.* And yet for all this, though *Noah* were in a juſtified accepted Eſtate before God, and highly approved of him, before ever God commanded him to make the Ark; yet his becoming an Heir of that Righteouſneſs which is by Faith, is attributed unto that act of Faith, by which he believed God, when he declared to him his Reſolution to drown the World, and by means whereof he was moved to obey God in making an Ark for the Salvation of himſelf and Family, *Heb.* xi. 7. *By Faith Noah being warned of God of things not ſeen as yet, moved with fear, prepared an Ark to the ſaving of his houſe; by the which he condemned the World, and became Heir of the Righteouſneſs which is by Faith.* A clear proof that Juſtification depends upon after-acts of Faith, as well as the firſt, and is and may be as well aſcribed to the one as to the other.

And I pray you let it not be paſſed over unobſerved, That though theſe Works, that of *Abraham*'s *offering Iſaac*, and this of *Noah*'s *preparing an Ark at the Command of God*, be attributed unto the Faith of each reſpectively, yet their Juſtification before God hereupon is attributed unto theſe Works themſelves, as well as unto their Faith, in the Scripture-paſſages: And therefore the Apoſtle St. *James*, ſpeaking of *Abraham*, ſaith, *Seeſt thou how Faith wrought with his Works? and by Works was Faith made perfect*, James ii. 22. His Faith and Works they wrought or laboured together, as two Beaſts in a Yoke, about the producing the ſame effect, and that was the rendring him capable of the continuance of God's Favour and Approbation; his Faith alone would not have done it, if theſe Works, being called for, ſhould have been knowingly neglected.

3. After-acts of Faith are abſolutely neceſſary to the continuance and carrying on of the Work of Juſtification, as the firſt act was to begin it and ſet it afoot; and therefore the Author to the *Hebrews*, ſpeaking of the juſt Man that lives by Faith, ſaith of him, *That if he draw back, the ſoul of the Lord ſhall have no pleaſure in him*, Heb. x. 38. As his Believing, ſo long as he continues it, renders him acceptable and well-pleaſing to God, upon Chriſt's account; ſo his withdrawing thoſe Acts of Faith, which intereſted him in God's favourable acceptation, provoke God to withdraw his delight in him, and acceptation of him. And when Chriſt in the Parable of the Debtor and Creditor ſets forth this, That a Servant, who having had a great Debt forgiven him by his Lord, yet afterward had it exacted of him again upon his cruel and unworthy Carriage towards his fellow-Servant, with this Application of it to his Diſciples to whom it was ſpoke; *So likewiſe ſhall my heavenly Father do alſo unto you, if ye from your hearts forgive not every Man his Brother their treſpaſſes*, Matth. xviii. 35. Doth he not plainly teach, that if ſuch as do believe as they did, and thereupon had their Sins forgiven, as they had, ſhall yet for all that afterward come to want thoſe after-acts of Faith that ſhould produce a merciful and loving Carriage towards others, (for the right Faith works by Love) that then their Juſtification ſhould become Unjuſtification to them, the Pardon, which till then had continued, ſhould then be recalled and withdrawn?

Sect. VIII. By the way then note, that this Doctrine which makes a Man's ſtanding and continuing in a juſtified ſtate to depend upon after-acts of his Faith, as his entrance thereinto did upon the firſt, doth diſcover that moſt dangerous Doctrine of the Men called *Antinomians* to be rotten and ſtark nought, which teacheth, That when a Man is once in Chriſt, or, which is the ſame, when he does once believe, all his Sins are pardoned, both paſt, preſent, and to come, and that he always ſtands accepted upon the account of his firſt believing. A Doctrine which moſt aſſuredly hath proved an occaſion of many's taking to themſelves a great deal more liberty than that which is

Chriſtian, and hath betrayed many hopeful Souls into a broader Way than that narrow Path that leads to Life. A fine Doctrine it would have been if it had been true, to prove that *Paul* knew not what he ſaid when he exhorted the Chriſtians *to work out, or to work through their own Salvation with fear and trembling*, Phil. ii. 12.

And I do the rather here admoniſh all, in the Fear of the Lord, to take heed of this Snare, for that I my ſelf having above twenty Years ago been taken in it, did ſadly experience the evil Tendency of it; and I verily think had not the Lord in much Mercy pluck'd me out of it, it would have proved no leſs than utter Ruine and Deſtruction to my poor Soul: And how then ſhould I upon this Occaſion refrain to warn all Men of this deep Ditch! No ſure, it is not one Act of Believing that carries the Buſineſs of a Man's Juſtification quite through, if there be Opportunity of After-acts afforded: *The Righteouſneſs of God is revealed* (in the Goſpel) *from Faith to Faith*, *Rom.* i. 17. The Goſpel reveals Righteouſneſs or Juſtification upon condition of the latter Faith as well as the former; and therefore let no Man think he hath done his whole Day's Work, whenas he hath but only begun it; for if he do, it's a thouſand to one but he will grow idle and remiſs before Night.

And therefore as you deſire and expect that your Faith ſhould do you the ſame Service as *Abraham*'s did him, ſee to it that your Faith be found walking in his Faith's Steps; by which, and not otherwiſe, you will prove your ſelves his Children, and Heirs to the ſame Inheritance. But alas! If the fore-mentioned Steps of *Abraham*'s Faith, as trodden by his Children, do diſcriminate the Faith of the right kind, from that which is of another Race; how many Mens Faith who call *Abraham* Father, will hereby be diſcovered to be but Baſtardly, and ſuch as will never make good their Title to the Inheritance which God hath promiſed to *Abraham* and his Spiritual Seed? Does the Call of God back'd with a Promiſe, by means of *Abraham*'s Faith taking hold of the Promiſe with one hand, and of the Command with the other, draw him out of his own Country from his ancient Acquaintance, Kindred, and Father's Houſe, which otherwiſe were lawful Enjoyments? What then ſhall we think of their Faith, who though the Lord give forth Command upon Command, back'd with great and precious Promiſes, on purpoſe to draw Men not out of their own Country, but out of their ill Company; out of their Intemperance and Exceſs, out of their Uncleanneſs, out of their covetous Practices, out of their Pride and ridiculous Faſhions, out not only of prophane Swearing and filthy Talking, but out of light, vain, frothy, frivolous Diſcourſe and Communication, out of their Lukewarmneſs, Heartleſneſs, and Deadneſs in Religion; and yet for all that are not drawn out of theſe unprofitable, ſinful, and vain Ways unto this Day? Can any thing be plainer than this, That either they have no Faith at all, or that the Faith they have is of a Baſtard kind, and ſuch as ſhall never inherit? Both they and their Faith muſt be judged of by their Works: If they were *Abraham*'s Children, they would do the Works of *Abraham*; but ſeeing they do the Works of the Devil, they thereby plainly prove themſelves to be his Children and not *Abraham's*; as Chriſt, who could not be miſtaken, hath told them, *John* viii. 39, 44. Theſe, as the unregenerate Jews that lived under the Word and Ordinances of God, and yet were not renewed to God by them, would needs claim from *Abraham*; but Chriſt, you ſee, hath found them out another Father. O that all ſuch would therefore be perſuaded now while it is called to Day, to take faſt hold of the Commands of Jeſus Chriſt, made very pleaſant and acceptable by the huge Promiſes that are annexed to them, which would then certainly draw them out of their vain Converſation. Shall *Abraham*'s Faith enable him at God's Command to offer to him his only and beloved Son *Iſaac*? And ſhall not thine enable thee to part with thy only beloved Luſt? Doeſt thou think thou haſt more to ſay why thou ſhouldſt not part with thy Sin, than *Abraham* had why he ſhould not part with his Son? If not, then either ceaſe flattering thy ſelf as if thou wer't one of *Abraham*'s Children and Heir to the ſame Promiſe, or elſe ceaſe from thy vain and ſinful Ways, that thou mayſt be ſo indeed.

CHAP. IX.

Shewing, That it hath been the common and univerſal Property of the Faith of God's Elect, both in former and latter Ages of the World, as well to depend upon (and ſo to be ordered by) the Counſels, Commands, and Directions of God touching the Way to Life; as upon his Grace, Power, and Promiſe, for Life it ſelf: And that it is the higheſt Point of Wiſdom in Men ſo to do. And that Mens miſtruſt of the ſuperlative Goodneſs of God's Ways, Counſels, and Commands, and putting more Confidence in their own, proceeds from their miſtruſt of his Power, Wiſdom, or Good-will towards them, in relation to their Happineſs.

Sect. I. HAving ſhewed the Nature of *Abraham's* Faith in the Properties and Effects of it, and after what manner it diſpoſed him in his Deportment towards God, and how the ſame is ſet forth as a Pattern unto all Men of that kind of Faith by which Juſtification is to be had; let us now alſo take a farther View of the ſame Grace of Faith, as it hath ſhewed it ſelf acting its part in other of the Saints: Always carrying in our Eye along with us our own Faith, and comparing it with theirs, to ſee whether it affects and acts us, as theirs did them; as undoubtedly it will, if it be of the ſame Nature and Kind with theirs. For as all Men in all Nations and Generations are of one Blood (*Acts* xvii. 26.) ſo all Saints in all Nations and Generations, are in the general of our Faith, *Epheſ.* iv. 5. And as the one hath the ſame Motion and Operation in reference to the Life, natural in all Men, ſo hath the other the ſame Influence and Operation in reference to the Life Spiritual in all Saints.

Now then that which hath been in a manner as natural to the Faith of all the Saints, as the Motion of the Blood in the Veins is to all living Men, is this, *viz.* To be verily perſuaded, that as Happineſs and Salvation are aſſuredly to be had from God, ſo the certain way not to miſs of it but to receive it upon his Promiſe, is, and hath been, ſtill to eye his Counſels, and to follow the Guidance of his Directions and Commands in all things, as the direct way leading thereunto.

And the Truth is, for the Creature Man to be thus acted and ſteered in his Dependence upon his God, is the moſt rational thing under Heaven, and moſt connatural to that Principle of Underſtanding and Light which God hath placed in Men. For firſt, God by his preventing Grace, in propounding gracious Terms, and vouchſafing convenient and ſufficient means of Salvation unſought for on Man's part, hath given a plentiful Proof and clear Demonſtration of his Love and Good-will to Men, and of his deſire of their Salvation. And then ſecondly, Having ſo done, what is more rational than for Men to be fully confident that the Lord will put them upon nothing, adviſe them nothing, command them nothing, but what doth certainly tend to, and perfectly conſiſt with their chief Good? Will any tender Mother put her dearly beloved Child upon any thing but what tends to his Good? Or if ſhe ſhould, would it not argue either want of Wiſdom, or of Love in her, or both? A want of neither of which are in God.

And then Thirdly, If Men are, or have cauſe to be confident that God will adviſe or enjoin them nothing, but what hath a true and real Tendency to their Salvation, which is his deſign towards them, and that which he ſeeks after, Is it not then moſt reaſonable and the greateſt Wiſdom in Men to commit themſelves to the Guidance of God, and to acquieſce in his Wiſdom and Love? As being confident, that that being truly followed, will lead and bring them to that Salvation which God hath offered, and they deſire and ſeek after.

It hath been in this Faith and Confidence, That the Saints from time to time have ſincerely followed God which way ſoever he hath led them, and not been turned out of his way by the greateſt Dangers or Sufferings that could befal them from the Hands of Men; as judging his Will and Counſel made known to them, as to be obſerved, to be the direct Path leading to the promiſed and expected Salvation of God.

Sect. II. Among that Cloud of Witneſſes which the Author to the *Hebrews*, in his eleventh Chapter, produces, as giving a lively Teſtimony to this Truth; let us, for Brevity ſake, hear only ſome of them: And we will begin with *Enoch*, ver. 5. *By Faith Enoch was tranſlated that he ſhould not ſee death, and was not found, becauſe God had tranſlated him; for before his tranſlation he had this teſtimony, that he pleaſed God.* Firſt, we ſee his tranſlation is aſcribed unto his Faith; though we cannot ſay, that he by his Faith did believe he ſhould after that manner be tranſlated, yet doubtleſs by his Faith he did expect to receive from God, firſt or laſt, that happy State into which he was ſo timely and extraordinarily tranſlated. Secondly, we ſee likewiſe how and after what manner this his dependence upon God for Happineſs did diſpoſe him in point of Behaviour towards God, it put him upon *pleaſing God*; that is, of endeavouring always to do ſuch things as were well-pleaſing to the Lord; which in *Gen.* v. 24. is called his *walking with God.* And what was that? but his being conſtantly found in that Way and Walk which God appointed and approved, and in which he met with God, and God with him. His Faith dictated that to him, that the Road to that expected Happineſs which was in his eye, was that Walk which God had appointed him; and that the way to receive it from God, was carefully to pleaſe him in all things, as he did faithfully endeavour to do for three hundred or more Years together.

Noah's Faith wrought the ſame way, *Heb.* xi. 7. *By Faith Noah being warned of God of things not ſeen as yet, moved with fear, prepared an Ark to the ſaving of his houſe.* As by his Faith he looked for ſafety and deliverance from God, ſo by his Faith he was taught to obſerve and do what God appointed and commanded him in order thereunto: His Faith eyed as well the means as the end, and made him as careful to be faithful in the one, as confidently to expect the other; which is indeed the true Nature and kindly Working of the Faith of all God's Elect.

Let us here again take another ſight of the Faith of our Father *Abraham*, meeting with him in this road. It is certain, that his Faith had a perfect regard both to End and Means; he was confident of receiving the bleſſed Inheritance promiſed, but he was alſo confident, that the way to come to it was to follow God's guidance and direction, and that God was as much to be believed in his ſhewing the Way, and therein his Counſels and Commands to be embraced, as he was in promiſing the End. *Heb.* xi. 14, 15, 16. There you have the End of the Faith of *Abraham* and *Sarah*, the Mark at which they aimed: *For they that ſay ſuch things, declare plainly that they ſeek a Country:* And what Country? Not ſuch as they left; *For truly if they had been mindful of that Country from whence they came out, they might have had opportunity to have returned: but now they deſire a better Country, that is an heavenly; wherefore God is not aſhamed to be called their God; for he hath prepared for them a City.* God had given them hopes of a heavenly Country, they believed him in his Diſcovery and Promiſe of this; and therefore when God calls them out of their own native Country to ſet forward for this, they preſently obey; *They went out, not knowing whither they went,* (*Heb.* xi. 8.) But were reſolved under the hope of the heavenly Country to follow the Conduct of God, and to deliver themſelves up to his Counſels and Commands, and to follow theſe whitherſoever they would lead them, as being fully perſuaded that theſe would at laſt bring them to that heavenly Country which they ſought. Juſt as the Wiſe Men, who following the Guidance of the Star, were by it brought to the houſe where the young Child Jeſus was, whom they ſought.

Sect. III. See alſo the Faith of *Moſes* running the ſame race, *Heb.* xi. 24, 25, 26. *By Faith Moſes when he was come to years, refuſed to be called the Son of Pharaoh's Daughter: chuſing rather to ſuffer affliction with the People of God, than to enjoy the pleaſures of Sin for a ſeaſon: eſteeming the reproach of Chriſt greater riches than the treaſures in Egypt; for he had reſpect unto the recompence of the reward.* Firſt, That which his Faith had in its eye, as the Mark at which he aimed, was the Recompence of the Reward, the great Prize for which all the Saints run: He believed there was ſuch a thing to be had from God. Secondly, The ſame Faith by which he depended upon God for this Bleſſedneſs, enabled him to wait upon God in his own way to be led to it. And therefore, rather than he would by Sin diſpleaſe him from whom he expected the Recompence of Reward, he at once turns his back upon the Honours, Pleaſures, and Treaſures of *Egypt*. And ſeeing he could not joyn himſelf unto the People of God, and with them to worſhip the Lord, but that in embracing them he muſt embrace Reproach and Affliction with them; therefore, rather than he would loſe the advantage of the one in relation to his expected Happineſs, he chuſeth and eſpouſeth the Inconvenience of the other. He by his Faith puts into the one Balance the Recompence of Reward as the end, and his Communion with the People of God in his Worſhip and Service as the way and means; and together with theſe, the Reproaches for Chriſt, and the Affliction of the People of God: And into the other Balance the Honours, Pleaſures, and Treaſures of *Egypt*; but with them that Sin, which the retaining of theſe would draw along with it, and which would cut him ſhort of the Recompence of Reward: And comparing his preſent Enjoyments with his future Loſs, and his preſent Sufferings with his future Gain, he comes to this iſſue, to prefer Afflictions and Reproaches as attending the right way to the Recompence of Reward, before the Treaſures, Pleaſures, and Honours of *Egypt*, when attended with that Sin which would deprive him of it. Behold here a lively Inſtance of Faith's overcoming the World! His Faith carries him out of the midſt of all the Glory of the Court of *Egypt*, and from thence into the midſt of the Scorn, Deriſion, Oppreſſion, and Perſecution of the poor People of God: And why? But becauſe this was the ready road to the Recompence of Reward.

That which is noted *Heb.* xi. 33. touching the power of Faith, as that by it *ſome have ſtopped the mouths of Lions*, reſpects *Daniel* the Prophet, who was *taken up out of the Lions Den, and no manner of hurt was found upon him, becauſe he believed in his God*, Dan. vi. 23. That which I would note concerning him, as to my preſent purpoſe, is Firſt this; That his Faith fixed him upon God, to depend upon him for whatever was good in his eyes. Secondly, That in order to his receiving his Expectation from God, his Faith kept him tite and cloſe to God, in the way of his Worſhip and Service, ſo that he would not be turned out of this a Hair's breadth for all the dread of the Lions Den: But though he knew the Snare that was laid for him, that in caſe he prayed to his God as formerly, he muſt be offered up in Sacrifice to the devouring Lions, yet for all that the Text ſaith, that *he kneeled upon his knees three times a day, and prayed, and gave thanks before his God, as he did afore-time*, Dan. vi. 10. As he depended upon *God*, and not on *Darius* the King for his Happineſs, ſo he was reſolved he would faithfully cleave to the Lord and pleaſe him, whoever was diſpleaſed, or whatever it coſt him. If his way, his direct way to his future Happineſs, lie through the Lions Den, he does not ſeek to go about; if the Path-way of God's Service leads thither, then thither his Faith carries him. His Faith, we ſee, brought him into the Lions Den, but it did not leave him there; as it brought him in, ſo it brought him out too: *He was taken up out of the Den, and no manner of hurt was found upon him, becauſe he believed in his God.*

The like we ſee of them whoſe *Faith quenched the violence of Fire*, Heb. xi. 33. As their Faith quenched the violence of Fire when they were in it, ſo it was their Faith too that brought them into it: But how? *viz.* By engaging them faſt to God, his Worſhip and Way, keeping them in an hour of Temptation from being ſhaken in their Loyalty and Fidelity to God, for all the formidable Pomp of *Nebuchadnezzar*, and the horrour of his hot fiery Furnace, *Dan.* iii. 13,——28. They truſted in God for Salvation, but would have no other but what the holy Commandment of God, faithfully ſtuck to, would bring them to. The Word of the Lord will try Men, as it did them, if they take hold of it by Faith, and will not let it go: It will ſometimes draw them *into the fire, and into the water*; but if they ſtill hold faſt by it, *it will at laſt bring them out into a wealthy place*, Pſal. lxvi. 10, 11, 12. But you ſee the Saints Confidence of its being a certain and moſt infallible Guide to conduct them to their deſired and expected Felicity, hath ſtill cauſed them to truſt themſelves with it, and to follow it through thick and thin, foul way as well as fair.

Sect. IV. The Faith of *David*, the Man after God's own Heart, and one of thoſe Worthies mentioned *Heb.* xi. 32. was notable this way alſo, *Pſal.* lxii. 5. *My Soul, wait thou only upon God, for my expectation is from him.* Where note, Firſt, That his Expectation, to wit, of Salvation (as in the next Verſe, *He only is my Salvation*) it was from God, and from God only. Secondly, This his dependence upon God for Salvation, as knowing it was to be had from him only, and from none elſe, drew him to wait only upon God in order to his receiving of it. And what's that? but his attending upon God always to do his Will, as a Servant that waits upon his Maſter, as ready always to be at his beck. *As the Eyes of Servants look unto the hand of their Maſter, and as the Eyes of a Maiden unto the hand of her Miſtriſs; ſo our Eyes wait upon* *the Lord our God*, *Pſalm* cxxiii. 2. Juſt as it is between great Men that are able to prefer others, and thoſe that expect to be preferred by them; Is it not common for ſuch to be caſt into the very Mold of the Will and Pleaſure of ſuch from whom they expect Advancement? Are they not glad of any Opportunity of gratifying and pleaſing them? *Every Man* (ſaith *Solomon*) *is a Friend to him that giveth Gifts*, Prov. xix. 6. And thereupon it is, that we uſe to ſay they are their Creatures: And moſt certain it is, that the Saints Expectation of being preferred by God to endleſs Dignity and Glory, works alike Deportment in them towards God, as we ſee here in *David* with the reſt before-mentioned. If he expects only from God, he reſolves to wait only upon God: Since God only can do for him that which he deſires more than all things, his Care is to be ſure to pleaſe him whoever he diſpleaſeth. Whatever Temptations he met with to the contrary, whatever his conſtant waiting upon God coſt him; yet this Expectation of his from God held him cloſe to God; as well it might. And therefore we have him oft expreſſing himſelf thus: *They had almoſt conſumed me upon Earth; but I forſook not thy Precepts*, Pſalm cxix. 87. *My Soul is continually in my hand; yet do I not forget thy Law*, ver. 109. *Many are my Perſecutors and mine Enemies; yet do I not decline from thy Teſtimonies*, ver. 157. *Princes have perſecuted me without a cauſe; but my Heart ſtandeth in awe of thy word*, ver. 161. Why did *David* ſtick ſo cloſe to God's Word, whenas we ſee his ſo doing procured him ſo many Enemies, and expoſed him to ſuch Dangers from Men? Surely, becauſe his Expectation was only from God; and therefore he judged it moſt reaſonable to forſake all to wait on him: His Heart ſtood more in awe of his Word, than of the Frowns and malicious Practices of the greateſt Men.

Pſal. cxix. 57. *Thou art my Portion, O Lord, I have ſaid, that I would keep thy Words.* When he ſaid, *Thou art my Portion, O Lord*, it was the Voice and Language of his Faith, for without that he could claim no ſuch Intereſt in God. But mark this, That the ſame Faith which enabled him to ſay unto God, *Thou art my Portion*, enabled him alſo to ſay unto him, *I will keep thy Words:* When once he comes to depend upon God as his Portion, and to expect the whole of his Felicity from him, he preſently comes to this Reſolution, That he will be ruled by his Advice, and ordered in all things by his Words. We have the ſame ſpiritual Breath, in *Pſalm* cxix. 166. *Lord, I have hoped for thy Salvation, and done thy Commandments.* All Men, in a manner, hope for Salvation, but few do the Commands; and that's the reaſon why ſo many ſhall be diſappointed of their Hope: But the Hope and Confidence of the right kind, ſtill puts them in whom it is upon doing the Commandments; Reaſon and Ingenuity requiring, That ſuch ſhould fulfil the Lord's Will, who expect to have their Will and Deſire fulfilled by him, in granting them Salvation. Beſides the Order and Relation which God hath eſtabliſhed between Salvation as the End, and the Walk in his Commandments as the Way, lays a regular Neceſſity upon every Man's Faith, to believe it to be every whit as neceſſary for a Man to be as careful to keep the right Way, as to be confident of coming to the deſired End; and ſo was the *Pſalmiſt*, we ſee, whoſe Hope of Salvation and doing the Commandments went hand in hand: *Therefore wait thou on God and keep his Way, and he ſhall exalt thee*, ſaith he, *Pſal.* xxxvii. 34. Here he is teaching other Men the Trade which he himſelf had learned, *viz.* Waiting on God for Exaltation, but ſtill keeping his Way.

Sect. V. Now that which had been the beaten Road of the Faith of the Saints recorded in the Old Teſtament, as we have ſeen, the ſame does the Apoſtle St. *John* affirm to be the Track of the Saints Hope and Confidence under the New. 1 *John* iii. 3. *And every Man that hath this Hope in him, purifieth himſelf even as he is pure.* Mark it, he ſaith *every Man*; none excepted that hath Hope of being like Chriſt in Glory, endeavours for the preſent to be like him in Purity; which is but the ſame thing with walking in the Path of God's Commands, *the Way that is called Holy*, or the depending wholly upon his Counſel, Will, and Pleaſure, *Pſalm* cxix. 1. *Bleſſed are the undefiled in the Way, who walk in the Law of the Lord.* 1 Pet. i. 22. *Seeing ye have purified your Souls in obeying the Truth*, &c. And the ſame Word of Grace that miniſters any ground of Hope to Men of being like Chriſt in Glory, does declare, That they *are the pure in Heart that ſhall ſee God, and that no unclean thing ſhall enter into* that glorious State; and that *without Holineſs no Man ſhall ſee the Lord*, *Matth.* v. 8. *Rev.* xxi. 27. *Heb.* xii. 14. And therefore all they that are not reprobate, or of an injudicious Mind concerning the Faith, have reſpect to both parts of

God's

God's declared Will, and do believe it's as neceſſary for them to be holy, as poſſible for them to be happy; and accordingly do depend upon the Lord for the one, in a faithful Proſecution of the other.

And accordingly does the Apoſtle St. *Peter* from the Lord, adviſe and perſuade the Chriſtians to exerciſe their Faith or Dependence upon God in the way of Well-doing, as that which would ſecure them indeed, 1 *Pet.* iv. 19. *Wherefore let them that ſuffer according to the Will of God, commit the keeping of their Souls to him in well-doing, as into the hands of a faithful Creator.* To commit the keeping of the Soul to God, is certainly an Act of Faith, reſpecting both the Ability, Grace, and Fidelity of God, to ſecure, ſave, and make happy the Soul ſo committed to him. 2 Tim. i. 2. *For I know whom I have believed, (or truſted) and I am perſuaded that he is able to keep that which is committed to him againſt that Day.* The believing or truſting God, and the committing to him the keeping of the Soul againſt that Day is the ſame thing: In which Act the Power of God, and his Truſtineſs, is mainly eyed. But then that which I would have eſpecially noted alſo, is, That the Sphere in which this Truſt and Confidence is to be acted, is Well-doing: Let them commit the keeping of their Souls to him in Well-doing; which is the proper Element of Faith, out of which it is not able to live, having no Promiſe to feed and ſupport it.

And St. *Paul* expreſſeth the natural and common working of his, and others of the Saints Faith, thus; *For therefore we both labour and ſuffer Reproach, becauſe we truſt in the living God, who is the Saviour of all Men, eſpecially of thoſe that believe,* 1 *Tim.* iv. 10. The Truſt and Dependence upon God as Saviour, as offering Salvation to the Believers, cauſed them both to labour and ſuffer Reproach, *i. e.* diligently to labour in the Lord's Work, and carefully to pleaſe him in all things, though their doing ſo expoſed them to Reproaches and Perſecutions: Their painful labouring to approve themſelves in Faithfulneſs to God always and in all things, did grow out of their Confidence in God, and in his Salvation. The ſame which this Apoſtle St. *Paul* expreſſeth concerning himſelf ſingly in another place, *Acts* xxiv. 15, 16. *And have hope towards God,* &c. *and herein do I exerciſe my ſelf to have always a Conſcience void of Offence towards God, and towards Men.* His Hope toward God, touching the Reſurrection and the Glory that ſhall follow, put him upon this continual Labour and Exerciſe, of having always a Conſcience void of Offence toward God and Men; that is of carrying the matter ſo, and that always, in his Behaviour and Diſcharge of his Duty to God and to Men, as that he might not give his Conſcience the leaſt Occaſion of being offended. And he ſays it was his Exerciſe ſo to do, that is, the Labour and Buſineſs of his Life: The ſame to which he exhorteth his beloved *Timothy*, ſaying, *And exerciſe thy ſelf rather unto Godlineſs,* 1 Tim. iv. 7. A Word as it is rendered by ſome, properly importing to ſtrip himſelf: A Metaphor taken from Harveſt-Labourers and other Workmen, who to the end they may effect their Buſineſs upon the beſt Terms when they are very intent upon it, are wont to caſt off their upper Garments, that they might have no Incumbrance upon them. This, you ſee, was the way of the working of the Hope and Confidence which the Bleſſed *Paul* had in God.

And the ſame St. *Paul* ſheweth, that the twelve Tribes (as many of them as truly feared the Lord) expected the Promiſes of future Happineſs upon no other Terms, than upon their inſtant ſerving of God Day and Night, *Acts* xxvi. 7. *Unto which Promiſe our twelve Tribes inſtantly ſerving God Day and Night, hope to come.* As they believed the Promiſe of future Bliſs, ſo they believed it was not to be had but upon a faithful ſerving of God; and therefore the ſame Faith which by one Act took hold of the Promiſe, by another Act took hold of the Precepts, and in order to their coming into their Hope, they ſteered the Courſe, and travelled the Way that directly led thither; and that is an inſtant ſerving God Day and Night. To name no more Inſtances of this kind, but only that *Heb.* x. 34, 35. *For ye had Compaſſion of me in my Bonds, and took joyfully the ſpoyling of your Goods, knowing in your ſelves that you have in Heaven a better and an enduring Subſtance: Caſt not away therefore your Confidence which hath great Recompence of Reward.* Mark, Their confident Perſuaſion of that better and enduring Subſtance in Heaven, as promiſed by God, and as expected and deſired by them, cauſed them cloſely and intirely to adhere to the Doctrine and holy Ways of the Lord, though their doing ſo coſt them the Loſs and ſpoiling of their Goods: They were confident the Doctrine of Chriſt ſtuck to, would bring them to the Enjoyment of that better and enduring Subſtance; and therefore they followed that, though it led them out of the midſt of what they poſſeſt and enjoyed for the preſent.

And thus now we have ſeen the common nature and working of the Faith of God's Elect from Age to Age, both under the former and latter Diſpenſation, of things appertaining to Eternal Life; by which a juſt ground is miniſtred of ſuſpecting their Faith to be none of the Faith of God's Elect, that does not carry them the ſame way in which the Elect have been all travelling towards that heavenly Country, which is the hope of all the Saints.

This Doctrine touching the Saints dependence upon God's Counſels and Commands for a guide, as the proper Effect and inſeparable Companion of their dependence upon his Grace and Power for the upſhot of their Deſires, might be farther exemplified by its contrary, *viz.* That Men's turning aſide from God's Counſels and Ways, hath been wont to proceed from a ſecret jealouſie and miſtruſt either of God's Power or Love; and that a miſtruſt of God's Way, in which he hath enjoyned Men to walk, as if that were not the very beſt, but another of a Man's own choice to be preferred before it; clearly argues a miſtruſtful opinion of God, as if either there were not ſo much Love in him to Men, as is in Men to themſelves; or ſo much Wiſdom, Care, and Providence in God to direct them the beſt way to Happineſs, as is found in their own Heads; or ſo much Conſtancy or Power, as to carry through his deſign of Grace towards them in his own propounded method and way.

All the Turnings aſide, Runnings out, Luſtings, Temptings of God, Murmurings, Complainings, and Rebellions of the People of *Iſrael* in the Wilderneſs, are charged upon their Unbelief, *Deut.* i. 32. *Yet in this thing ye did not believe the Lord your God.* Though God had gone before them, though he had born them as a Man bears his Son; yet when they came but a little into ſtraits, they had ſo ill an opinion of God, were ſo void of confidence of his Care and Love, as that they rather enclined to think, that becauſe he hated them and bore them ill-will, that therefore he had brought them out of *Egypt* to deliver them into worſe hands: And that which followed hereupon, was, their refuſing to venture themſelves under God's Conduct; they refuſed to go up when God commanded them ſo to do, *ver.* 26, 27, 31. The ſpring of all is this: *Yet in this thing ye did not believe the Lord your God.* Again, *Deut.* ix. 23. *Likewiſe when the Lord ſent you from Kadeſh-barnea, ſaying, Go up and poſſeſs the Land which I have given you; then you rebelled againſt the Commandment of the Lord your God, and ye believed him not, nor hearkened to his voice.* Either they did not believe that God could, or elſe that he would carry them ſafe into the promiſed Land: They diſtruſted his Power, or Love, or both, and therefore durſt not truſt themſelves in his hands; which appeared in this, That they hearkened not unto his Voice, to do what he bid them do, in order thereunto. See the like *Pſal.* lxxviii. 17, 19, 22. In ſhort, the whole of the Miſcarriage of that People in the Wilderneſs, for which God deſtroyed them, though it conſiſted in a great variety of faults, is ſummed up in their Unbelief, *Jude* 5. *I will therefore put you in remembrance, though ye once knew this, how that the Lord having ſaved the People out of the Land of Egypt, afterward deſtroyed them that believed not.* All their other Sins, it ſeems, were in the Bowels of this, and did indeed proceed from it, as we heard before. See 2 *Kings* xvii. 14. *Heb.* iii. 17, 18. *Numb.* xiv. 11.

Which things are not written for their ſakes only, but recorded for admonition to the Churches now under the new Teſtament, 1 *Cor.* x. 1, 2, 3, 4, 5. *Moreover, Brethren, I would not have you ignorant, how that all our Fathers were under the Cloud, and all paſſed through the Sea, and were all baptized unto Moſes in the Cloud and in the Sea, and did all eat the ſame ſpiritual meat, and did all drink the ſame ſpiritual drink; for they drank of that ſpiritual Rock that followed them, and that Rock was Chriſt. But with many of them God was not well pleaſed; for they were overthrown in the Wilderneſs.* Why would not the Apoſtle have the Church of *Corinth* ignorant of thoſe things? Surely he well knew, that there is too much aptneſs in very many Profeſſors of Chriſtianity to bear ſo much upon the external Privileges of the Goſpel, as becauſe of them to think themſelves in good Condition, though otherwiſe indulging themſelves in ſome Unſaint-like Behaviour or other in their Lives. And therefore to the end none might think, that becauſe they have been baptized, are Members of the Church, have ſome knowledge of Chriſt, have been partakers of the Supper of the Lord, that therefore they muſt needs be the Favourites of the Lord, and the People of his Love; he gives them to underſtand, that the *Iſraelites*, who were God's People by Profeſſion, enjoyed that Privilege then, to which our Baptiſm anſwers now, did eat and drink of that which was then a Figure of Chriſt, as now we do in the Supper; that yet for all this, God was not well pleaſed with many of them, but that becauſe of their luſting after evil things, and their communion with Idolaters, their defiling themſelves with Fornication, their tempting of Chriſt, their Murmuring, and other like Provocations, they were ſo overthrown in the Wilderneſs, as that of Six hundred thouſand and three thouſand and five hundred and fifty of the Men of War that came out of *Egypt*, there were but only two that entred the Land of *Canaan*, *Numb.* i. 46. and xxxii. 11, 12. And that which is much to be heeded is this, *That all theſe things happened unto them for Enſamples*, (or *Types*, as in the Margin) *and are written for our admonition, upon whom the ends of the World are come. Wherefore let him that thinketh he ſtandeth, take heed leſt he fall*, 1 Cor. x. 11, 12. *And let us therefore fear, leſt a Promiſe being left us of entring into his Reſt, any of you ſhould ſeem to come ſhort of it: For unto us was the Goſpel preached, as well as unto them; but the word Preached did not profit them, not being mixed with Faith in them that heard it*, Heb. iv. 1, 2. Wakening Items, and loud Warnings to carnal Goſpellers and formal Churchmen: The Lord grant that ſuch may be rouzed by them out of their drouſe of Death.

CHAP. X.

Shewing, That the Power of God's Grace, the Strength and Fulneſs that is in Chriſt, the Preſence, Power and Influence of the Spirit, being that by which the new and ſpiritual Life in a Chriſtian is maintained, it is the Property of true Faith to depend upon the Lord for theſe. And herein is an excellent Difference to be ſeen between the Living and the Dead Faith. The Want of this, the Cauſe of many's Apoſtacy. A great Defect in this, the Cauſe of many's Dryneſs and Barrenneſs in Grace.

Sect. I. AS in the former Chapter I have ſhewed you, that it hath been always the Property of the ſaving Faith in all the Saints to depend upon God's Direction for the way to Happineſs, as well as upon his Grace and Promiſe for Happineſs it ſelf: So now I would alſo ſhew you, that it's another Property of the ſame Faith in the Saints, to depend upon the Lord for Ability and Strength to follow thoſe Directions, and to walk in thoſe Ways of God which they believe do lead to Life. And there is good reaſon why they ſhould depend upon him for this, as well as the other; becauſe as the Way of Life is not of Man's contrivance, but God's; nor yet of his finding out, being contrived, but of God's revealing; So neither is the Ability or Power to walk in that Way, of Man himſelf, but is the gracious Donation or Gift of God. Whereupon it is, that the Scriptures deny the power of Acting in this Way to be of Man himſelf, without the Preventing or Concurrent Grace of God, or both, *John* xv. 5. 2 *Cor.* iii. 5. 1 *Cor.* xv. 10. and xii. 3. *Gal.* ii. 20. But on the other hand they aſcribe both Will and Deed, Purpoſe and Performance unto God's working them in Men of his own good pleaſure, *Phil.* ii. 13. 2 *Cor.* viii. 16. 1 *Chron.* xxix. 14. 2 *Chron.* xxx. 12. *Ezra* i. 1, 5. and vii. 27. *Nehem.* ii. 12. and vii. 5. *Hag.* i. 14. *Prov.* xvi. 1. *Heb.* xiii. 21.

It would be beſide the buſineſs I have in hand, here to enquire how far the Lord hath prevented all Men with that which is called *common Grace*, and in what capacity they are thereby put of receiving *ſpecial Grace*: But that which concerns what I have in hand, is to ſhew, That as no Man hath power of himſelf to walk in that Way, which he is convinced to be the Way of Life, but that whoſoever hath it, hath it of God's ſpecial Gift, and working in him; ſo the way of God's communicating this Ability unto the Soul, is by Faith exerciſed on himſelf thereabout, and conſequently that it is the property of their Faith, who have this power, to be thus exerciſed. And this I would ſhew in ſome Particulars.

Sect. II. 1. Though it is indeed by the ſame Almighty Power that raiſed Chriſt from the dead, by which Men are raiſed to their new and ſpiritual State, and are enabled to live, act and walk, as thoſe that are alive from the dead; yet when this Power is drawn forth into Act for the effecting hereof, it is by or through their Faith towards whom this Power is thus acted, *Col.* ii. 12. *Buried with him in Baptiſm; wherein alſo ye are riſen with him through the Faith of the Operation of God, who raiſed him from the dead.* Obſerve here on the by, That Men's burial with Chriſt in Baptiſm, preſuppoſeth their being dead with him, or made conformable to his Death, by their being dead unto Sin before; even as Chriſt's Burial preſuppoſed his Death, which went before. And therefore to bury ſuch by Baptiſm, who are not dead unto Sin, (and Death unto Sin, preſuppoſeth a living in Sin before) is in common caſes as incongruous, in reference to the right uſe of Baptiſm, as it would be to bury Men alive, in reference to the right uſe of civil Burial. But this I note only by the way, as moſt worthy their Conſideration, whom it moſt concerns to take light from it touching the right Subject and Form of the New-Teſtament-Baptiſm. But that other thing ſignified by the baptized Party's riſing out of the Water, is a living a new Life unto God, in conformity to Chriſt's new Life after his Reſurrection, to which the Chriſtian ſolemnly engages by his Baptiſm. But the Power and Ability (mark this) thus to live, is *through the Faith of the Operation of God, who raiſed Chriſt from the dead:* Not through the *Operation of God* ſimply, but through the *Faith* of it. Though a Man, were he not relieved by this Faith, might think it an impoſſible thing for him, having been ſo long accuſtomed to vain Company and vain Courſes, and an Enemy to the ſtrict Lives and holy Ways of the Saints, that now he ſhould be able to throw off all thoſe Vanities, which he eſteemed the Joy and Pleaſure of his Life, and to ſubject himſelf to the ſelf-ſame Courſe, which was to him a Scorn and Deriſion before; yet when he remembers, that That which is impoſſible to Men, is poſſible with God; and that the ſame Power which raiſed up Chriſt from the dead, and put him into poſſeſſion of Immortality, now no more to return to Corruption, can with like eaſe raiſe him up from that ſinful Condition into which he was ſunk, and ſtrengthen him with ſtrength in his Soul to live that Goſpel-Life, that Life of God, to which he is called by the Goſpel, and now no more to return to his former corrupt State; and ſhall thereupon depend upon that Grace and Power of his for this very thing, and under an Expectation of divine Aſſiſtance, and armed with Reſolution, ſhall humbly undertake this new Life; he ſhall certainly meet with Power and Strength from God to effect and carry through this great and notable Change. Chriſt Jeſus himſelf, who in his Death, Burial, and Reſurrection, is the Chriſtian's Pattern, is prophetically brought in rejoycing under the hope and confidence he had in his Father's Power and Love, as that he would not leave him in the Grave, under the power of Corruption and Death. *Acts* ii. 25, 26, 27. *For David ſpeaketh concerning him; I foreſaw the Lord always before my face, for he is on my right hand that I ſhould not be moved. Therefore did my heart rejoice, and my tongue was glad: Moreover alſo, my fleſh ſhall reſt in hope; becauſe thou wilt not leave my Soul in Hell, neither wilt thou ſuffer thine holy One to ſee Corruption.* And in this confidence he undertaking the Work which his Father had given him to finiſh, all came to paſs accordingly: As the new Life, and deliverance from the old State of Corruption and Death, is accordingly effected and accompliſhed in all thoſe that, in dependence upon the divine Power and Grace, undertake it. It is the Operation or Working of God, that raiſes up the poor Creature from his impotent State of Spiritual Death unto Spiritual Life; and yet this great Effect is attributed to the Faith of it; and why? But becauſe it then works actually this way, when the Creature once depends upon it for this end.

2 Pet. i. 3. *According as his divine power hath given us all things pertaining to Life and Godlineſs, through the knowledge of him that hath called us to Glory and Vertue.* The Lord he calls, he invites to Glory, but it is by the way of Vertue: And therefore he exhorts them afterward, *ver.* 5. *To give all diligence to add to their Faith Vertue*; to their Faith of Salvation by Chriſt, as the end at which they aimed, the Vertue of a Godly Life, as the direct way thereto. *And the divine Power* (ſaith he) *hath given us all things pertaining to both*; both to Glory and Vertue, both to Life and Godlineſs; it hath made ſuch proviſion, and put things into ſuch a way, as that all things may be and are had of him by the Saints, that neceſſarily appertain to both: But mark how; *through the knowledge of him that hath called us to Glory and Vertue.* He does not communicate the ſpiritual Strength and Vigour, by which the Godly Life

is maintained, but through the Knowledge of himſelf, the Exerciſe of that ſpiritual Principle, which the Lord confers for that end. Which is not to be underſtood, neither only of a naked and bare Act of diſcerning how great and gracious the Lord is in making ſo liberal a Proviſion of all things pertaining to Life and Godlineſs, nor of a diſcerning of the Nature of the things themſelves, nor of God's Method and Terms of conferring them; but alſo of a practical Improvement of ſuch Light in ſuch a Dependence upon, and Application to the Lord for them, as puts a Man into a regular Capacity of receiving them, and under the powerful Influence of the Promiſe. And ſo Knowledge is not taken here as a thing diſtinct from Faith, but as comprehending it, as the Scripture elſewhere alſo ſometimes uſeth it, *John* xvii. 3. *Iſa.* liii. 11. 1 *John* v. 20.

Sect. III. 2. Chriſt Jeſus is the Principle of ſpiritual Life unto the Chriſtian; he from whoſe Grace, Power, and Vertue, the Chriſtian Graces both in Habit and Act receive Being, Motion, Activity, and Strength. He is the ſame to the Saints as the Body of the Vine is to the Branches, a means of Fruit-bearing by Communication of his Grace unto the Soul, as that of Sap to the Branches, *John* xv. The ſame to them as the Head is to the ſeveral Members of the Body, from which Nouriſhment and Growth, is miniſtred and conveyed, *Epheſ.* iv. 16. But yet Faith is the great Inſtrument of this ſpiritual Communication and Conveyance: As the Influence of the Sun which draws the Sap out of the Root into the Branches, or as the Pump between the Well and the Veſſel; ſo is Faith in deriving that Grace and Strength by which the ſpiritual Life is maintained, from Chriſt the Fountain of it. The poor Soul ſees a great Prize ſet before it, and that a Race is to be run to obtain it; the Hope of their calling high, but the Duties and Engagements of it great and many; and Strength little to make them good: But with all Learning, that Grace and Truth are in all their Fulneſs in Chriſt, *and that of his Fulneſs the Saints have all received, and Grace for Grace*, (John. i. 16.) and that the Invitation is general for every one that is a-thirſt to come; hereupon it runs to Chriſt for Supply of Strength, and depends upon him for it, and ſo accordingly ſpeeds. And as the Bucket of every Man's Faith is larger or leſſer, by which theſe Waters are drawn out of the Wells of Salvation; (*Iſa.* xii.) or theſe Wells more or leſs frequently viſited, ſo proportionably does every true Believer receive more or leſs of that Fulneſs which is in Chriſt.

See this Property in the Apoſtle St. *Paul*'s Faith, *Gal.* ii. 20. *I am crucified with Chriſt, nevertheleſs I live: Yet not I, but Chriſt lives in me; and the Life which I now live in the Fleſh, I live by the Faith of the Son of God, who loved me and gave himſelf for me.* Mark, he ſays that he lived, and yet he ſays too, that it was not he that lived, but Chriſt that lived in him: Meaning, I ſuppoſe, That his Converſation which he had here in the Fleſh, was ſo ordered by the Commands of Chriſt, and ſo influenced by the Grace and Power of Chriſt, that Chriſt was more viſible in St. *Paul*'s Life, than St. *Paul* was himſelf. But then the Queſtion is, How he came to have ſuch a Preſence of Chriſt, and his Life ſo ordered and influenced by Chriſt? The Account of this you have in the next words (I conceive:) *And the Life which I now live in the Fleſh, I live by the Faith of the Son of God:* Not only as being thereunto led motive-wiſe, from the Conſideration of the Worthineſs of his Perſon, and Profitableneſs of his Service: Nor yet only Direction-wiſe, according to the Tenour of the Doctrine of the Goſpel, which is the Doctrine of Faith; but alſo by his Faith as deriving that Power and Strength from Chriſt by depending upon him for it, by which he was enabled ſo to live and to make Chriſt ſo viſible in his Life, as that he could ſay, Not I, but Chriſt lives in me: *I can do all things through Chriſt which ſtrengtheneth me,* ſaid he in another Place, *Phil.* iv. 13.

And what ſhall we underſtand by *Chriſt's dwelling in the Heart by Faith?* The thing for which this Apoſtle ſo earneſtly prayed in the behalf of the *Epheſians*, Epheſ. iii. 17. Chriſt in the Heart where he dwells, he dwells not only to command and rule by his Authority, but alſo to ſupport, quicken, and ſtrengthen by his Grace, and comfort with his Love; to furniſh that Soul with what it wants; for where he dwells in this kind, he dwells to bleſs. But this Preſence of his reviving, quickening, ſtrengthening Grace in the Soul, is brought thither, abides there by Faith. Faith goes to Chriſt in the Heavens as having all Power in his hands, and tells him (as it were) that though he have laid the Foundation of Eternal Salvation for the poor Soul in his own Blood; yet conſidering what Enemies are to be conquered, and what Services to be performed, the Work is never like to be carried through, unleſs he furniſh with Supplies of Grace and Strength for that purpoſe. And then having this Encouragement to ſtrengthen it ſelf in this Addreſs, that this ſupply of Grace, which is deſired, does not amount to more than what he hath already freely done for the Soul, in laying down his own Life for its Ranſom, before ſuch a favour was ſought at his hands; and that thoſe Treaſures of Spiritual Life, Strength and Power, which are in his hand, are placed there on purpoſe to ſupply every needy Soul that thus ſeeks them; and that they will never turn to ſuch an account of Glory to him, while kept there, as when delivered out to every Soul that, in a true ſenſe of its own want of them and their worth, unfeignedly deſires them: And conſidering withal, how agreeable it is to the Goodneſs of Chriſt's own bleſſed Nature, and the general Deſign of his Mediatorſhip, and his faithfulneſs to that Truſt which is committed to him by his Father, to carry forward the begun-work of ſaving the Soul, and to be furniſhing forth Strength for the doing of what he gladly would have done, and which he knows cannot be done without it: I ſay, Faith being ſupported with ſuch like Conſiderations as theſe, in its application to Chriſt for Supplies, is confident of obtaining, and never leaves him, till it brings down the Vertue, Strength and Power of Chriſt into the Soul, to ſupply the wants thereof.

Sect. IV. 3. There are many fair and gracious Overtures in the Scriptures, of God's gracious Inclination and Intention to deliver the Soul from the dominion of Sin; to ſubdue the Iniquity of his People; to purge, purifie, and cleanſe the Soul from the Pollution of Sin; to heal the ſpiritual Diſtempers and Diſeaſes of the Soul; to reſtore Health and Soundneſs to it; to repair the Breach that Sin hath made there; to reſtore the Image of God, which is decayed in the Soul, and the like, *Rom.* vi. 14. *Mic.* vii. 19. 1 *Theſſ.* v. 23, 24. *Ezek.* xxxvi. 25, &c. *Iſai.* lvii. 18. *Hoſ.* xiv. 4. 2 *Pet.* i. 4. And yet this Grace of God is not wont to make any great or conſiderable progreſs in this Work, till Faith in Men draw this mortifying Power and healing Vertue from him. And Therefore the Purification of the Soul, and Sanctification of the Perſon, is ſometimes aſcribed unto their Faith, as well as unto the Power of God's Grace, *Acts* xv. 9. and xxvi. 18. And that it is ſo, is not only becauſe it is inſtrumental in the hand of God's Grace to effect it, but alſo becauſe it is a powerful means of attracting and drawing the Vertue, Power, and Grace of God to engage in this Work, God ſo pleaſing that it ſhould ſo do.

It fares with the Soul, in reſpect of Spiritual Diſeaſes, and the Cure of them now Chriſt is in Heaven, as it did with the Bodies of ſome, in reſpect of Natural Diſeaſes, and the Cure of them, when he was on Earth. There was always Power and Vertue enough in Chriſt to heal them, and yet the Cure was not wrought until Faith was ſet on work to draw out Vertue from Chriſt. The Woman that had an Iſſue of Blood twelve Years, though ſhe had uſed many means, and ſpent all upon the Phyſitians, yet was never cured, no not by Chriſt himſelf neither, until ſhe came to touch his Garment, and by her Faith drew Vertue from him, and then the Cure was ſoon wrought. Chriſt caſts her Cure upon her Faith, ſaying, *Daughter, thy Faith hath made thee whole*, Mark v. 34. Certainly it was the Power of Chriſt, and the Vertue that went out of him, that made her whole, *ver.* 30. But in as much as this was not drawn out into Act till her Faith was active in it, therefore is the Cure aſcribed unto her Faith. And upon like account is it, that we meet with ſuch paſſages as theſe; *If thou believeſt, all things are poſſible*, Mark ix. 23. *According to your Faith be it unto you*, Matth. ix. 29.

What is the reaſon, may we think, why ſo few of thoſe vaſt Multitudes in the World, that languiſh under their Spiritual Diſeaſes, are cured; but that for the generality of them they are like to die eternally of them? Certainly it is not becauſe there is not Vertue enough in Chriſt to heal them all; but the reaſon is, becauſe there is ſo few that touch him by Faith to draw Vertue out of him for their cure. Nay, they are afraid of being healed, like ſome Beggars who keep their Sores open and unhealed on purpoſe, becauſe they make an advantage of them, as they do of theirs, ſuch as it is, *Matth.* xiii. 15. *They have cloſed their Eyes*, &c. *leſt they ſhould be converted, and I ſhould heal them.*

And what's the reaſon why many that are in part healed, yet are not more thorowly cured? But that there are too many Signs and Symptoms of their old Diſeaſe ſtill hanging upon them, and many Grudgings of their old Fits; ſo that the Caſe remains in doubt with them, whether they ſhould live or die? Surely it is becauſe, though they have ſome kind of Faith, yet they do not exerciſe it about this thing, or but very little.

It may be they may have more Communion with the Riches of God's Grace, the Value and Efficacy of Chriſt's Blood in relation to pardon, and God's unwillingneſs to deſtroy, and readineſs to forgive poor Sinners; but have not acquainted themſelves much with that heavenly art and method of Faith, by which the Saints depend upon the Lord for his communication of Vertue and Strength for the healing of their Souls of Spiritual Diſtempers, and reſtoring them to a Spiritual Health and Soundneſs. There's no doubt but that the Lord Jeſus is as much affected with the Diſeaſes that annoy Men's Souls, as ever he was with thoſe that afflicted the Body, and delights every whit as much in the cure of the Spiritual, as ever he did in healing the Corporal; in as much as his Own glory and his Creatures good, are more concerned in theſe than in the other. But that which obſtructed the Cure of Men's Bodies (and Souls too) by Chriſt when he was on Earth, obſtructs the perfect Cure of Men's Souls by him now he is in Heaven, and that is the want of Faith in them that ſhould be cured: *Chriſt could do no mighty Works* in this kind, in ſome places where he came, (ſave on a very few that did believe) *becauſe of their Unbelief*, *Matth.* xiii. 58. compared with *Mark* vi. 5, 6. As it was in the Days of *Eliſeus* (as Chriſt obſerves) when there were many Lepers in *Iſrael* needed cleanſing as well as *Naaman* the *Syrian*, and yet none were cleanſed by the Prophet but *Naaman*; for that none but he had Faith to ſeek it, and qualifie them for it: So was it with many in *Iſrael* in the Days of Chriſt, who, though they had as much need of healing as any that were healed, yet went without it; for that they had not that Faith in the Lord, by which thoſe that were healed drew Vertue from him for their Cure, *Luke* iv. 23. with 27. and vi. 19. And ſo it is now; the true reaſon why the Leproſie of the Soul is not cured in all, as well as in ſome, is, becauſe they do not by Faith draw Vertue from Chriſt, in whom it is, for their Cure. It is not becauſe Chriſt is not as ſenſible of the Condition of Men now he is in Heaven, as he was while he was on Earth: *For we have not an High Prieſt which cannot be touched with the feeling of our Infirmities*, Heb. iv. 15. Nor is it becauſe he is not as able now both to compaſſionate and ſuccour them as ever: *For in that he himſelf hath ſuffered, being tempted, he is able to ſuccour them that are tempted*, Heb. ii. 18. But as, I ſay, the reaſon of Men's languiſhing under their Spiritual Diſeaſes, either without any Cure at all, or that which is very imperfect, is either becauſe they do not come to Chriſt at all for Cure, or but very faintly; either not knowing where it is to be had, or not truly and thorowly deſiring it of him, or not having confidence enough of obtaining it from him: *Ye will not come to me* (ſaith he) *that ye might have Life*, John v. 40. and therefore they go without it. And ſo if Men will not come to Chriſt for Health and Cure, no marvel if they remain Unhealthful in their Souls.

The Lord makes Promiſe, it's true, of *taking away the Old Heart*, and of *giving a New*, (which is but the removing of the Diſeaſe of the Soul, and giving it Health and Soundneſs) but yet ſo as that he will be ſought unto by Men to do it for them, *Ezek.* xxxvi. 26. with 37. So that if they do not make their ſerious and hearty Applications to him for it, upon the terms he hath appointed, they may well go without it, for all his willingneſs to give it. It is moſt ſure, that Chriſtians are more or leſs healthful in Soul and Spiritual Condition, as they do more or leſs depend upon the Lord for his ſaving Health, for the power and preſence of his Grace and Spirit to renew them unto God. If Men had but Faith enough, they might have what they would in this kind from the Lord. When there was but once ground for Chriſt to ſay, *O Woman, great is thy Faith*; he preſently ſays alſo, *Be it unto thee even as thou wilt*, Matth. xv. 28. And therefore ſuch as have but little Faith, had need to make the beſt uſe and improvement of that little, by depending upon the Lord for the perfecting of that which is lacking in their Faith, as well as any other Grace. Men receive but little of this healing Vertue from Chriſt, but little hatred of Sin, and ſtrength to overcome the Fleſh, but little of the power of Love and of an humble Mind, but little of the quick and lively Savour of Spiritual Things, becauſe they expect but little; if they were larger and ſtronger in their Expectations from God, they ſhould have more from him; he does not love to diſappoint his Servants of this Hope eſpecially: *Open your mouth wide, and I will fill it*, (ſaith he) *Pſal.* lxxxi. 10. *And thoſe that hunger and thirſt after Righteouſneſs ſhall be filled*, Matth. v. 6. If Righteouſneſs were but deſired and ſought at the hands of God, and he depended on for it, as Meat and Drink is wont to be deſired and ſought for by thoſe that are ready to famiſh for want of Food, (in which caſe no other thing but Food will ſatisfie) there would not be ſuch a Spiritual Leanneſs and Emptineſs found among Chriſtians, as too commonly there is. No, it is Mens Indifferency about Matters of this mighty Moment, that cauſes them to fall ſo ſhort, and to be ſo ſcanty in their Receptions from God. The Lord does not care to pour out abundance of inward Grace, and Health, and Strength upon the Soul, until the Soul knows the Worth of them, feels the want of them, and deſires them more than any thing in the World beſides. And therefore Men may ask them, and ſeek them, and yet go without any great Meaſures of them while but cold and indifferent in their Deſires this Way; but when their Deſires are ſtrong, their Confidence ſtrong, and their Requeſts fervent, and God can (as it were) have no reſt for them, but they are ſtill following of him Night and Day, and will have no nay; then does the Lord rejoice over them to anſwer them in the Joy of their Heart, and *to cauſe them to inherit Subſtance, and to fill their Treaſures. For he waits to be gracious*, and is always ready, and never unprovided of the greateſt Meaſures of Grace and ſpiritual Strength, and is more deſirous to give, than the beſt of Men are to receive, if they would but come up to his Terms, which are eſtabliſhed by him in Wiſdom and Counſel: But ſurely, when he hath firſt given Men Faith, he does not uſe to beſtow upon them any great Addition of ſpiritual Ability, but upon the Improvement and Exerciſe of that Faith in a way of Dependence upon himſelf for it; nor does he give much in this kind to thoſe that are but of little Faith; but encreaſes their ſpiritual Revenue, as they encreaſe in the meaſure and degree of their Reliance upon him for it.

Sect. V. 4. The Gift of the holy Spirit, by whoſe Preſence, Power, and Influence, the Saints Salvation muſt be wrought through, and they ſtrengthened with all might in the inward Man, (*Epheſ.* iii. 16.) and by whoſe Workmanſhip they are formed, faſhioned, and fitted for that Glory which is prepared for them: (2 *Cor.* v. 5.) This great Gift is, I ſay, received alſo by Faith, and conſequently it is the Property of true Faith indeed, to be buſied about the receiving of it. I ſhall not ſo much ſtand to make this out, by ſhewing you how the Scripture ſpeaks of Mens receiving the Spirit after they believed, as conſequentially thereunto, *Eph.* i. 13. *In whom alſo after that ye believed, ye were ſealed with the holy Spirit of Promiſe.* John vii. 39. *This he ſpake of the Spirit, which they that believe on him ſhould receive.* Acts xix. 2. *Have ye received the Holy Ghoſt ſince ye believed?* Though this alſo is worthy Conſideration hereabout. For though it's true, That Faith it ſelf in it's firſt Act, is raiſed by the holy Spirit in the Soul (1 *Cor.* xii. 9. *Gal.* v. 22. *Acts* xviii. 27. *Eph.* ii. 8.) ſo as to furniſh it with this Divine Principle and Power; for where elſe ſhould Man have it? And ſo in this reſpect the Spirit's work upon the Soul, goes before the Spirit's being received by that Divine Principle which is wrought by it; yet the giving and receiving of the Spirit to remain and abide as a conſtant Nouriſher and Supporter, Comforter, Guide, Leader, or Teacher, follows believing. I know not how better to illuſtrate this thing, than by this Similitude: A Man by Viſits, Addreſſes, and Applications of Love to ſuch or ſuch a Woman, raiſes in her ſuch Affections towards him, as by which afterward he is invited and drawn to become her Husband and conſtant Co-habitant, and to take upon him the Care and Management of her Houſhold-Affairs, which he would not have done, had he not been thereunto encouraged by thoſe Affections which were but the Fruit of his own Applications. Even ſo the Spirit by his Applications and Viſits, firſt raiſes in the Soul that Faith, by means whereof his Company and Preſence is ſo valued and deſired, as that thereby he is ſtrongly invited to come and dwell in that Soul, and to undertake the Management of the ſpiritual Affairs thereof, and upon which he does accordingly.

But that by which I would more expreſly and particularly make out, how the holy Spirit is by Faith invited to come and to make his uſual and conſtant abode in that Soul that does believe, I ſhall preſent to you under theſe three Heads:

Sect. VI. 1. The firſt is that which I but now hinted, *viz.* That Act of Faith, or Divine Light, by which a Chriſtian ſets a holy and very high Eſteem of the Spirit's Preſence, as not knowing how to live the Chriſtian Life, or to do the Goſpel-Work without it. For when the Soul enlightened and converted to God, is made to know that there is no inheriting without overcoming; (*Rev.* xxi. 7. and ii. 7, 11, 17, 26. and iii. 5, 12, 21.) and that the reaſon why any do overcome, is, *Becauſe greater is he that is in them, than he that is in the World*, (1 *John* iv. 4.) and is made to know likewiſe, That Men cannot mortifie the Deeds of the Body but by the Power and Strength of the Spirit, and yet mortified they muſt be, or elſe they muſt die; (*Rom.* viii.

13.) when they ſhall perceive, that they know not how to pray as they ought, or to do other Chriſtian Duties as they ſhould, but that it is the Spirit that helps the Saints Infirmities; (*Rom.* viii. 26.) I ſay, when a Chriſtian upon the Knowledge and Senſe of the abſolute Neceſſity of the Spirit's Preſence and Aſſiſtance, is made to value and deſire him more than any thing, than all things in this World; then is the Spirit given, and then does the Spirit delight to join himſelf to ſuch a Soul, and to make his conſtant abode there. But as for the Men of the World on the other hand, becauſe they are under no ſuch Senſe, they know him not, nor the Neceſſity and Worth of his Preſence, nor are under any longings of Soul after him for thoſe and the like ſpiritual Ends before-mentioned; therefore is it that they are in no preſent Capacity of receiving him.

See both theſe things ſet forth in *Joh.* xiv. 16, 17. *And I will pray the Father, and he ſhall give you another Comforter, that he may abide with you for ever: Even the Spirit of Truth, whom the World cannot receive, becauſe it ſeeth him not, neither knoweth him: But ye know him, for he dwelleth with you, and ſhall be in you.* Why cannot the World receive the Spirit of Truth which Chriſt promiſeth? Even *becauſe it ſeeth him not, neither knoweth him*: The Antecedent being (as I conceive) here put for the Conſequent of not *ſeeing* and *knowing him*; and that is, their not prizing nor deſiring him. For the Men of the World, who contrary to the Saints, walk by Sight and not by Faith; do not value and eſteem ſuch things whoſe Worth and Uſe are not diſcerned but by Faith, (1 *Cor.* ii. 14.) and ſuch is the Gift and Preſence of the Spirit of God; but ſuch things are Matters of their Eſteem, as do accommodate the natural Senſes. And becauſe they do not thus deſire him, out of a ſenſible Knowledge of his Worth and Excellency, and their want of him, therefore is it that they cannot receive him, he being not otherwiſe given than upon ſuch Terms. But why then do the Saints receive him? So that he dwelleth with them, and ſhall be in them. The Reaſon is, becauſe they know him, and ſo highly prize him, and thoroughly deſire him. For the Particle FOR in this place, (*but ye know him, FOR he dwelleth in you*) hath not, I conceive, the Force of a Cauſe, but of an Effect: Not as if the Reaſon why they knew him, is becauſe he dwelleth with them, but the Reaſon why he dwelleth with them, is, becauſe they know, or have known him. The ſame Particle being uſed in this ſenſe, *Luke* vii. 47. And indeed the words are thus tranſlated by Dr. *Hammond*; *But ye know him, therefore he abideth with you, and ſhall be among you.* And beſides all this, the Antitheſis that lies between the Reaſons, why the World cannot and the Saints can and do receive him, evidently gives this to be the right ſenſing of theſe words. For if that be the reaſon why the World cannot receive him, *viz.* becauſe it knoweth him not, as it is, then the reaſon why others do receive him, is that Knowledge they have of him, for the want of which the World cannot receive him.

That (we ſee then) which is ſaid of Wiſdom, *Prov.* viii. 17. is moſt true of this holy Spirit, which is the Spirit of Wiſdom: *I love them that love me, and thoſe that ſeek me early ſhall find me.* Thoſe that ſo love him out of a deep ſenſe of their extream want of him and his incomparable Worth to them, as to ſeek him early, in the firſt place, and before all other things, with the firſt of their Strength and Deſire, he loves them and loves to be found of them, and loves to dwell with them, and to be every good thing to them.

Sect. VII. 2. And the next Act of Faith which I would ſpeak of, as prevalent for the procuring the Spirits Reſidence in the Soul, for the great and ſpiritual Ends for which he is promiſed, is the Act of Reliance or Dependence upon the Father, and the Son for it. *Gal.* iii. 14. *That we might receive the Promiſe of the Spirit through Faith.* Through Faith: Not only concerning other Promiſes, but alſo and eſpecially touching ſuch as concern the Father and the Sons giving the holy Spirit; who becauſe he is given and received by Vertue of Promiſes made and embraced, is therefore ſtiled, *The holy Spirit of Promiſe*, Epheſ. i. 13. And Faith eying God's Knowledge and Senſe of the Creature's Condition in making ſuch a Promiſe, and in what need he was of the thing promiſed, and his Love and Friendſhip to him by engaging himſelf in ſuch a Promiſe which he needed not to have done, had not his Good-will been great to him, and that therefore his Intendment of doing the thing muſt needs be very thorough and real; and eying alſo his Faithfulneſs in keeping, and Power of performing Promiſes, hereupon leans, and depends upon the Lord for this Promiſe of the Spirit, and ſo accordingly receives it from him.

Sect. VIII. 3. And that in the Third place which follows upon the two former, is the Faith of deſiring him, and the Hope and Confidence of obtaining and receiving him, digeſted into inceſſant and fervent Prayer for him. For when the ſenſe of the Spirit's worth, and our want of him, renders him exceedingly deſirable unto the Soul; and when the ſenſe of the Father's good-will, and readineſs to give him, by his promiſe of giving him, and by what he hath done already in giving Chriſt when we needed him, ſhall prompt the Soul with Confidence of obtaining him; and the ſenſe of all together ſhall diſpoſe the Soul Prayer-wiſe, and influence the Prayer with much of Deſire and Longing, with much of Earneſtneſs, Importunity, and Perſeverance in Begging, and with much of Confidence in Expecting; then undoubtedly will the Holy Spirit be obtained as an Inhabitant to the Soul: For ſo hath the Lord aſſured us, ſaying, *If ye then, being evil, know how to give good gifts unto your Children: how much more ſhall your heavenly Father give the Holy Spirit to them that ask him?* Luke xi. 13.

Sect. IX. This Property in Faith, of which I have now ſpoken, humbly to depend on God for Spiritual Supplies, for maintenance of Spiritual Life, and to be ſtrengthened unto Spiritual Work, is I am perſuaded that which puts a manifeſt difference between the Living and the Dead Faith. For the Dead Faith being found in that Nature which never underwent ſuch a Change yet, as will denominate it to be a new Creature, is void of Spiritual Senſe, perceives not the neceſſity of thoſe Spiritual Supplies, which are the new Creature's Life and Nouriſhment, nor feels the want of them, and therefore cannot long after them, nor depend on God for them; but ſuch an one thinks himſelf in excellent good Condition, becauſe he believes Chriſt died for him, and that he hath been Baptized in his Name, and hath Communion in his Ordinances, and gives Chriſt good Words, and profeſſes himſelf to be his Servant, and can Diſcourſe (it may be) many Points in the Chriſtian Religion, and poſſibly Diſpute for them too; yea, which is more, poſſibly may be able to ſpeak many things in the Theory and by Hear-ſay, touching the Work of the New Creature, and theſe Spiritual Supplies, of which I now ſpeak; and yet all this while void of any true Senſe of the power of them upon his own Heart.

But on the other hand, the living Faith being the Heaven-born Principle of the New Creature, which is it ſelf born from above, does ſtill diſpoſe and encline it to look up to God, the ſame Fountain of Grace, for daily Supplies, from which it at firſt received its new and ſpiritual Being. As God hath placed in Nature a certain Inſtinct among the Creatures, by which, as ſoon as they are brought forth, they do with a kind of dependence ſeek their Nouriſhment from their Dams; ſo hath he likewiſe placed a ſpiritual Inſtinct in the new Creature, which enclines and guides it to himſelf, as ſoon as it is born from above, to ſeek its Food from God.

Sect. X. And the main Reaſon, I conceive, why many Perſons, who have flouriſhed like a green Bay-tree in the Chriſtian Profeſſion for a time, have yet afterwards ſhamefully miſcarried and fallen away, (of which this Age affords too many ſad Inſtances) hath been this: They have not been cloſe in their dependence upon God for Supplies of Strength to encounter the Motions of the Fleſh, and Temptations from Spiritual Enemies; they have not had, or have loſt the Senſe of their own Weakneſs, and what Children they are in the hands of their Spiritual Enemies, if God ſhould but a little withdraw and leave them; but having received (it may be) many Spiritual Gifts, and many Favours from God, they have grown Confident, Bold, and preſuming upon the Stock they have already received; and being a little ſpiritually intoxicated with drinking too deeply of their own Cup, and fallen too much in love with themſelves, by viewing their Beauty in their own Glaſs, have forgotten themſelves, and their own Weakneſs, and forgotten God their Strength, and ſo have come down wonderfully, God taking no pleaſure in them, but leaving them to fall, and to be an Admonition and Warning to thoſe that yet ſtand, to take heed leſt they alſo fall.

Sect. XI. Whereas others again, that have been but poor and low, and exceeding weak in Parts and Gifts, yet always bearing about them the ſenſe of their own Meanneſs and Weakneſs, and withal retaining a good Perſuaſion of God's ſupporting Grace and Good-will towards them; and in the ſenſe of both, depending upon him to be upheld, kept and maintained in Grace, have hereupon retained their Spiritual Verdure, when others have withered; have been holpen with a little ſtrength, and ſate ſafely under the ſhadow of the Almighty, when many tall Cedars in the Mountains have fallen in the ſtormy Day. Theſe poor Souls, being jealous of themſelves, and of their own ſtrength, dare not truſt themſelves with themſelves, or at any diſtance from God, but follow him cloſe, begging him to help and to uphold them, and to keep them from falling, who in that caſe is willing to be intreated. *Pſal.* lxiii. 8. *My ſoul followeth hard after thee*, (and what of that?) *thy right hand upholdeth me:* If the Soul follow him for it in good earneſt, it ſhall have it. *They are kept by the power of God* (ſaith the Apoſtle) *through Faith unto Salvation*, 1 Pet. i. 5. Mark it; They are kept by the Power of God, and yet through Faith. Why is Faith joined with the Power of God? Alas! it's but a poor, weak, feeble thing of it ſelf; but its happineſs is, it lives in the ſtrength of another, it carries the Soul out of its own ſhelter, and leads it unto a Rock that is higher than it; it takes hold of God's Almighty Strength, and intereſſeth it ſelf and the poor Creature in that: And the Power of God is well content, that Faith ſhould be buſie with it, and as confident of it, and of its improvement for ſuch a Soul's good, as if it were in its own poſſeſſion, and under its own diſpoſal. Though it is the Power of God by which the Soul is kept, yet it is the Power of God leaned upon through Faith, which is the leaning and depending Grace. The Power of God could uphold all, but it is not its pleaſure ſo to do, but only thoſe that through Faith hold by it.

And as by how much the more Men live out of themſelves, and depend upon the Lord, by ſo much the ſafer they are, and at the greater diſtance from falling; ſo likewiſe by how much the more entire and cloſe Men's dependence is upon God for Spiritual Supplies, for a Spiritual Frame of Mind, for God to write his Law in the Heart, and to maintain a good ſavour in the Soul of God and all good things; for a Spiritual Liberty and Enlargement of Soul in God's ways, for to be ſtrengthened with all might by his Spirit in the inner Man, and the like; by ſo much the more does the Lord give forth of theſe and like good things unto ſuch. The cloſer they lie, and the more they draw at thoſe ſpiritual Breaſts, the more they receive, the more they thrive. *Bleſſed is the Man* (ſaid he) *that truſteth in the Lord, and whoſe Hope the Lord is: for he ſhall be as a Tree planted by the Waters, and that ſpreadeth out the roots by the River, and ſhall not ſee when heat cometh, but her leaf ſhall be green, and ſhall not be careful in the year of drought, neither ſhall ceaſe from yielding fruit.* Where we clearly ſee, That Faith, Truſt, Dependence on God, puts a Man under a like capacity for the flouriſhing Eſtate of his Soul, in reſpect of ſpiritual Lovelineſs, Beauty, and Fruitfulneſs, as a Tree is of the utmoſt Proſperity, ſuch a Creature is capable of, by being planted by Waters and Rivers, in thoſe dry Countries.

And as the more Men thus depend on God for Supplies, the more they receive, and the more ſpiritual they grow; ſo on the other hand too, the more ſpiritual and the more ſtrong in the Lord Men grow, the more ſenſible do they grow of their own frailty and weakneſs, and the more emptied of all Self-confidence, and their thoughts running more upon the Grace of God, and Strength of Chriſt, and Preſence of the Spirit, and the neceſſity of theſe; prizing theſe more, deſiring theſe more, following God more for them, depending on him more to receive them at his hands. And ſo proportionably are they the more ready and the more enlarged to attribute and aſcribe all Spiritual Incomes, all Spiritual Endowments, all Operations of Grace, all Strength and Ability of Acting and Doing in the Lord's Work, unto the Lord from whom all comes, and to ſay with him, 1 *Chron.* xxix. 14. *But who am I that I ſhould be able to offer ſo willingly after this ſort: for all things come of thee, O Lord, and of thine own have we given thee.*

Sect. XII. And however God hath (as I conceive) vouchſafed, by the Gift of Jeſus Chriſt for all, ſuch means and opportunities of Grace, even unto thoſe that ſhall periſh, and ſo much power and ability of improving thoſe Means and Opportunities for the end for which God gives them, as will diſcharge the Lord of their Condemnation, and caſt their loſs of Salvation wholly upon themſelves; yet I cannot but fear that many make that Ability which God hath given unto the Creature on this behalf, greater in their own Thoughts, than it is in it ſelf. And I am not without fears too, leſt the large Apprehenſions which ſome have touching the Power of the Creature, and what all Men are able to do out of the ſtock of common Grace wherewith God hath prevented them, and what others are able to do out of that ſtock of ſpecial Grace with which God hath bleſſed them, ſhould have betrayed them into too low and too narrow Apprehenſions touching the neceſſity of additional Supplies from God for the iſſuing of common Grace into ſpecial, and for the maintenance, activity, and growth of ſpecial Grace it ſelf. And there is too much cauſe to fear alſo, That the largeneſs of many's Apprehenſions touching what God hath already given in this kind, hath contributed much towards the making of their Dependence upon God low and little, and their Applications to him weak and faint for farther Supplies, and conſequently their Receptions in this kind, to amount but to little.

Which if ſuch a thing be (as is too much cauſe to fear) then I am perſuaded that this is the true reaſon why many whoſe Judgments run too much this way, are leſs ſpiritual, are flatter and duller Chriſtians, leſs verſed in the Work of God upon the Heart, whoſe Religion lies more in Matters of a controverſial and diſputable Nature, or in Matters of external Form and Order. And while Men are buſied and taken up with the Skirts and Borders of Religion, and in the mean while neglect their inward and cloſe Communion with God, and ſtudy of their own Hearts, and their ſpiritual Trade and Intercourſe with God, it's no marvel if they be found but huskiſh, dry, and barren in the Power of Holineſs, and experimental part of a Chriſtian. For ſurely the Spirit of God does not take Pleaſure in this or that Opinion which Men hold in Religion, but as it ſerves them in bringing them nearer to him, and cauſing them to prize him, and his Grace and Preſence more; and working in them a greater Love of his Likeneſs, and longing after the Power of his Grace to conform them to it.

Nor is the other extream Opinion touching Mens being meer *Paſſives* in the hand of Grace, and that Grace always works its Effects in Men in an irreſiſtible way, any better Friend (I conceive) to the thriving way of depending upon God for more Grace in a due Uſe of what they have already received. For as the Opinion of Mens having more Power than they have, or that that Power which they have, is more conducible to the principal End, Salvation, than indeed it is, obſtructs their Applications to, and Dependence upon God for what is indeed neceſſary on this behalf; ſo does an Opinion of having received no Power at all, freez the Soul, and bind up the Faculties of it from uſing and improving that Power which it hath from God, in ſeeking of more, and conſequently deprives them of receiving more, or at leaſt of ſo much more, as otherwiſe they might have.

Sect. XIII. All which I have noted for *Caution*, leſt while Men are ſtriving who ſhall approve themſelves the greateſt Friends to the Grace of God in point of Opinion, they ſhould in the mean while fall ſhort of the powerful and ſaving Effects of it in their own Hearts. And ſince the end of all Doctrines and Ordinances in Religion, and conſequently of every particular Branch, Point, and Opinion concerning them, is to bring Men back again to God, and to reſtore them to his Likeneſs and Similitude; it concerns every Man therefore in his holding and managing any Matters of Controverſie hereabout, to be ſo true to his own and others Souls, as thereby to drive on the principal end of all, and to ſteer himſelf in holding or letting go Opinions, as they appear conſonant or repugnant to that end.

CHAP. XI.

Shewing how Faith worketh by Love, both to God and Man.

Sect. I. THere is one Property more of Faith, which I have had oft occaſion to mention, but ſhall now a little farther enlarge on, and ſo conclude this part of my Diſcourſe, touching the Nature of Faith. And this Quality in Faith is, that Property of it by which it works by Love, which is made the Badge and Character of that Faith that ſhall avail Men. *Gal.* v. 6. *For in Jeſus Chriſt, neither Circumciſion availeth any thing, nor Uncircumciſion, but Faith which worketh by Love.* As the Apoſtle ſhews that not Circumciſion but Faith avails Men under the Goſpel, ſo he ſhews too, what manner of Faith it is that does ſo; namely, ſuch as works by Love: Not every Faith that is ſo called, but that Faith which is thus diſtinguiſhed. So that it concerns every one as he deſires to have ſomething that will avail him in the ſight of God and in the great Concernments of his Soul, not only to prove himſelf to be in the Faith, but to prove his Faith to be that Faith which will avail him, by this Operation of it here ſpecified. When he ſays, that Faith works by Love, I take it for granted, that he means Love both to the Lord and unto Men; for they go together as inſeparable Companions: *Every one that loveth him that begat, loveth him alſo that is begotten of him*, 1 John v. 1. *And he that loveth not his Brother whom he hath ſeen, how can he love God, whom he hath not ſeen?* 1 John iv. 20.

But then the Queſtion will be, *How Faith works by Love?* And the Anſwer is, *It does ſo:* Firſt, by working this Grace, Heavenly Qualification, Spiritual Affection, or Principle in the Soul; and ſo in the ſecond place, diſpoſing the Man in whom it is, by means of this Principle, unto a Deportment and Actions ſuitable to ſuch an Affection. And this I would ſet out in two things eſpecially:

Sect. II. 1. Firſt, Faith raiſes this Principle of Love in the Soul both to God and Men, by having it ſelf ſo much to do with the Love of the Lord, as indeed it hath. For the Love of God and Jeſus Chriſt to poor Man, is the very Element in which Faith lives, the Food and Nouriſhment upon which it continually feeds, the lovely and moſt beautiful Object which it delights continually to behold; lodges in the Boſom of it, and finds no reſt but in this Bed of Love. Faith is wonderfully intent upon it, exceeding buſie with it, and marvellous curious in its Inſpections into, and enquiries about it, 1 *John* iv. 16. *We have known and believod the Love that God hath to us.* And by reaſon of Faith's free, frequent, familiar, and intimate Converſe and delightful Communication which it hath with this Love of the Lord, it comes to contract an habitual Similitude of it in the Soul; by degrees to change the Soul into the ſame Image. *Solomon* ſaith, *He that walketh with wiſe Men, ſhall be wiſe*, Prov. xiii. 20. Which thing doubtleſs proceeds from a great Aptneſs that is in Men, to be transformed into the Diſpoſition, Temper, and Quality of thoſe Perſons with whom they much converſe, and delight ſo to do; eſpecially if ſuperior to themſelves, and judging what they ſee in them worthy Imitation. And ſo Faith keeping ſuch conſtant Company with the Love of Chriſt to the poor Soul, and being ſo much taken with it as it is, and having it ſelf ſuch an Influence upon the Soul as it hath, does by degrees fetch over the Soul in Conformity of Diſpoſition to it.

This is ſweetly ſet out by the Apoſtle, 2 *Cor.* iii. 18. *But we all with open Face, beholding, as in a Glaſs, the Glory of the Lord, are changed into the ſame Image, from Glory to Glory, as by the Spirit of the Lord.* The Glory of the Lord he here ſpeaks of, is doubtleſs amongſt other things, the Grace or Love of the Lord to Men, which is indeed his Glory; that by which *he hath made us accepted in the beloved*, being called *the Glory of his Grace*, Epheſ. i. 6. and is that thing which in the Goſpel Miniſtration here ſpoken of, ſhines forth with greateſt Luſtre and Brightneſs. But mark now: The Soul's intent and earneſt beholding of this Glory of the Lord by the Eye of Faith, as it is viſible to it in this Glaſs of the Goſpel, works this Effect; the Soul it ſelf is hereby changed into the ſame Image, transformed into this Likeneſs of the Lord, Step by Step, Degree by Degree, from Glory to Glory, as by the Spirit of the Lord, by whoſe Influence Faith does this thing. For ſo Chriſt foretold, *John* xvi. 14. *He ſhall glorifie me: for he ſhall receive of mine, and ſhall ſhew it unto you.* Like as the Flocks which *Jacob* kept, by their looking upon the ſtreaked Rods in the time of their Conception, came to conceive and bring forth Cattle that were ring-ſtreaked, *Gen.* xxx. 37, 38, 39. even ſo the Soul by Faith dwelling in the ſerious and pleaſant Contemplation of the Glory of this Love of the Lord, conceives and brings forth Affections and Actions in the ſame Likeneſs.

The very Reaſon why any Man comes to love God, is the Belief, Knowledge, and Senſe which he hath of God's Love to him firſt, 1 *John* iv. 19. *We love him, becauſe he loved us firſt.* Which is to be underſtood of God's Love believed and perceived; for till then it does not work this reciprocal Affection in the Soul. And therefore the ſame Apoſtle concludes, that *if any Man does not love, he does not know God*, as he is a God of Love, 1 *John* iv. 8. For if he did, and had the true Senſe of it in his Soul, he might ſooner draw nigh a great Fire and not be warm'd, than feel the warming Influences of this wonderful Love play hot upon the Soul, and not in ſome meaſure be transformed into its Likeneſs. The Apoſtle St. *Paul* well knowing this, made this Prayer for the *Epheſian* Saints, *That Chriſt might dwell in their Hearts by Faith, that they being rooted and grounded in Love, might be able to comprehend with all Saints, what is the breadth, and length, and depth, and height, and to know the Love of Chriſt which paſſeth Knowledge, that they might be filled with all the Fulneſs of God.* In which Prayer you may obſerve, firſt, his End and Scope; the thing he had in his Eye, and that which his Soul exceedingly longed after for them, and that was, That *they might be filled with all the Fulneſs of God.* Which, I conceive, is not to be underſtood, at leaſt not only to be underſtood in a Paſſive Senſe, of having the Soul filled with the Knowledge and Senſe of all the Fulneſs of God's Love to it; for this he had prayed for as the means of their being filled with all this Fulneſs of God: But in an active Senſe, for their being ſo filled with their Love back again to Chriſt, as by which to attain the higheſt pitch, and utmoſt Perfection of Chriſtianity (which is wrapt up in our Love to Chriſt) to which God in Chriſt deſigned to elevate and raiſe the Chriſtian. And therefore when we love one another as the Lord hath loved us, according to his Command, *John* xiii. 34. he is ſaid to *dwell in us, and his Love to be perfected in us,* 1 Cor. iv. 12. *viz.* by way of Imitation and Reſemblance of that Divine Vertue, Property, or Perfection in God; to wit, his Love, which is ſo wonderfully remarkable in him, as that he is called Love it ſelf, 1 *John* iv. 8, 16. Now for God to dwell in Men, and for them to have his Love perfected in them, what is this leſs than to be filled with all the Fulneſs of God? But that which the Apoſtle prayed for, in order to this their being filled with all the Fulneſs of God, was *that Chriſt dwelling in their Hearts by Faith, they might be able to comprehend with all Saints, what the breadth, length, depth, and height is, and to know the Love of Chriſt which paſſeth Knowledge.* So that Mens being filled with the Fulneſs of that Love to the Lord, which his Love to them calls for, and deſigns to procure, depends (we ſee) upon their comprehending by Faith the Glory of his Love ſet out in the Dimenſions of it: Upon their knowing very much of that Love of Chriſt, which in the utmoſt Extent of it paſſeth Knowledge.

Sect. III. 2. Faith raiſes this Heavenly Affection of Love in the Soul, as a Principle of worthy Behaviour both to God and Men, by an effectual cloſing with the Doctrine of the Lord concerning Love. For it is Mens Faith in that Word which calls for Love to the Lord, to Saints, and to all Men, that cauſes the Word to incorporate it ſelf with the Soul, turning the Doctrine of Love into a Principle of Love in the Soul, making it an *ingrafted Word,* (*James* i. 21.) as turning the Stock into its own Nature. It is by Faith that all That in the Word is diſcerned and felt, which renders it acceptable to, and gives it Force and Authority in the Soul: And therefore the Word is ſaid *to work effectually in thoſe that believe,* 1 Theſſ. ii. 13. And what's that but to produce its Effect, reach its End, and to have its Errand about which it's ſent? Working that Love it ſelf in the Soul, which is the Buſineſs about which the Doctrine of Love is ſent. And therefore *Love* is ſaid to be *the end of the Commandment, out of a pure Heart and of a good Conſcience, and of Faith unfeigned,* 1 Tim. i. 5. Love to proceed from unfeigned Faith, as the end of the Commandment; that is, I conceive, its Aim and Scope, the Prize for which it runs: And where there is Faith unfeigned firſt wrought and procured by the Word; there the Word by means of this Faith, works effectually to the raiſing or producing of that Love, which is the End or Deſign of the Commandment.

It's ſaid of ſome (*Heb.* iv. 2.) that *the Word did not profit them, not being mixed with Faith in them that heard it.* The Word is then ſaid not to profit Men, when it loſes the End and Deſign of good towards them; when it does not work in them, and procure from them that Frame and Diſpoſition of Soul, and Habit of Behaviour, which does anſwer its Nature and Scope: As when the Doctrine of Love is preached to them, and yet no ſuch thing is wrought in them. But the Cauſe of this Diſappointment, is the not mixing the Word with Faith. If Men do not verily believe it to be a Word from the Lord, or that it comes from him upon like or far better Terms than hearty Counſel from a Friend, as both able and faithful to adviſe and direct upon the beſt Terms for Good; or if they think themſelves and their own Good not much concerned in it, and the like; no marvel if it profit them not, if it procure not that Compliance from them which ſhould give it an abiding Place in the Soul, to work there as Seed does which is wont to bring forth Fruit according to its kind. But where the Word, the Doctrine of Love for Example, is mixed with Faith, with reſpect to the Authority, Power, Wiſdom, Deſign of Good in the Author, and the Conducibleneſs of the Word it ſelf to the real and ſubſtantial Happineſs and Felicity of the Perſon himſelf in whom this Faith is, there it proſpers in the thing for which it is ſent.

Sect. IV. Having now thus ſhewed how Faith works by Love, by contributing to its Being, and conſequently to its Motions and Operations; and conſidering that Faith's working by Love is the Characteriſtical Mark, and Diſtinguiſhing Property of that Faith which ſhall avail Men unto Salvation; let us now put our ſelves upon the Tryal of our Faith, and ſo upon our Title to Life by this Evidence. And I will begin with that Love which is wrought by Faith to the Lord.

Hath then the Sight and Senſe which Faith hath given you of the wonderfulneſs of the Father's Love, and of the Son's Love, in doing, ſuffering, and deſigning ſuch marvellous things for Perſons ſo unworthy of them, and ſo worthy of what is directly contrary to them as we are, as may well aſtoniſh the Rational part of the whole Creation: I ſay, hath the Sight and Senſe of this divine Fire of Love kindled upon your Souls, and cauſed a heavenly Burning of Affection to the Lord? Hath the Senſe which Faith hath given you of his Love to you, exceedingly endeared your Souls by way of return in love to him? Hath your Faith opened ſuch a paſſage for Chriſt's Love to come at the Soul, as that you can ſay with the Saints of old, *The love of Chriſt conſtraineth us, becauſe we thus judge, that if one died for all, then were all dead: and that he died for all, that they which live, ſhould not henceforth live unto themſelves, but unto him which died for them, and roſe again?* 1 Cor. v. 14, 15. Hath it ſuch a force and influence upon you, in cauſing you to devote your ſelves, your Lives to him, as his Love to you had upon him, in cauſing him to give his Life for you, and himſelf unto you?

Sect. V. 1. To what degree any Man or Woman loves another, to the ſame degree they are uſually wont to be deſirous and careful to pleaſe them. And therefore the Apoſtle ſuppoſeth this to be the natural effect of that conjugal Relation and Affection that is between Husband and Wife, *viz.* the one's caring to pleaſe her Husband, and the other's caring to pleaſe his Wife, 1 *Cor.* vii. 33, 34. And there's no doubt but it is ſo with all thoſe that love the Lord indeed, the more they abound in that Affection to him, the more deſirous, the more thoughtful, and the more careful are they how to pleaſe the Lord in every thing they do, and in every thing he would have done. And therefore the Scripture meaſures Men's Love to the Lord by their Care to do his Commands, which are indeed the things that pleaſe him. 1 *John* v. 3. *For this is the Love of God, that we keep his Commandments.* And again, *John* xiv. 15. *If ye love me, keep my Commandments.* And ver. 21. *He that hath my Commandments, and keepeth them, he it is that loveth me.* And again ver. 23. *If a Man love me, he will keep my Words.* And yet again, ver. 24. *He that loveth me not, keepeth not my Sayings.* 1 John ii. 5. *But whoſo keepeth his Word, in him verily is the Love of God perfected.* And therefore when Men are not full of thought and care about what will pleaſe, and what will diſpleaſe the Lord, and deſirous and induſtrious to come at his Mind hereabout; but are untender, and do things at a venture, either in his Worſhip, their own Calling, or in their Converſe with Men, not *laying it cloſe to the Heart to give Glory to God in all,* it argues that things are not yet as they ſhould be with them in their Love to the Lord.

Sect. VI. 2. Again, where the Soul by means of Faith hath had a taſte of the exceeding Sweetneſs and Preciouſneſs of the Lord's Love, (1 *Pet.* ii. 3. *If ſo be ye have taſted that the Lord is gracious)* and is thereby brought in love with his Love, as highly prizing it, and the ſenſe of it, there the Soul will be wonderfully fearful of acting or doing any thing that might make any breach between the Lord and it, that might offend or grieve him, or that ſhould cauſe him to turn away in diſpleaſure, or to hide his face, or to with-hold the influences of his quickning and comforting Grace. And if at any time, through want of care and watchfulneſs, ſuch a Soul hath been ſurprized, and drawn to ſpeak or act, yea though but in the inmoſt parts of the Soul, that which tends to grieve the Spirit, to provoke the Lord, and to work any Eſtrangement; O what humbling is there! what taking of ſhame! what begging, crying, and earneſt intreating, that God would paſs it by, that it might not obſtruct the courſe of their Communion with the Lord! And if it hath wrought any diſtance, and the Lord hath hereupon withdrawn himſelf a little, O how the poor Soul is caſt down! how earneſt in her purſuit after her Beloved, that hath withdrawn himſelf, and is gone! and how reſtleſs till the Breach be made up, and the Lord hath ſmiled again upon the Soul by ſome gracious effects of his Preſence there! Such things as theſe are undoubtedly found, in greater or leſſer proportion, where true and entire Love to the Lord hath been raiſed by Faith in the Soul, *Pſal.* li. 7,——12. *Cant.* v. 2,——8.

Sect. VII. 3. Farthermore, to what degree Faith works by Love to the Lord, to the ſame degree it caſts Fear out of the Soul; I mean, fear of ſuffering Reproach, Shame, Diſgrace, the loſs of Friends, Eſtates, Liberties, and Lives for the Lord, for adhering to Him, his Truth and Cauſe: So ſaith the Apoſtle, 1 *John* iv. 18. *There is no fear in love, but perfect love caſteth out fear; becauſe fear hath torment: he that feareth is not made perfect in love.* It's true, where love to Chriſt is not predominant in the Soul, but though a Man hath ſome love to Him, yet hath more to Himſelf, Relations, and Worldly Intereſt, there, when Chriſt and theſe come in competition, the fear of the loſs of theſe will caſt love to Chriſt out of the Soul, *Matth.* xxiv. 12. *Becauſe Iniquity* (to wit, of Perſecution) *ſhall abound, the love of many ſhall wax cold, viz.* to Chriſt and to his Goſpel. But where a Man loves Chriſt more than all other things which he hath loved, or does love in this World, (as he that loves Chriſt ſincerely and ſavingly does, *Matth.* x. 37.) there his love prevails againſt his fear, and caſts it out of poſſeſſion. Not that he that loves Chriſt truly and ſincerely, is not troubled at all with fear of loſing that which is dear to him in the World for Chriſt's ſake; for ſomething in that kind is ſurely incident to the beſt of Men, (1 *Cor.* ii. 3.) but ſuch a Man's love to Chriſt gets the maſtery of his fears, is ſtronger to hold him to Chriſt, though in danger of loſing all in this World but him, than are his fears of loſing all for his ſake to cauſe him to deſert him. If fear in this kind do ariſe in the Soul, and work trouble and torment there, and fill the Heart with diviſions of thoughts, and ſome degrees of feebleneſs and fainting for a little time; yet by that time Love to Chriſt hath but muſtered up its forces, and called in and ſtrengthened it ſelf with Conſiderations near at hand, and ready to offer themſelves to ſuch an one's ſervice, Fear is driven out of the Soul, and the Tumult which Fear had cauſed there is appeaſed, the Storm laid, and all things reduced unto a peaceable calm; and then Love begins to triumph, and to ſay, *Who ſhall ſeparate me from the Love of Chriſt? Rom.* viii. 35. But if a Man ſo fears, as that his Fears drive him from his Duty, hurry him into acts of Diſloyalty to his Lord, and put him upon diſgracing Chriſt and his Truth; ſuch a Man's *love to Chriſt*, whatever otherwiſe it may be, *is not* (according to St. *John*'s Phraſe) *made perfect: He that feareth, is not made perfect in love*; his Love is not of the perfect and right kind.

But where Love to Chriſt is prevalent and predominant, there it is ſtrong as Death, (*Cant.* viii. 6.) which we know is ſo ſtrong, that all the Oppoſition that Men, by their Wit and Wealth, Policy and Power, can make againſt it, will not turn it out of its way. Of which conquering ſtrength in Love, proof hath been made many and many a time by the faithful Martyrs of Jeſus, whoſe love to him hath held it out againſt all manner of Enticements and Allurements on the one hand, and all the variety of the moſt horrid and dreadful Torments on the other hand, which the Wit and Malice of Men, aſſiſted by the Policy and Rage of Hell, could invent, whereby to take them off their entireneſs of Affection to their Redeemer. *Many Waters cannot quench Love, neither can the Floods drown it: if a Man would give all the ſubſtance of his houſe for Love, it would utterly be contemned*, Cant. viii. 7.

Neither does this *Love to Chriſt*, when thus proved, only conquer, and barely get the Victory over the World, as it does when it holds its own againſt all its attempts, (1 *John* v. 4.) but it makes a *Chriſtian more than Conqueror*, when his Love ſhall hereby get more ſtrength and vigour than it had before, as it does when Chriſt giving a clearer viſion, and more lively taſte of his Love at ſuch a time, than at any other, (as uſually he does) ſhall thereby endear himſelf farther to the Soul, and render himſelf more precious, and the world leſs deſirable than ever before. *Nay, in all theſe things* (ſaith he) *we are more than Conquerors through him that loved us*, Rom. viii. 37. Men by this manifeſtation and proof of their *Love to the Lord* (I mean, in ſuffering for him) ſhoot themſelves farther into his Love, and conſequently draw forth richer Diſcoveries of it to themſelves than formerly; according to *Prov.* viii. 17. *I love them that love me.* And *John* xiv. 21. *He that hath my Commandments, and keepeth them, he it is that loveth me; and he that loveth me, ſhall be loved of my Father, and I will love him, and will manifeſt my ſelf to him.* Where we ſee the proof of a Chriſtian's love to the Lord, is anſwered with a gracious return of the Lord's love back again to him: *He that loveth me, ſhall be loved of my Father, and I will love him.* And the Lord is ſo well pleaſed herewith, that he muſt needs let the poor Soul know how he is taken with his love, and how his Soul is as it were more knit to him: For he does not only ſay that *he will love him*, but that *he will manifeſt himſelf to him, viz.* in clearer diſcoveries of his Love than formerly; which we know too is wont greatly to increaſe the Chriſtian's Love to the Lord. So that ſincere Love to the Lord, when it is thus put upon the tryal, does not only caſt out Fear, but it does more too, it gathers and contracts an additional ſtrength and increaſe.

Which Conſideration, that Love does not only caſt out Fear in the time of Fear, but prefers a Man both in the Lord's Love to him, and his own Love to the Lord, ſerves not only for a Proof and Tryal of the Sincerity of our Faith, which yet is one thing which it does, (for it's Faith that gets the Victory in this kind, 1 *John* v. 4. only it works out this Victory by Love) but alſo is an excellent Encouragement for Men, not to be afraid and ſhie of ſuffering for Chriſt, or any Truth of his, in which he may be owned. Let it not ſeem a ſmall thing in any Man's Eye, that he hath hereby (when it comes) a ſpecial Opportunity and Advantage miniſtred unto him, of being enlarged in the Lord's Love to him, and in his Love to the Lord, and in the Evidence of both unto his own Soul; which is indeed a Privilege to them that know the Worth of it, of no mean Account. And as you would have the Proof and Evidence both of your Faith and Love, and of your Faith by your Love come fairly out, ſo take heed of all undue and carnal Compliance with Worldly-minded Men; either in ſaying or doing any thing that may bear hard upon the Honour and Intereſt of Chriſt, his People, Ordinances, or holy Ways, out of Deſign to preſerve your own Reputation, or Worldly Intereſt with them, and to defend your ſelves from their Frowns and Contempt, and from the Scourge of their Tongue: For a Compliance in ſuch things as theſe where it is found, argues Falſeneſs of Heart to the Lord Jeſus.

Sect. VIII. 4. One thing farther (to name no more, though many more Particulars of this kind might be touched) by which you may know your Love to Chriſt to be ſuch as will evidence your Faith which produces it to be of the true ſort, and right kind, is this: If your Belief in Chriſt, and your Love to Chriſt, hath wrought in you a Love of, and a looking and longing for his next Appearance; when he will ſo come to receive the Saints unto himſelf, as that *they ſhall be ever with the Lord.* For while Men are better pleaſed with his Abſence, and to remain at this diſtance, it argues little Love in them to him: For it is the Nature of Love, where it is true and entire, to encline and diſpoſe a Man or a Woman to deſire the Preſence of thoſe they love, and all Nearneſs of Converſe and Communion, and to have all means of diſtance to be removed. And if that ſpiritual and inviſible Preſence which the Lord vouchſafes of himſelf to his Servants in his Ordinances, and in their way of worſhipping and ſerving him, (which yet comparatively is but a being abſent from him, 2 *Cor.* v. 6.) is to thoſe that love him ſo exceeding precious and deſirable, as that their Senſe of the want of this hath made their *Fleſh and their Heart to cry out for the living God*, and to ſay, *When ſhall I come and appear before God?* (*Pſalm* lxxxiv. 2. and xlii. 2.) then certainly that Preſence of his in which he will be *ſeen Face to Face*, in which *his Face ſhall be beheld in Righteouſneſs*, and his Servants *ſatisfied with his Likeneſs:* That Preſence of his when neither Weakneſs nor Temptation ſhall obſtruct, interrupt, or diſturb their full and perfect Communion with the Lord; that Preſence of his which will perfectly deliver them from all Fears of being caſt out of his Preſence, or of ſuffering any Suſpenſion in the Effluxes of his Love, is much more deſired and longed for, by thoſe that unfeignedly love the Lord.

This loving and expecting the bleſſed and glorious Appearance of our Lord Jeſus Chriſt, is noted in Scripture, not only as a ſign of Mens Love to him, and Faith in him, but as a general Character of thoſe that ſhall be then ſaved by him, *Heb.* ix. 28. *And unto them that look for him ſhall he appear the ſecond time, without ſin, unto Salvation.* Tit. ii. 13. 2 Pet. iii. 12. *Henceforth is there laid up for me a Crown of Righteouſneſs, which the Lord the righteous Judge ſhall give me at that day: And not to me only, but unto all them alſo that love his appearing*, 2 Tim. iv. 8.

By theſe, and ſuch things as theſe, you may try the Truth or Feignedneſs of your Love to the Lord, and conſequently the Soundneſs or Unſoundneſs of your Faith in him, which when it is true, works more or leſs, according as it is ſtronger or weaker; in thoſe, and like ways of Expreſſion of Love to the Lord, which have now been laid before you: And therefore as you love your Souls, be not partial, but ſtrict and thorough in proving your Faith and ſpiritual Condition by them.

Sect. IX. And as Faith works by Love to the Lord, ſo it works by Love to Men likewiſe: For which cauſe it may well be that Faith in Chriſt, and Love to Men, are ſo frequently coupled together in the Scriptures, as Co-workers, and Fellow-helpers in the ſervice of Man's Salvation, ſee *Epheſ.* i. 15. and vi. 23, *Col.* i. 4, 1 *Theſſ.* i. 3. and iii. 6. and v. 8. 2 *Theſſ.* i. 3. 1 *Tim.* i. 1, 14. and ii. 15. 2 *Tim.* i. 13. and ii. 22. *Tit.* iii. 15. *Philem.* v. 1 *John* iii. 23. And ſince they are ſuch inſeparable Companions as they are repreſented to us to be in theſe and other Scriptures, we may well conclude where the one is, there the other is; and where the one is miſſing, there the other is wanting. And therefore ſince our Love to Men is more viſible, and a thing nearer at hand than our Faith, and a Proof of a true Faith where it is of an Evangelical kind; therefore let us now try our Faith by our Love to Men, and our Love to Men by the Standard of the Scriptures.

1. I ſhewed you towards the beginning of this Chapter, that Faith beholding as in a Glaſs the Glory of the Lord's Love to Men, changes the Soul into the ſame Image; Men by it viewing the Promiſes and Proceedings of God toward Man, are made Partakers of the Divine Nature, (2 *Pet.* i. 4.) contract a Similitude of God's Love upon the Soul.

See then if you can find any ſuch working in your Souls, any ſuch Compaſſions and Longings of Soul after Mens Salvation, as does really and truly (though infinitely inferiorly) hold ſome Reſemblance of thoſe ardent Deſires and Longings which are in God after the Salvation of poor miſerable Men, which are to be ſeen in theſe and other-like Scriptures, *Deut.* v. 29. *Pſalm* lxxxi. 13. *Iſa.* xlviii. 18. *Jer.* xliv. 4. *Ezek.* xviii. 23, 32. 2 *Chron.* xxxvi. 15. *Luke* xix. 41, 42. *Matth.* xxiii. 37. 2 *Pet.* iii. 9. *Hoſ.* xi. 8, 9. Or, are your Affections and Compaſſions over the precious Souls of Men, ſo ſtirred within you, as that they put you upon Action, as you have Opportunity to deliver them from going down into the Pit? Of reſcuing them out of thoſe wicked Ways, by Admonitions, Inſtructions, and affectionate Perſuaſions; which unleſs they be fetcht off from, by ſome means or other, will certainly ruine their poor Souls? For after this manner God's Love and Compaſſion wrought towards ſinful Men; it put him upon giving his only beloved Son Chriſt Jeſus to die for them, and by his Death to make and procure gracious Terms of Salvation, and by himſelf and Servants whom he hath gifted for the purpoſe, to publiſh thoſe Terms of Salvation, and earneſtly to perſuade all Men to embrace them; he himſelf ſeconding theſe with many Viſits of his Spirit, and Acts of Grace and Providence to render theſe Means ſucceſsful. And however, every Chriſtian is not an Apoſtle, nor endued with that Power from on high for the Work, as the Apoſtles were; and therefore it is not expected nor required of them, that they ſhould make it their conſtant Work and Buſineſs as they did, to go up and down to warn and perſuade Men that they might be ſaved; yet undoubtedly, to what degree this Love to Men which the Love of God hath begotten in them in its own Likeneſs does dwell in them, to the ſame degree does it put them upon Applications of a Soul-ſaving Tendency to Family-relations, Church-relations, to Neighbours, Friends, and Acquaintance, yea, and Strangers too; as Ability, Conveniency of Opportunity, and Mens Neceſſity do concur in the caſe. And the leſs Men are affected with, or the more careleſs they are of the ſpiritual Condition of others, the leſs is their Love and Faith, and the darker their Evidence of them. The Scriptures ſay, that *Love covereth a multitude of Sins*, Prov. x. 12. 1 *Pet.* iv. 8. and ſo it does, as in other reſpects; ſo when ſuch Applications proceed from Soul-love, as by which a Man is converted from the Error of his way, and ſo his ſins come to be covered, or not imputed by God, *James* v. 19, 20.

Sect. X. 2. And where Mens Souls are loved, and their Salvation longed after, (which is the beſt kind of Love, and the moſt God-like) there will be a great deal of Care and Tenderneſs uſed, that nothing be done or ſpoken that may prove a Snare, a Stumbling-block, or an Occaſion of ſin to others; and to hide ſuch things from them as through their Weakneſs might harden them againſt any Good, or any evil Ways. And therefore thoſe that are enriched with this Love, are wont to conſider, not only what is in it ſelf lawful for them to do; but how it will ſtand with the Edification of others, and what Uſe they are like to make of it. The Apoſtle ſaith, That *Knowledge puffeth up, but Love edifieth*, 1 Cor. viii. 1. Knowledge where it is alone by it ſelf without Love, makes Men lofty and diſdainful towards others. But *Love edifieth*; that is, it diſpoſeth the Perſon in whom it is, to uſe his Knowledge in ſuch a way, as will tend to, or at leaſt conſiſt with the Edification of others, and not their Prejudice. It is a fine Expreſſion which we have to this purpoſe, 1 *Cor.* xiii. 4. where he ſaith, That *Charity is not raſh*, (ſo it is in the Margin) *is not puffed up*. It is not raſh: No, it is a tender Grace, it makes a Man look about him before he does many things, and to conſider where they may light, and whereto they may tend, and what uſe may be made of them; and is wonderful fearful of doing any body any Harm in the Affairs of their Souls. Upon account whereof their own Liberty and outward Accommodation, many a time ſuffers Suſpenſion, as it fell out in the holy Apoſtle St. *Paul*'s caſe, who would take no Money of ſome Churches, but rather labour

with

with his hands, when he perceived his taking of Money (which was otherwiſe lawful for him) would not tend to the furtherance of the Goſpel in Men's Souls, 1 *Cor.* ix. 14, 15, 18. 1 *Theſſ.* ii. 6, 9. 2 *Theſſ.* iii. 8, 9. The like was about eating, and not eating of Meats, while the Lawfulneſs and Unlawfulneſs thereof was under diſputation, and is concluded to be againſt the Law of Love for Men to uſe their known liberty in ſuch things, when the uſe of it ſhall endanger a Brother's Edification, or probably betray him into any ſin. I may not inſiſt at large on theſe things, or deſcend farther to particulars, but only give general hints. See 1 *Cor.* viii. 9,——13. and x. 23,——33. *Rom.* xiv. 13,——23.

Sect. XI. 3. Furthermore, If Faith's Contemplation upon the Love of God to Men imprints the ſimilitude of his Love upon the Soul, as I have formerly ſhewed it does; then, as it fills the Soul with the love of pity and compaſſion to Sinners, in conformity to God's love and compaſſion towards them, (which I have ſhewed already) ſo does it alſo diſpoſe the Soul to a love of Complacency, Delight, and dear Affection towards all the Saints, in conformity to God's love to them, who taketh pleaſure in his People, *Pſal.* cxlix. 4. The Father he loves the Saints, becauſe they love his Son, which is the delight of his Soul, *John* xvi. 27. *For the Father himſelf loveth you, becauſe ye have loved me, and have believed that I came out from God.* And without doubt, every one whoſe Soul cleaveth to Chriſt out of the knowledge and ſenſe he hath of the worth and lovelineſs of him, and of the great benefit that comes by him, cannot but take pleaſure in all thoſe that are true lovers of him, and faithful and cordial Friends to him. As it is the property of Saints to love the Saints, ſo it is upon Chriſt's ſcore they do it, becauſe they love him, and Chriſt loves them. *Mark* ix. 41. *For whoſoever ſhall give you a cup of water to drink in my name, becauſe ye belong to Chriſt, verily I ſay unto you, he ſhall not loſe his reward.* Plainly implying, that Expreſſions of Love from one Chriſtian to another, where the Love is right Chriſtian indeed, proceed toward them upon the account of that near relation they have to Chriſt, becauſe they belong to Chriſt. When Men are loved, becauſe they do what they do for Chriſt's Name-ſake, or out of Friendſhip to him, then are they loved with a right Spirit of Love indeed, 3 *John* 6, 7, 8.

It's common among Men, where one does truly and entirely love another, there to love and reſpect the Children and Friends of ſuch for their ſake. And ſo it is in theſe matters of ſpiritual Affection and Relation: *He that loveth him that begat, loveth him alſo that is begotten of him,* 1 John v. 1. the Child for the Father's ſake, and becauſe of that Reſemblance of the Father which is found in the Child. And if the Love which is wrought by Faith be delighted with the Saints, becauſe of their Friendſhip to Chriſt, then the more any Man ſhews himſelf a Friend to Chriſt, in keeping his Commands, ſhewing forth his Vertues, pleading his Cauſe, and propagating his Truth, the more is he prized and truly eſteemed by ſuch as have this Love truly wrought in them. 2 *John* 1, 2. *Whom I love in the Truth; and not I only, but alſo all they that have known the Truth, for the Truth's ſake which dwelleth in us.* Mark, it's the Property of all that have known the Truth, to love ſuch as are the Friends of Chriſt's Truth, for the Truth's ſake, whoſe part they take.

Sect. XII. 4. And this Love and dear Affection to the Saints for Chriſt's ſake, where it is indeed, will ſhew it ſelf in acts of real Kindneſs and Friendſhip to them, as Occaſions and Opportunities do occur; which is called, *A loving not in Word and in Tongue, but in Deed and in Truth;* by which Men may know themſelves *to be of the Truth, and ſhall aſſure their Hearts before God,* 1 John iii. 18, 19. If they want Brotherly Admonition, Reproof, Inſtruction, Exhortation, or Comfort for the healthful and flouriſhing Eſtate of the inner Man, they are ready to miniſter to them in theſe, according to their ability: Which, when faithfully done, Chriſt takes as a real demonſtration of Love, not only to them, but alſo unto himſelf, as that which contributes towards his deſign of ſaving Men, and nouriſhing and cheriſhing his Church, and the ſupplying of his abſence, and the doing of that for him, which he would do himſelf if he were preſent. *John* xxi. 15, 16. *Loveſt thou me? feed my Lambs. Loveſt thou me? feed my Sheep.* As if there were no way wherein he could better expreſs his Love to Chriſt, than by miniſtring Soul-food to his Sheep that follow him. *The lips of the righteous feed many,* &c. *Prov.* x. 21.

Sect. XIII. 5. The ſame Love alſo puts them, in whom it is, upon miniſtring Supplies to the Neceſſities of their Brethren's outward Man, if there be power in their hand. It's oft ſeen thus with Men, That when ſuch whom they love and honour, and from whom they have received extraordinary Favours, are above their Requitals, yet then in teſtimony of their true Reſpects to them, will ſhew Kindneſs to, and beſtow Gifts upon their Servants that wait upon them, 1 *Sam.* xxv. 27, 41. 2 *Kings* v. 17. And ſo it is with thoſe that truly love and honour the Lord Jeſus: He indeed is exalted above the Contributions of their Worldly Subſtance, but yet is well contented that ſuch of his poor Servants as have need ſhould partake of it, and will take it every whit as kindly as if it had been given to himſelf, *Matth.* xxv. 40. Hereupon they expreſs their love to Him, by their love to his Servants for his ſake, by refreſhing their Bowels when hungry and thirſty, and cloathing them when bare and naked; diſperſing that among them, which they would have been ready to have offered unto him, if his condition now, as ſometime, had made him capable of it. *Pſal.* xvi. 2, 3. *My Goodneſs extendeth not to thee, but to the Saints that are in the Earth, and to the Excellent in whom is all my delight.* When he could not reach the Lord with his Goodneſs, Benefit, or Bounty, then he applies himſelf to his Servants, Friends and Favourites, whom he could reach, and communicates to them.

Men may talk of their love to Chriſt, and how much they are beholding to him, and how ready they would be to die for him, if called to it; but if in the mean while they ſee the true Friends and Servants of Jeſus Chriſt in need of relief, and yet *ſhut up the Bowels of their Compaſſion againſt them*, it may well be demanded, *How dwelleth the Love of God in them?* 1 John iii. 17. There's neither reſemblance of that Love which is in God, who, when the World's neceſſity called for it, parted with his Son to ſupply their need; nor yet any true ſign or token of Love to God, when thoſe whom he loves ſo well as he does his Friends, ſhall not be regarded, pitied, or ſupplied in their need, when power and opportunity to do it are preſent. Indeed ſuch a bowel-leſs, hard-hearted, cloſe-fiſted Temper, is that which renders Men very unlike to God, very unlike to Jeſus Chriſt, who though *he were rich, yet became poor for our ſakes, that we through his poverty might be made rich*, 2 Cor. viii. 9. And it is a plain Argument, they never had much to do with the Love of God, the Love of Chriſt, as to come under any ſtrong ſenſe, or powerful influence of it; for if they had, it would have transformed them into its own likeneſs. Let them talk what they will of their Truſt in God, and Faith in Chriſt, yet this mercileſs Temper lays them open to that Judgment which ſhall be without Mercy, (*James* ii. 13.) and conſequently their Faith will be far from intereſſing them in the pardoning Mercies of God, or ſaving Merits of Jeſus Chriſt.

I cannot now ſtand to ſhew how much the Heart of Chriſt is in this Chriſtian Work of Bounty and Beneficence, nor how much of the Chriſtian Religion lies in it, which if I ſhould undertake, the Scriptures would be found to ſpeak much this way: Only let this be remembred, That as *Love to one another* is the Badge of Chriſt's Diſciples, *John* xiii. 35. ſo their Bounty and readineſs to give, according to their ability, is the proof of the ſincerity of this their Love. 2 *Cor.* viii. 24. Where the Apoſtle encouraging theſe *Corinthians* to be bountiful in miniſtring to the Saints, ſaith, he did it to *prove the ſincerity of their Love*, ver. 8. *Wherefore* (ſaith he again) *ſhew ye to them, and before the Churches, the proof of your Love*, ver. 24.

Sect. XIV. Nor are the Tents of the Saints the only Sphere in which Faith acts in this way of Love and Bounty, but its influences flow out to all Men, as it hath opportunity. As I ſaid at the firſt, Faith eying God in his love to Men, and in the way of its working, takes its Pattern from thence, to cauſe thoſe in whom it is *to be followers of God as dear Children, and to walk in love*, Eph. v. 1, 2. And therefore finding that God is not only loving, kind, and bountiful to the Good and to the Holy, but that *his tender Mercies are over all his Works*; and that *he is kind to the Unthankful and to the Evil; and that he maketh his Sun to riſe on the Evil and on the Good, and ſendeth rain on the Juſt and on the Unjuſt*, (*Pſal.* cxlv. 9. *Luke* vi. 35. *Matth.* v. 45.) it inclines and draws the Man, in whom this Faith is, in imitation of his Heavenly Father, *to love enemies, to bleſs them that curſe him, to do good to thoſe that hate him; to feed them when hungry, to give them drink when thirſty*, according to the mind of the Lord in this behalf. *Matth.* v. 44. *Rom.* xii. 20. And becauſe Faith thus works, where it is in Truth and Power, as being nothing leſs than what is expreſly commanded of the Lord, (all whoſe commands Faith makes Men very careful to obſerve) therefore are the Chriſtians (that they might ſhew forth their Faith by their Works) ſo frequently provoked and exhorted to do good, to be merciful, charitable, and compaſſionate to all; only with this *Item*, That the choice and chief of their Contributions of Relief muſt be reſerved for ſuch as are of the *Houſhold of Faith*, Gal. vi. 10. As we have therefore *Opportunity, let us do good unto all Men, eſpecially unto them who are of the Houſhold of Faith*, 1 Theſſ. iii. 12. *And the Lord make you to increaſe and abound in Love one towards another, and towards all Men, even as we do towards you*, 1 Theſſ. v. 15. *See that none render Evil for Evil unto any Man: But ever follow that which is good, both among your ſelves, and to all Men*, 2 Cor. ix. 13. *Whilſt by the Experiment of this Miniſtration they glorifie God for your profeſſed Subjection unto the Goſpel of Chriſt, and for your liberal Diſtribution unto them, and unto all Men.*

Sect. XV. 7. And if you would have your Diſtributions to the poor Saints, and others in need, amount unto a clear Proof and Evidence of the Truth of your Love to them, and ſo of the Soundneſs of your Faith, ſhewing it ſelf by ſuch Works; (*James* ii. 18.) then carefully ſee to it that your Bounty and your Ability hold ſome good Proportion. For if a Man be niggardly and ſparing in his Almſ-giving, and makes a little go a great way, is able to do much, and yet does very little; he will not be able to diſcern whether what he does proceed from any inward Principle of Love and good Affection, or from ſome Motive from without, as *viz.* becauſe others do ſo, or to get himſelf eaſed of the Trouble of being ſolicited, (the Caſe of the unjuſt Judge in doing that which was juſt, *Luke* xviii. 5.) or at the beſt, to allay the Clamour of Conſcience. The Apoſtle clearly ſuppoſes that Men may give Alms upon ſuch Terms, that their very giving ſhall rather demonſtrate them to be covetous Men than charitable; elſe what does he mean when he ſays, that he took ſuch and ſuch courſe about the Collection in the Church of *Corinth* for other poor Saints, that it might proceed from them *as matter of Bounty, and not of Covetouſneſs*, 2 *Cor.* ix. 5. And that he had herein an Eye upon Niggardlineſs in giving, we are induced to believe by the very next words, *ver. 6. But this, I ſay, that he which ſows ſparingly, ſhall reap ſparingly, and he which ſoweth bountifully, ſhall reap bountifully.* And therefore when there is ſo great a Diſproportion between Mens giving, and their Ability to give, both in reſpect of Number and Quantity of their Gifts, as is too common among Men: Their Almſ-deeds will never amount unto a Proof of the Truth, Reality, or Sincerity of their Chriſtian Love; but rather on the contrary, prove an Argument of the want of that Grace. For whence proceeds this Straitneſs of hand if it be traced, but from Narrowneſs and Straitneſs of Heart? And that from want of Love; for it is the very Nature of Love where it is, to open and dilate the Heart, (as the Sun does the Pores of the Earth) which till it comes is contracted and ſhut up.

And this illiberal Temper in Men, as it argues want of Love in them, ſo it argues want of Faith too, the Mother of Love. For whence proceeds that undue ſparing and ſaving, and Lothneſs to part with any thing conſiderable, but from a ſecret Diſtruſt of wanting that themſelves which others call for from them? If Men could but believe and be thoroughly perſuaded that it is the ſureſt way, not only to *provide themſelves Bags that wax not old, a Treaſure in Heaven*, but alſo to ſecure themſelves and Children too from Want and Poverty here on Earth, they would as freely part with their Money in a way of Charity for ſo much as were meet for them to give, as now they do in their Trades, in hopes of defending themſelves from Want. If ſuch Scriptures were but turned into Faith, which declare the Man *bleſſed that conſidereth the poor*, and that the *Lord ſhall deliver him in time of trouble, and preſerve him alive, and make him bleſſed on Earth*, Pſalm xli. 1, 2. that ſay *the liberal Man deviſeth liberal things, and by liberal things he ſhall ſtand*, Iſa. xxxii. 8. *The liberal Soul ſhall be made fat, and he that watereth ſhall be watered himſelf*, Prov. xi. 25. *He that hath pity on the poor lendeth to the Lord: And that which he hath given, will he pay him again*, Prov. xix. 17. *He that giveth to the poor ſhall not lack*, Prov. xxviii. 27. *Thou ſhalt ſurely give him, and thine Heart ſhall not be grieved when thou giveſt unto him*, (viz. the poor) *becauſe that for this thing the Lord thy God ſhall bleſs thee in all thy Works, and in all that thou putteſt thy hand unto*, Deut. xv. 10. *And God is able to make all Grace abound towards you, that ye always having all Sufficiency in all things, may abound to every good Work*, 2 Cor. ix. 8. I ſay, if theſe, and many like Scriptures were but turned into Faith, they would be counted being lived-to, in a way of Mercy, Liberality, and Bounty, a thouſand times better Security againſt Want, than all Mens pinching and ſparing in their Deeds of Charity, is like to be, *Prov.* xi. 24. *There is that ſcattereth and yet increaſeth; and there is that with-holdeth more than is meet, but it tendeth to Poverty.* It's certainly Mens Unbelief that binds their Hearts, and binds their hands from bounteous Acts; they muſt have God's to go before them, ſomething

thing to truſt to which they ſee, and therefore they think the diminiſhing of their Wealth by giving, will be a weakening of the Prop upon which they lean. And therefore theſe lean, ſtarved Sacrifices, and niggardly Almſ-deeds, proceeding as they do from Mens Diffidence and Diſtruſt, can never poſſibly amount unto an Evidence of the Goodneſs of their Faith.

It concerns every one therefore as they prize the clear Evidence and Proof of the Sincerity of their Faith and Love, to proportion their Almſ-deeds in ſome good Meaſure ſuitable to their Eſtates, as that without which ſuch Evidence and Proof is not to be had. Nor do I ſay, that it is the only thing by which ſuch Aſſurance is to be had; for the Apoſtle ſuppoſeth that Men may poſſibly cut large Morſels out of their Eſtates to ſupply the poor, and yet be void of true Chriſtian Charity when he ſaith, *Though I beſtow all my Goods to feed the poor, and have not Charity, it profiteth me nothing*, 1 Cor. xiii. 3. But that proportionate Diſtribution I ſpeak of, in Conjunction with other Effects of thoſe Graces, will reach it; though nothing that I know without this will, it being an expreſs Duty, *Him to whom much is given, of him much is required*, Luke xii. 48. *But rather give Alms as you are able*, (ſo it is in the Margin) *and behold all things are clean unto you*, Luke xi. 41. *Upon the firſt Day of the Week, let every one of you lay by him in ſtore as God hath proſpered him*, 1 Cor. xvi. 2. *Then the Diſciples, every Man according to his Ability, determined to ſend Relief unto the Brethren which dwelt in Judea: which alſo they did*, Acts xi. 29.

Sect. XVI. I cannot indeed by any Rule certainly determine what Proportion of his Eſtate, or the Income of it, a Man as a Chriſtian is bound ordinarily to diſburſe in a way of Charity: And that which makes this the more difficult, is the great Variety of Circumſtances that do attend Mens outward Conditions here in the World; both in reſpect of their Eſtates themſelves, and the neceſſary Occaſions of iſſuing of them forth in a way of ordinary Expence. As for Example; one Man, it may be, hath five hundred by the Year Revenue, and no Child; another but one hundred, and yet hath five or ſix Children: Now in ſuch a caſe it ſeems no-wiſe reaſonable, to think that the ſame Proportion, ſuppoſe it to be an eighth, tenth, or twelfth part of a Man's Income, which would be, it may be, ſufficient for the one, would be ſufficient for the other alſo. And the reaſon of the difference is, becauſe the one hath neither the like neceſſary Occaſion of Expence for the preſent, but what is voluntary, and matter of his own Election and Choice; nor the like neceſſary Occaſion of increaſing his Eſtate by way of future Proviſion for Relations, as the other hath; but may with much more Eaſe and Reaſon, part with a fourth or fifth part of his Income in way of Charity, than the other may with a tenth or twelfth. For as it is neither neceſſary nor good Chriſtian-like, for Men to advance in the Coſtlineſs of their way of living to the utmoſt of their Income, when their Eſtates are large enough to ſupport themſelves and Houſhold-relations in a free, if but in a ſober and moderate way of living; and yet withal to ſtrengthen the hands, and to refreſh the Bowels, and eaſe the Burthens of many poor; ſo neither is it neceſſary, nor as I think Chriſtian, for them whoſe Eſtates are grown to their full Stature, ſo as to be in a competent Capacity of anſwering all a Man's truly neceſſary and convenient Occaſions, according to the Rules of Chriſtian Moderation and Sobriety, for them ſtill to be every Year making their heap higher, *Joining Houſe to Houſe, and laying Field to Field*, the thing of which the Lord complains, *Iſa.* v. 8. Surely when Chriſt ſaith, *Lay not up for your ſelves Treaſures on Earth, where Moth and Ruſt doth corrupt, and Thieves break through and ſteal. (Matth.* vi. 19.) He would have Men to ſet ſome Bounds unto themſelves, in heaping Treaſure together for the laſt Days, (*James* v, 3.) And therefore it may be neceſſary for one whoſe Eſtate is of competent Growth, to diſpoſe in a way of Charity ſo much of his Yearly Income, as is found to be the whole Surpluſage of neceſſary Expences in a ſober way of living, though it ſhould amount to as much or more than the whole of his Expences do; when the ſame thing cannot be thought to be the Duty of another, whoſe Occaſions as a Chriſtian may call for ſome Augmentation of his Eſtate, if Providence vouchſafe Opportunity. As for thoſe who when they have more than enough already, and ſo much as proves far more frequently a ſad Occaſion of Deſtruction to their Childrens Souls, (as there is cauſe to fear) and many times of Bodies too, than of any ſpiritual Advantage to them, ſhall yet make it their Buſineſs to their Dying-day, to be heaping up more and more, while in the mean time many Families are in great Diſtreſs through Want, and they contributing little to their Relief; I dread to think what account they will be able to make unto the Lord, who hath directed them to *make themſelves* in a ſpiritual ſenſe *of their unfaithful Mammon*, and charged them to be *rich in good works*, *ready to diſtribute*, *willing to communicate*; and hath declared them ſtark *Fools* that *lay up treaſures for themſelves*, *and are not rich towards God*, Luke xii. 20, 21. and xvi. 9. 1 *Tim.* vi. 17, 18.

But now ſince the different Circumſtances of Men's Caſes do render any one Rule of Proportion as unlike to ſuit every Man in this caſe, as it's impoſſible for the ſame Shoe to fit every Man's Foot; therefore we muſt leave this matter of Proportion to every Man's Conſcience, which faithfully conſulted with (it having it ſelf firſt faithfully conſulted with the Word of God, and the Arguments and Motives unto Bounty which are there) will be a competent guide unto a Man herein: Only let it be remembred to take aim by that before the Law, the Principles of Love and Godly Devotion, dictated to the Patriarch *Jacob*, to give the Tenth of what God gave him unto God, *Gen.* xxviii. 22. And under the Law: 1. Every third Year's Tenth was to be put apart for Charitable Uſes, *Deut.* xiv. 28, 29. and xxvi. 12, 13. 2. Part of the corners of the Fields were purpoſely to be left unreaped, *Levit.* xix. 9, 10. and xxiii. 22. And, 3. Beſides this, a certain proportion for gleaning was to be left for the Poor, both in the Field and Vineyard, *Levit.* xix. 9, 10. 4. The forgotten ſheaves in the Field, *Deut.* xxiv. 19. And, 5. Beſides all this, a ſpecial Law for Relieving, with that which was ſufficient for his need, any poor Brother that was fallen to decay, *Deut.* xv. 7, 8, 9. All which put together, did ariſe to a conſiderable proportion of a Man's yearly Increaſe, which was alſo deeply charged with a Tenth for the Prieſts, and with Sacrifices and Oblations otherwiſe. And the Law of Love under the Goſpel is not leſſened, but rather much improved and heightned, by the great Example and Obligation of Chriſt's ſignal Love, which is propounded as our Pattern, *John* xiii. 34. 1 *John* iii. 16. And therefore Chriſt's Precepts for Charity run very high, ſaying, *Sell that ye have, and give Alms*, Luke xii. 33. And again, *Give to every Man that asketh of thee; and from him that would borrow of thee, turn not thou away*, Luke vi. 30. Matth. v. 42. Yea, as the caſe may be, our very Lives, which are more than Eſtates, muſt be *laid down for the Brethren*, 1 John iii. 16. All which conſider'd, though a juſt Proportion cannot be ſet, as a Tenth of the whole proceed of the capital Stock, or the like, which is the Rule of Proportion which ſome Chriſtians of a middle rank in the World do ſet unto themſelves; yet in ordinary, leſs than a liberal, free, and frequent diſtribution of Alms, according in proportion to every Man's ability, cannot be underſtood to be the expreſs Will of our Lord, beſides what is to be done extraordinarily, in extraordinary caſes.

I cannot ſtand ſo much as to touch the variety of Motives, and great Encouragements that belong to this Duty. But if ſuch as profeſs themſelves to be Chriſtians indeed, and would be thought to be none of the loweſt rank of them neither, would but convert their ſuperfluous Expences upon Back and Belly, and other Bravery and vain Delights (wherein too too many of the Profeſſors of this Age do abound, to the great ſcandal of Religion) into works of Charity and Mercy, it would turn to a thouſand times better account, both in point of Evidence of the Goodneſs of their Faith and Charity, and in procuring Reverence and Reſpect to their Profeſſion in the Conſciences of Men, and as being that alſo which would abound to their account (*Phil.* iv. 17.) in that great Day of Account which is ſhortly to come, wherein *what good ſoever any Man hath done, the ſame ſhall he receive of the Lord, whether he be Bond or free.* But while their Superfluity and Vanity, inſtead of their Moderation, (*Phil.* iv. 5.) is made known unto all Men; and their Worldly Glory, inſtead of the Light of their good Works, ſhines before Men, (*Matth.* v. 16.) I am ſure they make but bad Proviſion for that ſpiritual Aſſurance of the ſoundneſs of their Title to the Promiſe of Juſtification by Faith, and Eternal Life; the worth whereof when they come to die will be diſcerned, and the vanity of the other diſcovered to the Conſcience, and their preſent folly in ſowing ſo liberally to the Fleſh, and ſo ſparingly to the Spirit, will then be lamented and bewailed.

Sect. XVII. 8. Moreover, as giving, ſo forgiving is ſuch an act of Love and Mercy, and ſo neceſſary to the evidencing of a Man's Faith to be right, as without which no Man can prove his Faith to be ſuch, as by which he ſhall be juſtified. For when Chriſt declares this to be the Law of Heaven, ſaying, *But if ye forgive not Men their treſpaſſes, neither will your Father forgive your treſpaſſes*, (Matth. vi. 15. and xviii. 35.) He does as good as tell all ſuch in plain words, whoſe Hearts ſerve them not to forgive Treſpaſſes, that their Faith, whatever otherwiſe it be, is not of the right kind, neither ſuch as will avail them to Juſtification: For where there is no forgiveneſs from God (as there is not, where there is not forgiving of Men) there's no Juſtification; and where there is no Juſtification, there is no juſtifying Faith. How then will they be able to evince their Faith to be of the juſtifying kind, who are apt to render Evil for Evil, and to bear Grudges one againſt another upon account of Injuries received, and to eaſe themſelves by throwing the Burthen of others Weakneſſes wholly upon them, by ſpreading and aggravating them, and that too before all due means on their part have been uſed to cure them. I might, but I will not enlarge this.

Sect. XVIII. 9. There are other ways and veins, wherein Faith works by Love, as, *viz.* by doing to all Men, in point of Commerce and Dealing, as they themſelves would be done unto in like caſe, *Matth.* vii. 12. not uſing any deceit or fraud, nor taking advantage of others weakneſs, nor cruelly working upon others neceſſities; for Men would not be ſo ſerved themſelves; but ſetting the Law of Neighbourly and Brotherly Love before them in all their civil Tranſactions and Affairs with others. But I ſhall not enlarge farther upon this Doctrine of *Love*, as it is an effect of Faith, having already dwelt longer on it, than at firſt I intended. Only let it be remembred for a cloſe of this matter, That Men's Love to God and Men in theſe and other-like ways of working, holds proportion with their Faith, ſo that where they are rich in Faith, they abound in Love; and where they are poor, and low, and narrow-ſpirited in acts of Love to God, and of Kindneſs, Mercy, and Bounty to Men, it's a ſure ſign their Faith is not well thriven, 2 *Theſſ.* i. 3. *We are bound to thank God always for you, Brethren, as it is meet, becauſe that your Faith groweth exceedingly, and the Charity of every one of you all towards each other aboundeth.* Mark, if you hear of their Faith growing exceedingly, to be ſure you will hear alſo of their Love abounding alſo.

And thus I have now diſpatched alſo the handling, not only this Property of Faith, but alſo this Branch of the Doctrine of Juſtification, which concerns the Nature of that Faith which ſhall be counted unto Men for Righteouſneſs.

CHAP. XII.

Shewing, That Faith is counted for Righteouſneſs, both as it entitles Men to the juſtifying Vertue of Chriſt's Blood, and as it puts them under the Protection and Promiſe of the Goſpel, as it is a fulfilling of it: And ſo diſcovers the Opinion of Men's being juſtified before Believing, and of being juſtified by Believing only in the Court of Man's Conſcience, to be unſound.

Sect. I. I Have already been ſhewing, 1. The believing of What; and, 2. What Believing it is that ſhall be counted for Righteouſneſs. Now I ſhall come, in the 3^d^ and laſt place, to ſhew how or in what ſenſe this Faith is counted unto Men for Righteouſneſs. For, counted for Righteouſneſs it is; ſo ſaith our Text: *But to him that worketh not, but believeth on him that juſtifieth the Ungodly, his Faith is counted for Righteouſneſs:* Or, which is the ſame, *is reckoned to him for Righteouſneſs*, Rom. iv. 9. Or *imputed to him for Righteouſneſs*, Gal. iii. 6. Rom. iv. 22, 23, 24. For our Apoſtle uſeth this threefold variety of Expreſſion, to ſet out the ſame thing. For the better underſtanding of this point, I will ſhew you,

1. Negatively, how it is not counted for Righteouſneſs; or, which is the ſame, how it does not juſtifie. It does not juſtifie, or is not reckoned for Righteouſneſs, as Chriſt his Death and Blood is, *viz.* by way of *Atonement*, *Rom.* v. 9, 11. for that's the incommunicable Property of Chriſt's Blood, *Heb.* i. 3. which is reckoned to us for Righteouſneſs too in a ſenſe proper to it: For Chriſt is ſaid *to be made unto us Righteouſneſs*, 1 Cor. i. 30. and ſo he is, when the atoning Vertue of his Blood, the power and efficacy of his Death and Reſurrection is made over, conveyed, reckoned, or imputed to us for our Juſtification. But this in a way infinitely ſuperiour to the Imputation of

Faith for Righteouſneſs; for Faith it ſelf, and the Activity of that and all other Graces in their Sphere, become acceptable with God as built and bottomed upon that ſure Foundation Chriſt Jeſus. And therefore [illegible] exceeding much deſire, that the Lord Jeſus may have all the Glory of your Confidence touching the Merit of Remiſſion of your ſins; and that your Confidence about Juſtification, having nothing to do with Faith, but as that thing which God hath ordained to entitle you to the other, and the gracious Privileges annexed to it; nor with Works farther than they are appointed by God to render your Faith a ſubſtantial, and not deceitful Title.

2. But come we then to ſhew in the affirmative, how Faith is counted for Righteouſneſs: And this I ſhall according to my Underſtanding, lay out to you in two things.

Sect. II. 1. Faith is a means of our Juſtification, or is reckoned toward our righteous making, as it is a means appointed by God to intereſs us in the Benefit of Chriſt's Death, and the atoning Vertue of his Blood for our Pardon and Acceptation. For though it's true, *Chriſt gave himſelf a Ranſom for all*, 1 Tim. ii. 6. *and taſted Death for every Man*, Heb. ii. 9. yet all are not thereupon delivered from their ſins, and why? But becauſe they have not that Faith which ſhould give them a Right and Propriety in the juſtifying Vertue of his Death. For Chriſt was not given to die for Men upon ſuch Terms, as that they ſhould reap the Benefit of his Blood in the Pardon of their ſins; however, they ſhould carry themſelves towards him, well or ill. And therefore the Apoſtle plainly declares how Men by Miſcarriage towards Chriſt, may cut themſelves ſhort of the Benefit of his Death, *Gal.* v. 2, 4. *Behold, I Paul ſay unto you, that if ye be circumciſed, Chriſt ſhall profit you nothing.* And again, Verſe 4. *Chriſt is become of none effect unto you, whoſoever of you are juſtified by the Law.* Which could not be, if Chriſt were not given, if Chriſt did not die for Men conditionally. See 2 *Pet.* ii. 1. 1 *Cor.* viii. 11. *Heb.* x. 29.

Sect. III. Which Condition or Proviſo is plainly laid down, *John* iii. 16. *God ſo loved the World, that he gave his only begotten Son:* (but with this *Proviſo*, mark it) *that whoſoever believeth in him, ſhould not periſh, but have everlaſting Life.* Though Chriſt be given for the World, yet Mens not periſhing by means of this Gift, but enjoying Eternal Life, is ſuſpended upon their believing in him: So that it's Mens believing, that does enſtate them in the juſtifying, ſaving Vertue of Chriſt's Death. Another like place is that *Rom.* iii. 25. *Whom God hath ſet forth to be a Propitiation through Faith in his Blood.* 1. God hath ſet him forth as a publick Propitiation unto all; there's the Extent of the Offer and Tender of Grace. But then 2. He is ſet forth as ſuch through Faith in his Blood; there's the Limitation of the propitiating Vertue of his Blood, *viz.* to ſuch as have Faith in it.

The Author to the *Hebrews* ſaith, Chap. xiii. 10. *We have an Altar whereof they have no right to eat, that ſerve the Tabernacle*, meaning Chriſt; or which they had no right to partake of, that did judaize it, adhere to the *Moſaical* way, and is parallel with *Gal.* v. 2, 4. But that which I note hence, is, that Men in order to their partaking of Chriſt, muſt have a right to him. Now what is that which gives Men a right to Chriſt, his Death, Blood, Reſurrection, and Interceſſion? Is it not this Faith of which I have been ſpeaking ſo much? Surely it is. Hence the Apoſtle ſuſpends the believing *Hebrews* being made Partakers of Chriſt, upon their holding the beginning of their Confidence ſtedfaſt unto the end, *Heb.* iii. 14. It was that Faith and Confidence which they had, by which they were made Partakers of Chriſt, when they firſt believed; and they were to continue their right by continuing their Faith; for thereto did his Exhortation tend. Another like place is that *Col.* i. 21, 22, 23. *And you who were ſometimes alienated, and Enemies in your mind by wicked Works, yet now hath he reconciled, in the Body of his Fleſh through Death, to preſent you holy and unblameable, and unreproveable in his ſight: If ye continue in the Faith grounded and ſettled, and be not moved away from the hope of the Goſpel.* If their final Reconciliation by the Death of Chriſt, ſo as to be preſented unreprovable in his ſight, depended upon their continuing in the Faith, then certainly that which firſt inveſted them with that Privilege in which for the preſent they ſtood, was their believing.

Sect. IV. And the reaſon why I conceive this Right which Faith gives unto Chriſt, and the juſtifying Vertue of his Blood, is one Cauſe or Conſideration for which it's ſaid to be counted for Righteouſneſs, is this; becauſe Faith it ſelf without this Office and Uſe, is neither Righteouſneſs nor means of Righteouſneſs unto any Man, and conſequently cannot be counted to him for Righteouſneſs. But foraſmuch as though Faith is not virtually or meritoriouſly any Man's Righteouſneſs as Chriſt's Blood is; and yet by the Grace and Appointment of God, becomes a means of poſſeſſing him with that which is. Hence Faith it ſelf may well be ſaid to be counted to him for Righteouſneſs, with like Propriety of Speech, as when in Scripture the means bears the Denomination of the End, as *John* iv. 22. 2 *Pet.* iii. 15. For that now, I conceive, may be a Reaſon of the Phraſe, *counted, reckoned, or imputed for Righteouſneſs*, as it is applied to Faith, *viz.* becauſe by it, as it hath to do with Chriſt, a Man though he be not formally righteous with a perſonal and Sin-leſs Righteouſneſs, yet becomes poſſeſſed with the ſame Privilege of enjoying God's Favour and Love, and the bleſſed Effects of it, (in reſpect of Juſtification) which a perſonal and Sin-leſs Righteouſneſs in the Formality of it in caſe he had it, would inveſt him with. And therefore may well be ſaid to be reckoned for, or put to account inſtead of Righteouſneſs, becauſe it does a Man the ſelf-ſame ſervice as that would do.

Sect. V. 2. There is another Notion or Conſideration, in reſpect whereof Faith may be ſaid to be counted for Righteouſneſs to him that hath it; and that is, as it is a fulfilling of the Terms of the Goſpel, or New Covenant. For Faith in that Latitude of which I have been ſpeaking of it, as it is a lively, active, working Grace, and diſpoſes the Soul in Affection and Subjection to the Lord, as well as to depend upon him for what it would have, is really the fulfilling of the Condition or Terms of the Goſpel, and conſequently that which puts him that hath it under the great Promiſes of Juſtification and Eternal Life, contained therein.

For the Goſpel declares who and what manner of Perſons ſhall have their ſins pardoned for Chriſt's ſake, ſhall be accepted and approved of God, and are by him deſigned to Eternal Life, *viz.* Believers: No Man by Name, but all under this Qualification of effectual Faith; *For therein is the Righteouſneſs of God revealed from Faith to Faith*, Rom. i. 16, 17. And whoever does accordingly believe, does fulfil the Goſpel, and ſo is righteous in the account thereof. As any Man that lived under the firſt Covenant (I mean the *Moſaical* Covenant) had he but obſerved and kept the Terms of it, (*the Man that doth thoſe things ſhall live by them*, Rom. x. 5.) he ſhould have been righteous in the Eye of that Law or Covenant, *Deut.* vi. 25. even ſo, he that does but obſerve and keep the Terms or Condition of the Goſpel or New Covenant, which is, *Believe in the Lord Jeſus and thou ſhalt be ſaved*, Acts xvi. 31. he alſo is righteous in the Eye of that.

As it is in the common Law of Nations, thoſe that are juſtified are juſtified by that; and thoſe that are condemned, are condemned by that, if there be Righteouſneſs of proceeding, *John* vii. 51. If Men be caſt, they are caſt by the Law, and if they are acquitted, they are acquitted by the Law: The Law cannot juſtifie the guilty, nor condemn the innocent, whatever Men may do that have the handling of it. Juſt ſo is it with the Goſpel, and thoſe that are under the Adminiſtration thereof: All ſuch ſhall be caſt as guilty, or acquitted as righteous by it. *The Word that I have ſpoken* (ſaid Chriſt) *the ſame ſhall judge him*, John xii. 48. The Doctrines of Chriſt, are his Statute-laws, which whoſoever believes, and ſincerely obeys, ſhall be juſtified by their Sentence. All the holy Word is on ſuch a Man's ſide: *Againſt ſuch* (as the Apoſtle ſaith) *there is no Law*, Gal. v. 23. but he hath as *Demetrius* had, *a good Report, even of the Truth it ſelf*, 3 John xii. *Micah* ii. 7. As he hath been a true Friend to this, to believe, love, and obey it in Truth and Uprightneſs, (though not without Weakneſs) ſo will it be a true Friend to him, to ſtand by him, to vindicate and juſtifie him againſt the Accuſations of the Enemy.

So that mark we then, Faith in the Latitude of it, being that very thing which doth anſwer the very Mind and Scope of the Goſpel, which is the *Law of Faith*, (*Rom.* iii. 27.) it muſt needs be counted to them for Righteouſneſs that have it; becauſe by it they ſtand right in the Eye and Account of this Law of Life. And indeed it is this Heavenly and Divine Law in the Promiſory part of it, which furniſhes Faith with that Power which it hath to juſtifie. As on the contrary, the Law is ſaid to be *the Strength of Sin*, 1 Cor. xv. 56. It arms Sin with that Power which it hath to condemn the Creature; ſo is the Goſpel the Strength of Faith, that which inveſts it with a Power to juſtifie. The Efficacy, juſtifying Power, and Vertue of Faith, depends not upon, nor riſes out of the Excellency or Dignity of its own Nature; but it depends upon and proceeds from the Will, good Pleaſure, Ordination, or Appointment of God digeſted and put into the Goſpel, as a ſtanding Law and unchangeable Decree. As it was not the Naturalneſs of Proportion between the *Iſraelites* looking up to the Serpent of Braſs, and that effect of Healing that was procured thereby, (*Numb.* xxi. 9.) that brought the thing to paſs; but the production of ſuch an Effect by ſuch Means depended upon the Operativeneſs of God's Will; ſo in the Antitype of this (*John* iii. 14.) Men's being healed, juſtified, by looking up to, and believing in Jeſus, as lift up upon the Croſs; this is not brought to paſs neither meerly by the Act of Faith it ſelf as ſuch, but by the Efficacy of the Divine Will, which hath ordained it to that end and uſe. And therefore is it, I ſuppoſe, that the Scripture ſo frequently caſt this great Effect, of Men's being juſtified, upon God, as his Act, Grant and Gift, though by or through Faith as ſubſervient to his Will herein; calling it, *The Righteouſneſs of God which is by Faith*; and ſaying, *That it is one God which ſhall juſtifie the Circumciſion by Faith, and Uncircumciſion through Faith*, Rom. iii. 22, 30. Phil. iii. 9. And if Chriſt himſelf is ſaid to be unto us *Righteouſneſs*, becauſe made ſo of God, 1 *Cor.* i. 30. and *Salvation* to be had through his Name, becauſe given for that end, *Acts* iv. 12. then much more certainly does the juſtifying Office or Work of Faith depend upon the Divine Will. *John* vi. 40. *This is the will of him that ſent me, that every one that ſeeth the Son, and believeth on him, may have everlaſting Life.* This might be farther argued from *Rom.* iii. 25. *John* i. 12. and iii. 16. but I forbear.

Sect. VI. But in the mean while, a comfortable Doctrine ſurely it is to underſtand that our Juſtification by Faith does not depend ſo much upon the Nature of the Grace it ſelf, as upon the Will of him that hath appointed it to that Office, and upon the Goſpel, as that Charter by which ſuch a Privilege is conferred upon it: Which is a thouſand times richer and firmer Foundation to bear ſuch a Building, as the hope of Righteouſneſs by Faith is, than is the Nature of the Grace it ſelf, which is ſubject to ebbings and flowings, and times of ſhaking, and fits of feebleneſs and weakneſs. If the juſtifying Effect of Faith had depended meerly upon the Nature and Operation of the Grace it ſelf, then the infiniteneſs of Diſproportion that is between ſuch a Cauſe and ſuch an Effect, the inconſiderableneſs of the Service, and vaſtneſs of Reward, might have rendred the confident Expectation of ſo great a Benefit upon ſuch terms, matter of greater difficulty. But now ſeeing that the weight and ſtreſs of this great Effect which is produced by or through Faith, as that without which God will not have it take place, does depend upon the powerful and operative Will of God, which is infinitely full of Grace and Kindneſs to the poor Creature, and upon the everlaſting and unalterable Covenant of his Grace and Love, the confidence of Juſtification by Faith now becomes much more eaſie and pleaſant, as feeling firmneſs, rockineſs, ſubſtantiality of Ground under the Feet of it. He that holds an Eſtate worth a Thouſand Pounds by the Year, by Leaſe or Charter, though he pay but a Pepper-corn by way of acknowment, hath as good a Title in Law to that Eſtate, as another that holds the like Eſtate from the ſame Landlord, though he pay a Thouſand Pound Rent by the Year for it; becauſe the one Leaſe is the voluntary Act of the Landlord, as well as the other. Even ſo, though Faith amount but to little, in compariſon of that abſolute Perfection of Holineſs, Love, and Obedience that was found in *Adam* while he ſtood; yet conſidering that the ſame Lord hath now graciouſly, by an unchangeable Act of his own Will, ſettled and entailed Juſtification and Eternal Life upon Men's unfeigned Believing in his Son Jeſus Chriſt; which once ſettled ever-living upon *Adam*'s abſolute perfect Holineſs, Love and Obedience, it hereupon follows, that whoſoever doth in truth unfeignedly Believe, hath therefore as real, as ſure, and as certain a Title to Eternal Life, as *Adam* himſelf had, and would have kept, in caſe he had kept his firſt Integrity.

But then that which is the Amountment of all this, is, That ſeeing there is now a new Law given by God, a new Covenant eſtabliſhed, and that the ſum and ſubſtance of it is this, That God having ſent his Son Jeſus Chriſt into the World to ſave Sinners, he requires and enjoyns Men to receive him, and believe in him, in that capacity in which he is ſent; and upon their ſo doing, promiſes Juſtification and Eternal Life; as on the contrary, threatens Eternal Death to thoſe that do not. Hereupon it follows, that thoſe that do thus believe in Chriſt, do fulfil the terms of the Goſpel; and fulfilling the terms of it, muſt needs be righteous in the account of it. For what elſe is a Man's Righteouſneſs, but his conformity to that Law under which he lives, or which is given him to live by? As Tranſgreſſion of it is Sin, (1 *John* iii. 4.) ſo Conformity to it is Righteouſneſs. And therefore ſince Faith bears ſuch a proportion of Conformity to the Goſpel, as it does, when it is ſound and ſincere, well may it be counted for Righteouſneſs to them that have it.

Sect. VII. Yet becauſe this Righteouſneſs, which is called *the Righteouſneſs of Faith*, conſiſts, in great part at leaſt, in the Forgiveneſs of Sins; and ſince both that, and all the gracious Acceptation with God, which does accrue to Men upon their believing, is vouchſafed them, not for their Faith ſake, though not without it, but upon the account of another, to wit, Jeſus Chriſt, (*Epheſ.* iv. 32. 1 *John* ii. 12.) thence it may well be, that though Faith be really and truly a Man's Righteouſneſs in the Goſpel's account, yet it is ſo only in the way of imputation, reckoning, or accouut of Grace. Which is a thing I would not have ſlightly paſſed over, but diligently and carefully obſerved, as having much of the Spirit of the Goſpel, and Doctrine of Grace in it. For Faith, though it be rich indeed, and hath glorious things in it, and ſignifies much in the reckoning or account of the Goſpel, yet it is rich with the Riches of another. Faith it is the borrowing Grace; as the Moon borrows its light from the Sun, ſo Faith borrows that by which it does ſuch great things for the Soul, from another, from Chriſt. It is true, Faith is a worthy thing, as it gives Glory to God in believing all that he ſays; as it carries the Soul, and unites it to him; as it purifies the Heart, and works by Love, and the like; but alas, what would all this do towards the making of Atonement for Sin, without which the Creature is undone, and without which Faith cannot juſtifie! And therefore that which is impoſſible, as to it ſelf in this reſpect, it hath from another, from Chriſt, *who is the Propitiation for our Sins.* So then, Righteouſneſs coming upon, or accruing to Men upon, or by means of their Believing, and yet proceeding or iſſuing principally by way of reſult from that which is extrinſical to Faith, to wit, the Blood of Chriſt, and unſpeakable Grace of God, there is good reaſon why Faith, though it be a Man's Righteouſneſs, or that upon or by means of which he enjoys the Privileges of a juſt and righteous Man, yet he ſhould have and hold this great and bleſſed Benefit, by way of Imputation, or altogether upon the account of Grace, as having that transferred to his account in the reſult of it, which reſides in another, and which indeed hath the greateſt ſtroke in his Juſtification.

Sect. VIII. Which Doctrine of Faith's being counted to Men for Righteouſneſs, according to the Explanation given, if it be true, then the Opinion and Doctrine of ſome who hold and teach, That Men are juſtified before Believing, or when Chriſt ſuffered, or from Eternity, muſt needs be falſe. For if there be no Juſtification but by the Blood of Chriſt, and no Application of this Blood in the juſtifying Vertue of it to Perſons of Years of Diſcretion (for of ſuch I ſpeak) but by Faith, which is the thing ordained by God to intereſs them in the juſtifying Vertue and ſaving Benefit of it; then there can be no actual Juſtification of Men till they do believe, But that there is no Juſtification by the Blood of Chriſt, nor right to, or ſaving Application of that Blood without Believing, is that which from the Scriptures hath been aſſerted in the firſt Head of Explanation, and might be abundantly farther made out from the Scriptures, if what hath been already ſaid on this behalf were not ſufficient.

And ſo again; if that be true, that whoſoever ſhall be juſtified muſt be juſtified (declaratively or ſententially) by the Goſpel, and acquitted by that; and that the Goſpel acquits no Man, but ſuch as perform the Terms, and fulfil the Condition of it, upon which its Promiſes of Juſtification do depend; and that the Goſpel-terms or Condition, upon which it promiſes Juſtification and Eternal Life, is Believing; then certainly till Men do indeed Believe, the Goſpel does not, will not, cannot acquit and juſtifie any Man, but caſt and condemn him. But that no Man ſhall be juſtified without the Acquittance or Diſcharge which the Goſpel gives; and that it gives this Acquittance or Diſcharge to none but ſuch as perform its Condition, and fulfil its Terms; and that the ſaid Terms or Condition, is Believing; are things that lie very fair and obvious in the Scriptures, and are in part to be ſeen in the ſecond Head of Explanation of the Doctrine of *Faith's being counted for Righteouſneſs.*

Sect. IX. By the light of the ſame Doctrine, of *Faith's being imputed for Righteouſneſs*, that Opinion alſo which holds, that the Juſtification by Faith, which the Scripture ſpeaks of, is not meant of Men's being juſtified in the ſight of God, but only in the Court of their own Conſcience, by way of Evidence or Aſſurance, is proved to be Darkneſs and not Light. For when *Faith* is ſaid to be *counted* or *imputed for Righteouſneſs*; the meaning is not, that when a Man comes to Believe, he thereby comes to know himſelf to be what indeed he was before, *viz.* juſtified in the ſight of God; but that then indeed he comes to be that which till then he was not, *viz.* a Man acquitted and diſcharged from his Sins, and accepted in the ſight of God, as one reconciled by the Death of his Son, which till then was not actually applied for his Juſtification, as one under the Protection of the Goſpel; which till then, thundred out Wrath and Judgment againſt him, as it does againſt all, while in the State of Unbelief, (*Mark* xvi. 16. *John* iii. 18, 36.) Which Threatnings would be really inconſiſtent with their ſafe Condition by Juſtification in the Sight of God, if there were ſuch a thing as Juſtification in his Sight before Believing. For thoſe Threatnings are true, or elſe they are falſe; if true, as moſt certainly they are: Then whoſoever dies before he believes, and ſo before he is juſtified by Faith, is damned, and if damned, then not juſtified in the Sight of God.

Sect. X. And I the rather mention theſe things as well for Caution, as Confutation, becauſe the Doctrine of Mens Juſtification before believing, as grounded on the Doctrine of particular and perſonal Election before Faith, hath, I fear, in theſe late Years, rendered the Work of Faith with Power in the Heart and Life of too many; a Matter, not of that mighty Importance which indeed it is, in the Scripture Account. But hath been a Temptation upon them to think, that Faith hath not been abſolutely and eſſentially neceſſary to the being of a Chriſtian, or a Man's ſafe ſtanding before God; but neceſſary only unto his comfortable and well-being, in reſpect of Evidence and Aſſurance. And ſo hath rendred their Care and Diligence about their proving themſelves to be in the Faith, proportionably leſs; by how much an Aſſurance of one's good Condition, is leſs, than one's good Condition it ſelf.

CHAP. XIII.

Containing an Exhortation by way of Uſe, for Men to behold themſelves in this View of Juſtification, and by the help of the precedent Diſcourſe, to prove the Goodneſs or Badneſs of their Title to Life. And ſhewing the ill abode of Negligence, and the real Advantage of Care and Diligence herein: And what muſt be done to obtain a good Teſtimony from Conſcience as Judge Delegate under Chriſt, touching the Goodneſs of Mens ſpiritual Condition in the Eye of the Goſpel, and in the Sight of God.

Sect. I. Dearly Beloved, as you have heard ſome parts of the Doctrine of Juſtification more briefly opened, ſo you have had the Nature of that Faith by which you are to be juſtified, if ever juſtified, more largely handled; according to that Meaſure of Underſtanding in it which God hath given me. By which means you have Opportunity given you of beholding, as in a Glaſs, your own ſpiritual State and Condition before the Lord, whether juſtified or not; and whether your Title to that incomparable Privilege be tite and ſound, or crack'd and flaw'd. It remains now, that according to the Apoſtle's Exhortation, 2 *Cor.* xiii. 5. *You prove your own ſelves whether you be in the Faith or no*; whether you have that Faith in you, which hath been diſcovered to you to be that only kind of Faith which will be counted to them that have it for Righteouſneſs. As for ſuch as ſhall be negligent, careleſs, and ſlight in a Matter of this moment; it's a ſhrewd ſign that all is not well with them. When Tradeſmen are backward and unwilling to caſt up their Books, and to ſee how the caſe ſtands with them in point of Eſtate, it's an ill ſign that thoſe Men are behind-hand in the World; and that they themſelves are under Jealouſie and Suſpicion, that in caſe they ſhould narrowly look into things, and come to ballance their Accounts, they ſhould not find all things well: And ſo between Hope and Fear, preſuming the beſt, they blindly go on till Suits and Arreſts make them thoroughly ſenſible of their bad Condition. And truly when Men are backward and indiſpoſed to caſt up their Accounts, and to ſee how Matters ſtand with them in this great Concernment of their Souls, and to be curious and exact in it, but go on from Year to Year careleſly, preſuming the beſt, it's a thouſand to one but they are ſpiritually Bankrupts, in a breaking

Condition; which when Death comes to arreſt them, it may be they ſhall perceive, unleſs carried away in a ſpiritual Lethargy, which is worſt of all. *Solomon* ſaith, *He that deſpiſeth his Ways ſhall die*, Prov. xix. 16. He that makes light how things ſtand with him, which yet do exceeding nearly concern him, ſuch as are Matters of Eternal Life and Death; it's next to a Demonſtration that Eternal Ruine and Deſtruction, are not far from that Man, unleſs he recover himſelf from that careleſs Poſture. Whereas on the contrary, as Men that are thriving in the World, and in good caſe in point of Eſtate, take pleaſure in caſting up their Eſtates; *So he that doth Truth, cometh to the Light, that his Deeds may be made manifeſt, that they are wrought in God*, John iii. 21.

But however, let things be how they will be, as bad with you as Jealouſie it ſelf can ſuſpect, yet there's reaſon why you ſhould make the more haſt to find out the worſt; becauſe as yet there is Opportunity of keeping all from going to Ruine, of mending a bad Eſtate, of coming to underſtand things that belong to your Peace: *Now is the accepted Time, now is the Day of Salvation*; (2 *Cor.* vi. 2.) the Door is not yet ſhut, the Market-day of the Soul is not yet over. Chriſt is yet calling upon ſuch as have thought themſelves *rich, and abounding in Goods, and to have need of nothing*, and yet upon Tryal have been found *miſerable, and poor, and blind, and naked*; he is yet calling upon them to *buy of him Gold tried in the Fire, that they may be rich, and white Raiment, that they may be clothed, and that the Shame of their Nakedneſs may not appear*, Rev. iii. 18.

Truly I exceedingly fear, That that which was the caſe of this *Laodicean* Church, is the condition of vaſt Numbers of Chriſtians by Profeſſion in theſe Days, who think all is very well with them, in that they have ſome Knowledge of the Scriptures, and a Belief of the Goſpel touching Chriſt's dying for ſinners, and being the Saviour of Mankind; and becauſe they frequent the Places of his publick Worſhip, and in a formal (though liveleſs, powerleſs) way perform ſome Duties: Whenas they in the mean time are Workers of Iniquity, in Bondage to their Luſts, have no Experience of their new Birth, or Work of Regeneration in their Souls, (preſuming it may be, to the ſad deceiving of their Souls, that they were regenerate, and born again, in their Infant Baptiſm) but indulge themſelves in ſuch things as pleaſe the Fleſh; thinking that Chriſt as he is able, ſo will be willing to pay all their Scores, as long as they do but depend upon him for it. But alas! Such, if they will be but perſuaded to try themſelves by that Doctrine of Faith here laid before them, they will find themſelves in an ill caſe. O but let not that diſcourage any to be trying how it is with them, the Lord is calling upon you, ſaying, *Awake thou that ſleepeſt, and ſtand up from the dead, and Chriſt ſhall give thee Light*, Epheſ. v. 14. Though you have been all this while aſleep, and have dreamed you have been Believers, and that you are juſtified, when it's no ſuch matter; like the hungry Man the Prophet ſpeaks of, *Who dreameth, and behold he eateth, but he awaketh, and his Soul is empty: Or as when a thirſty Man dreameth, and behold he drinketh; but he awaketh, and behold he is faint, and his Soul hath Appetite*, Iſa. xxix. 8. Yet now if with this Jogg you may be but awaken'd out of this ſleep, and ſo come to ſee that That which pleaſed you ſo was indeed but a Dream; Chriſt is ready to give you Light, not only in making known to you the true and certain Terms of his Salvation, but alſo in ſhewing you how you may be indued with Power and Strength to obſerve the ſame; and finally to attain Salvation it ſelf, which through your Miſtakes hitherto, you have been in great Danger to miſs of: *He will guide you with his Counſel, and afterwards receive you unto Glory*, Pſalm lxxiii. 24.

Only be diligent in this Work, make no longer delay, thou art not Maſter of thy Time, and thou knoweſt not what a Day may bring forth; remember it is for thy Life, the Life of thy Soul; there's no dallying and trifling in Matters of this moment. What Man is he that expects ſhortly to be tried for his Life, this mortal Life; who out of the ſenſe of the Conſequence of it, is not reſtleſs in his Labours, Pains, and Endeavours Day and Night, till (if ſuch a thing be attainable) he have got together the Evidences of his Defence, and hath put himſelf into a good Poſture of Vindication? And ſhall Men be Penny-wiſe, and Pound-fooliſh? Shall they be ſolicitous about a mortal, temporal Life, which for ought they know ſhall expire with the Day of their Tryal? And ſhall Men be rechleſs, negligent, and careleſs in their Preparations and Proviſions for ſuch a Tryal, wherein their everlaſting Condition, Life, or Death, lies at ſtake? God forbid! Therefore I beſeech you in the Name of the Lord, and for the ſake of your Souls, that you give your ſelves no reſt till you know what ground you ſtand on, till you come to know, that your Plea and Defence which you have to make in the great Day of your Tryal before Chriſt the Judge of Quick and Dead, is ſuch as will then carry the Day on your ſide.

Sect. II. You may know now how things will go with you then, when that great and notable Day of Judgment and Tryal comes. You have the Rule of that Day's proceeding before you now: *The Word which Chriſt hath ſpoken*, the Doctrine which he either by himſelf or his Apoſtles hath delivered, *the ſame ſhall judge you*, that's it by which you ſhall be tryed in that Day, *John* xii. 48. That Word which you read, that Word which you hear from day to day, that's it by which you muſt ſtand or fall. So that if you will but make a buſineſs of it by laying things together, and comparing one thing with another, Scripture with Scripture, and the Temper of your Heart and Tenour of your Life therewith; you may be able to propheſie (upon ſuppoſition that you remain in the ſame Condition until Death) what Judgment you ſhall have. There's no fear of the Judge's awarding of any Sentence contrary to Law, contrary to the Doctrine of the Scriptures. If your Cauſe be good by that, you do not need to fear the Judge's being made againſt you; if your Cauſe be naught in the account of that, there's no hopes of deceiving or bribing the Judge: As your Cauſe is in the eye of the Law, ſo and no otherwiſe will it be in the Sentence of the Judge.

And for your Eaſe and Accommodation in this great and weighty Affair of your Souls; and to the end you may not be miſtaken in your own Cauſe, by miſtaking the Nature, Terms, and true Intent of the Rule of your Tryal, by which you muſt be juſtified or condemned, (Ignorance wherein, and Miſtakes whereabout are wonderful dangerous;) I have in this Book laboured to fit things to your hands, by opening the Doctrine of *Juſtification*, eſpecially in thoſe parts of it that are moſt liable to Men's Miſtakes, and to deliver it from the Incombrance of thoſe crooked Notions and Miſapprehenſions, by which Men are in danger of making that to become a Snare to them, which God hath prepared for a Table.

That therefore to which I exhort you, is, That you put your ſelves upon the Tryal now before-hand, as Men who are to run a Race, or to try Maſteries otherwiſe, are wont to be proving their Ability by a more private running of the Race, or enuring of their Bodies to other Exerciſe, before the Day of publick ſtriving for Maſtery comes. Deal faithfully with your own Souls, in trying your ſelves before the Bar of your own Conſcience now for the preſent, by that Doctrine of Faith here laid before you. The Conſcience is as it were Chriſt's Delegate, deputed by him to make Judgment by the Rule of his Word of a Man's ſpiritual Condition in the Interim, before the ſolemn Aſſize, and Day of publick Tryal come. And therefore *Men's Thoughts* are ſaid *in the mean while* (mark that word, *in the mean while*) *to accuſe or excuſe one another*, (*Rom.* ii. 15.) that is, to juſtifie or condemn, as it finds a Man guilty or not guilty, according to that Rule by which he is to be tryed by Chriſt. It is true, the Conſcience does not always make that infallible Judgment in a Man's caſe, as Chriſt himſelf will do, either for want of a right underſtanding of the Rule of Judgment, or the true ſtate of a Man's Cauſe, as being defiled and darkned, and the Eye of it made dim by too much communion with ſinful Luſts, which it may be he has corrupted and bribed partially to favour the Man's Cauſe, or at leaſt to be neutral, as not to juſtifie, ſo not to condemn, but to leave things in doubt. But to what degree it is truly enlightned in the Nature of Chriſt's Law, and the Nature of a Man's Cauſe that is to be tryed by it, ſo far it will, and can hardly do otherwiſe than make the ſame Judgment and Determination concerning a Man's Condition (if a Man will bring his Cauſe before it) as Chriſt himſelf will do. Otherwiſe there would not be that ground of ſpiritual Triumph and Rejoycing in the Verdict of Conſcience, which was found in St. *Paul* and his Chriſtian Companions upon that account, 2 *Cor.* i. 12. *For our rejoycing is this, the teſtimony of our Conſcience, that in ſimplicity and godly ſincerity, not with fleſhly Wiſdom, but by the Grace of God, we have had our Converſation in the World.*

Sect. III. The Devil, as he makes it his work and buſineſs to accuſe the very Servants of God themſelves before God day and night, (*Rev.* xii. 10.) ſo at certain times and ſeaſons, which he watches for on purpoſe, as after ſome notable ſlip in the Chriſtian Walk, or in time of ſome deep Affliction, and eſpecially towards the hour of Death, he will accuſe them at the Judgment-Seat of their own Conſciences, and bring their Cauſe to a Tryal there, to force them if poſſible to deſpair of any good iſſue when

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they ſhall come to be tryed before the Lord: Which he will ſay hard to, if he can but confound and puzzle them in the Evidences of their Juſtification and Defence, in the Court of their Conſcience. And you ſhall find ſtill, in the iſſue and upſhot, that the ſtreſs and pinch will lie upon the Evidence of the goodneſs of a Man's Faith: For if a Man be but ſure he have a right Shield of Faith in the hand of his Soul, he will eaſily be able to quench all the fiery Darts of the Devil, *Epheſ.* vi. 16. If he lay to their charge, and ſet before them the greatneſs and multitude of the Sins and Miſcarriages which they have been guilty of at times, heighten'd with all the provoking Circumſtances of Aggravation; the Plea and Defence will be, that *Chriſt the Lamb of God taketh away the ſin of the world*, John i. 29. That the *Blood of Jeſus Chriſt his Son cleanſeth us from all ſin*, 1 John i. 7. That *he is the Propitiation for our ſin, and not for ours only, but alſo for the ſin of the whole world*, 1 John ii. 2. And that not only few and ſmall Offences, but even *all manner of Sin and Blaſphemy* (that againſt the Holy Ghoſt excepted) *ſhall be forgiven unto Men*, Matth. xii. 31.

If he tell you, though that be granted, yet it will not follow that therefore your Sins are forgiven, or that you are actually cleanſed by the Blood of Chriſt; becauſe, though *Chriſt gave himſelf a Ranſom for all*, yet all ſhall not be ſaved by him; for that *wide is the gate, broad the way that leads to deſtruction, and many there be that go in thereat*, Matth. vii. 14. And ſo put you upon proving your Title to the Promiſe of Remiſſion of Sin by his Blood; your Plea will be your Belief in him, as that to which the promiſe of Juſtification and Eternal Salvation is made, in whomſoever found, *John* iii. 16. *Mark* xvi. 16. *Acts* xvi. 31. *Rom.* iii. 25. But then it's like he will go farther with you, and argue againſt you, That it does not follow, that becauſe you have ſome Faith in Chriſt, as that *he is the Son of God*, that *he died, was buried*, and *roſe again*, that therefore you are juſtified, and ſhall be acquitted before the Lord; becauſe there is a certain kind of formal, feigned, and dead Faith, which will not ſave, *James* ii. 14. And that *Simon Magus* did believe, though for all that he was *in the gall of bitterneſs, and bond of iniquity*, Acts viii. 13. and ſo did others, who for all that were in no very good condition, *John* ii. 23. and xii. 42, 43. If therefore he ſhall lay to your charge, that yours is but a Faith of this ſort and kind, and conſequently that it will not avail you, nor render your Title to the Promiſe valid, you have no other way to deal with him, and ſo defend your ſelves againſt this Article of Indictment, but by producing ſuch Proofs and Evidences of the truneſs, goodneſs, and ſoundneſs of your Faith, and thereby the validity of your Title to the Promiſe, as will ſatisfie the Judge Delegate, *Conſcience*, and make that on your ſide; and then you have caſt your Adverſary, and foiled him in his ſuit; he can proceed no farther with you; his Accuſation and Bill in this kind being thrown out of the Court of Conſcience as malicious and ſcandalous.

Sect. IV. But then, O how does it concern us to have the Evidences and Proofs of the Goodneſs of our Faith, which is our Title, to be always in a readineſs, and not to ſeek! For to be ſure, ſhould they be wanting, or ſhould they be loſt, or but defaced and blur'd, or but in a capacity of delivering themſelves ambiguouſly, our Adverſary the Devil is ſo diligent to pry into matters of this nature, as that there will be no hiding them from him, and ſo ſubtil to improve advantages in this kind given, as that we ſhall hear of him in ſuch a time and ſeaſon, in which of all other we have leaſt need to be troubled by him. And therefore as you would not have your bitter and cruel Enemy, the Devil, to vex, perplex, and worſt you in the Court of your own Conſcience, be careful above all things ſo to ſhew forth your Faith by your Works (*James* ii. 18.) as that you may put the Devil out of heart as it were of attempting you in this kind, or if he do, that you may be ſure he ſhall but loſe his labour. *He that is begotten of God, ſinneth not, but keepeth himſelf that the wicked one toucheth him not*, 1 John v. 18. It's ſinning, and matter of miſcarriage, unevenneſs, and faultering in one's way, that gives the Devil advantage againſt one, and power of impleading him: But thoſe that are truly careful to *walk worthy of the Lord unto all pleaſing*, (mark that, *Col.* i. 10.) as thoſe that are begotten of God do, they keep themſelves out of the Devil's reach, that the wicked one toucheth them not, though he diligently ſeeks it, yet he cannot get this advantage againſt them. It's in vain for the Devil to bring his Accuſations againſt a Man at the Bar of his Conſcience, if Conſcience it ſelf, which is Judge in the caſe, be able to bear a Man witneſs, that his Faith is of that kind that in the tenour of his Life worketh by ſuch acts, which argue unfeigned Love both to God and Men. This *Breaſtplate of Righteouſneſs* will effectually ſafeguard the Soul from all the Thruſts of the Devil, that he ſhall not be able to wound the Spirit, *Epheſ.* vi. 14. *Righteouſneſs keepeth him that is upright in the way*; (*Prov.* xiii. 6.) It's that to the Soul which a Coat of Mail is to the Body, it preſerves the Soul from the Moleſtations of the Devil, his Weapons cannot enter, his Inſinuations touching a Man's bad Condition before God, cannot take place. The *Armour of Righteouſneſs* is Armour of Proof *on the right hand and on the left:* (2 *Cor.* vi. 7.) If a Man have that on, the Devil can find no way to enter, or to draw Blood of the Soul: But let a Man leave off that but a little, and he ſhall ſoon feel the Devil's Darts ſtriking through his Liver, (to allude to *Prov.* vii. 23.) and his Sword paſſing through his Soul, and ſuch Aches, Pains, and Gripes occaſioned thereby in the Soul, as ſometime cauſed a ſtout Soldier of the Lord's upon that occaſion, to *roar for the Diſquietneſs of his Heart,* (Pſalm xxxviii. 8.) and to complain of broken Bones, *Pſalm* li. 8.

Sect. V. And truly for Conſcience it ſelf, which is ſuch a Judge, as next to the ſupreme Judge, is privy to all a Man's Ways, inward and outward; it cannot take a Man's part againſt the Devil's Accuſations and Pleas before its Bar touching the Unſoundneſs of his Faith, and Brokenneſs of his Title to the Promiſe of Juſtification and Life; if it diſcern not in him thoſe ſpiritual Qualifications, as will in the Eye of the holy Law of Jeſus, evince his Faith to be living and not dead. For as it is the living and not the dead, among Men, in whom the Title in Law reſts, and is always ſo judged; ſo is it the living and not the dead Faith, in which the Title in the ſenſe of the Goſpel reſts, and will be always ſo judged by an upright Conſcience.

And therefore if you would have Conſcience to paſs the Sentence on your ſide, and againſt the Impleadings of your Enemy, and to be a Witneſs for you in your Cauſe; be you ſure you do nothing at any time to offend Conſcience, and to diſoblige it, or to make it a Witneſs againſt you. For if the Devil ſhall appeal to Conſcience it ſelf, which is the Judge, whether it be not able to witneſs that at ſuch and ſuch a time, ſuch and ſuch Offences and Tranſgreſſions of the Holy Law were committed and done in Word or Deed, not only in its ſight, but contrary to its *Items* and Checks, and the Conſcience knows it to be true; can the Conſcience, think you, in ſuch a Caſe vindicate a Man's Cauſe againſt his Enemy? Surely no; but muſt give the Devil his due, and ſay as he ſays, ſo far as he ſpeaks true. And how far a few Inſtances of this Nature will go towards the ſpoiling of a Man's Cauſe, when he comes to be tried for his Integrity, I leave to every Soul ſeriouſly to conſider. A few Acts of this Nature will go farther to evince a Man to be unfaithful and falſe to God, and under the Condemnation of his Law in the main, than a great many good Actions in Company of theſe will do, to prove him to be faithful, and under the Protection of the Law, *Ezek.* xxiii. 12, 13. *The Righteouſneſs of the righteous ſhall not deliver him in the Day of his Tranſgreſſion.* Again, *When I ſhall ſay to the righteous, that he ſhall ſurely live: If he truſt to his own Righteouſneſs, and commit Iniquity, all his Righteouſneſs ſhall not be remembred, but for his Iniquity which he hath committed he ſhall die for it.* Which ſurely remains in force, where true Repentance, which conſiſts of Contrition and Reformation, hath not altered the caſe; which otherwiſe is indeed a Remedy againſt the Sin of back-ſliding, as well as againſt other Evils, where it takes place.

Sect. VI. Again, Conſcience in its Teſtimony or Verdict, is that which does not only acquit a Man from the Accuſations of the Devil, when calumnious, but which alſo gives him Boldneſs towards God of receiving a gracious and merciful Sentence of final Juſtification and Abſolution from Chriſt, when the Day of his ſolemn and publick Trial ſhall come. For as here in *London* at the Seſſions of Peace, an inferiour Court, things are prepared and made ready for Tryal at the Grand Seſſions, ſo that a Man may gueſs by the Verdict of the petty Jury in the lower Court, how things are like to go with him in the upper Court; even ſo may a Man be able to make a kind of certain Judgment how things are like to go with him touching his final Juſtification in the Grand Seſſion of the Judge of all the World, by that preparatory Tryal which hath been impartially made in the Court of a Man's own Conſcience, as I noted before. If he be acquitted, juſtified here by the Teſtimony and Verdict of Conſcience grounded upon the Statutes of Chriſt, and agreeable to Matters of Fact, he will be full of a comfortable Confidence of ſpeeding well at the Judgment Seat of Jeſus Chriſt, 1 *John* iii. 21. *Beloved, if our Heart condemn us not, then have we Confidence towards God.* But if a Man's Conſcience, which if it err on any ſide it's like to be in favour to the Man himſelf, if this find a Man guilty and obnoxious to the condemning Sentence of Chriſt's Law, there's ſmall Hopes for that Man to expect a Sentence of Juſtification and Abſolution at the Tribunal of Chriſt, (unleſs he can upon the Senſe of what Condition he is in, beſtir himſelf in the mean time to procure his Pardon, by taking ſuch a courſe of Amendment as by which through infinite Grace it may be had,) 1 *John* iii. 20. *For if our Heart condemn us, God is greater than our Heart, and knoweth all things*; hath a more piercing Sight to diſcern a Man's Guilt, than Conſcience it ſelf hath, and therefore will condemn much more.

Sect. VII. O Sirs, how does it then concern every one of us to carry all things fair in the Sight of our Conſcience, which indeed is privy in a manner to all our doings, and to maintain Friendſhip with that, and to take heed of wronging and abuſing that, or making that ill affected towards us. Sin and Unworthineſs of Behaviour in Word or Deed, is that which defiles Conſcience, which troubles and diſturbs it, which grieves and ill affects it, and diſables it from pleading a Man's Cauſe before the Lord, or giving Teſtimony on his ſide; ſo that it can never ſend a Man with Boldneſs before the Lord, till that which hath defiled and offended it be taken away, *Heb.* x. 22. *Let us draw near with a true Heart, in full Aſſurance of Faith, having our Hearts ſprinkled from an evil Conſcience.* Mark, to the drawing near to God in full Aſſurance of Faith, with Boldneſs and Confidence of being accepted with him; this we ſee is abſolutely neceſſary, *viz.* That the Heart be firſt *ſprinkled from an evil Conſcience*; that That be taken away which made the Conſcience evil while it was there, and what's that but ſin? So long as the Guilt of Sin, and Filth of Sin remain upon the Heart, the Conſcience will be evil; if Sin trouble the Conſcience, Conſcience will trouble the Man, and fill him with thoſe Fears as that he will be far from drawing nigh to God with Confidence and full Aſſurance of Faith, but rather like *Adam* in that caſe, run away and hide himſelf from God, if it were poſſible.

St. *Paul*, no doubt, well knowing this, to the end he might maintain his Hope and Confidence in God touching the Reſurrection-day in good plight, and might always have his Conſcience on his ſide, and ready to preſent him unto God with a good Teſtimony, what did he do? What! *Herein* (ſaith he) *do I exerciſe my ſelf to have always a Conſcience void of Offence towards God, and towards Men*, Acts xxiv. 16. In all his Behaviour God-ward, Men-ward, and that always; he was ſo intent upon this thing of gratifying his Conſcience, that he made it his conſtant Exerciſe, was wonderful affraid of giving his Conſcience any Offence, of offering any Injury or Wrong to that; for he knew if he did, that would ſpoil his Hope towards God. As the *Myſtery of Faith*, (2 *Tim.* iii. 9.) ſo the Confidence of Faith muſt be *held in a pure Conſcience*: Indeed it's able to live in no other Air. *A pure Heart*, *a good Conſcience*, *and Faith unfeigned*, theſe are link'd together, (1 *Tim.* i. 5.) where you find one, there you will find all, and where any one is wanting, to be ſure there the other will be miſſing. If a good Conſcience be once put away, as it is where a pure Heart is not kept, it's in vain for Men to boaſt of their Faith and Confidence in God, 1 *Tim.* i. 19. *Holding Faith and a good Conſcience, which ſome having put away, concerning Faith have made Shipwrack.* If a good Conſcience be once put away, the next News you hear, is the Shipwrack of Faith. Men may have a liveleſs Form of Faith, as the Body and Bulk of a Ship ſometimes remains after a Wrack, but is rendred uſeleſs and unſerviceable; and ſo is Faith when once a good Conſcience is gone, it's of no uſe to entitle a Man to the Promiſe, and conſequently of no uſe to give a Man Confidence towards God, or to embolden him to come before him.

If therefore to have Conſcience which is Judge under Chriſt to be your Friend, be any thing in your Eye: If to have that to plead your Cauſe, and to be a Witneſs for you againſt the ſubtle Inſinuations, malicious Accuſations, and violent Proſecutions of the Devil, be a thing deſirable to you: If to have Conſcience to ſend you to Chriſt's Bar with Letters teſtimonial in your hand, ſignifying that your cauſe hath been tried in that Court, and Evidences and Witneſſes impartially heard and conſidered on both ſides, and your Cauſe found good, and you your ſelves under the Juſtification and Protection of Chriſt's Goſpel; I ſay, if ſuch things as theſe be any thing worth with you, then be ſure you uſe Conſcience well which hath its Eye upon you always; do not trouble it, do not provoke it, do not diſoblige it at any time by any means, and then *the Peace of God which paſſeth all Underſtanding, ſhall keep your Hearts and Minds through Chriſt Jeſus.*

Friends, theſe are great matters, and you your ſelves, every one of you, greatly concerned in them: If you have not the ſenſe of it now, yet know ye, that the time is coming apace wherein ye will better underſtand what theſe things mean. But take heed this ſenſe come not upon you too late, when the opportunity of acting the part of a good Conſcience is over: Remember how the fooliſh Virgins were then to provide themſelves of Oil for their Lamps, when the wiſe, by the light of that which they had, provided in due time, entred in with the Bridegroom, and the Door was ſhut againſt the other.

I have now done with giving this piece of Inſtruction, Caution and Advice, and the good Lord proſper it to thoſe that have heard it, and to thoſe that ſhall read it: It remains on our part, every one of us, that we be preſently up and doing according to it, or elſe it will be a witneſs againſt us, in the Day of the Lord. And I my ſelf, who have been holding forth to you theſe great things, am very ſenſible, God knows, that I am but a very poor and weak Creature, and have had many a trembling of Heart for my ſelf as well as others, whilſt I have been writing theſe matters of mighty moment, leſt I ſhould ſtrike upon any of thoſe Rocks, whereof the troublesome Sea of this ſinful World is very full; and of which I have been warning others, before I make the fair Haven toward which I am ſteering. And I dare ſay, you will be never the nearer the danger, if you be under the ſame ſenſe and fear too. But O then let us all away to God, and follow him day and night with our fervent Supplications, to be upheld and kept by him, taking hold of his Strength, truſting under the Shadow of his Love, depending upon Chriſt for ſupplies of all neceſſaries for the Chriſtian Life, carefully avoiding all things that might diſtaſte or grieve him, and cauſe him to withdraw and leave us; and with like care to do always thoſe things that pleaſe him; ſo may we be certain that his Eye will be always on us, and his Heart towards us for good, and his right Hand ſhall uphold us and preſerve us to his Heavenly Kingdom, *Amen.*

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ANIMADVERSIONS

On that PART of

Mr. *ROBERT FERGUSON's* BOOK,

ENTITULED,

The Intereſt of Reaſon in Religion,

Which treats of JUSTIFICATION:

In a LETTER to a FRIEND.

BRITISH MUSEUM

ANIMADVERSIONS ON Mr. *Ferguſon* of Juſtification.

SIR,

I Return you, with Mr. *Ferguſon*'s Book, my hearty Thanks for the Loan of it. I have read it, and find many things well ſaid in it: And where I find any thing otherwiſe, I impute it not to his want of Ability if the Cauſe would bear it; but the Cauſe it ſelf in thoſe particular Inſtances which I ſuſpect him to be defective in. For neither he, nor any other, of what Ability ſoever he be, can, as *Solomon* ſays, *make that ſtreight which God hath made crooked*, Eccles. vii. 13. And therefore the greater the Parts be of any Man, who yet cannot make Work of a Cauſe he undertakes, it doth but make me ſo much the more doubtful of the Goodneſs of that Cauſe, if it were any whit doubtful to me before.

I will give you one Inſtance of this nature out of Mr. *Ferguſon*'s Book, *Chap.* II. *Sect.* 10. Where he aſſerts, That Mr. *Sherlock*'s Notion (as he calls it) of Juſtification, *is not any ways maintainable, but by perverting innumerable Texts from their plain and natural Senſe to a Metaphorick: And that it is accompanied with this fatal Unhappineſs, of turning a great part of the Bible into more inſignificant and empty Metaphors*, p. 402, 403. And then repreſents Mr. *Sherlock*'s Notion thus: *That we are only juſtified by believing and obeying the Goſpel of Chriſt; That the Sacrifice of Chriſt's Death, and the Righteouſneſs of his Life, have no other Influence upon our Acceptance with God, but that to them we owe the Covenant of Grace; that is, God being well pleaſed with the Obedience of Chriſt's Life and the Sacrifice of his Death, entered into a new Covenant with Mankind, wherein he promiſeth Pardon of Sin and Eternal Life to thoſe who believe and obey the Goſpel. So that the Righteouſneſs of Chriſt is not the formal Cauſe of our Juſtification; but the Righteouſneſs of his Life and Death is the meritorious Cauſe whereby we are declared righteous, and rewarded as righteous Perſons. The Covenant of Grace, which God for Chriſt's ſake hath made, pardoning our paſt Sins and Follies, and rewarding a ſincere though imperfect Obedience. The Goſpel, by its great Arguments and Motives, and powerful Aſſiſtances, forms our Minds to the Love and Practice of Holineſs, and ſo makes us inherently righteous: And the Grace of the Goſpel accepts and rewards that ſincere Obedience, which according to the Rigour and Severity of the Law could deſerve no Reward*, p. 404.

Mr. *Ferguſon* having made this Recital out of Mr. *Sherlock*'s Book, knew not how as it ſeems to make good his Charge therefrom; unleſs Mr. *S.* would be ſo kind as to grant what Mr. F. doth affirm, but Mr. *S.* himſelf no-where aſſerts. And therefore although he grants in p. 416. *That in reference to the mere Demands of the Goſpel, we may, in a proper Senſe be ſaid to be juſtified:* Yet he ſaith, *that in reference to the Law, which is that alone which accuſeth us, we cannot in any Propriety of Speech be ſaid to be juſtified; but that Juſtification, whereſoever it regards our Diſcharge from the Accuſation of the Law, muſt be taken Metaphorically*, (he means, I ſuppoſe) unleſs we are diſcharged from that Accuſation, by having the Righteouſneſs of Chriſt imputed to us. Whether this be true or no, I ſhall put to the Tryal afterwards.

But in the mean time, pray you conſider how little reaſon Mr. F. had to go about to charge Mr. *S.* with holding Juſtification in a *Metaphorick* ſenſe, unleſs he had firſt ſhewed us, that according to Mr. *S*'s Sentiment of Juſtification before repreſented, he had made ſomething elſe neceſſary to it, than that which is an anſwering of the Demands of the Goſpel, which yet he hath not done that I can ſee. But indeed Mr. F. is ſo far from doing that, as that he hath done the quite contrary; as you cannot but perceive, when you compare Mr. F's Conceſſion and Mr. *S*'s Notion touching Juſtification together: For Mr. F. acknowledgeth, as I ſaid before, that in reference to the mere Demands

mands of the Goſpel we may in a proper ſenſe be ſaid to be juſtified; and Mr. *S.* ſaith no more, as Mr. F. recites him, but that we are only juſtified by Believing and Obeying the Goſpel. And if to Believe and Obey the Goſpel be not to anſwer the Demands of the Goſpel, and no more, pray you get Mr. F. to tell us what is: But if it be, then Mr. F. inſtead of making good his Charge againſt Mr. *S.* hath himſelf even fairly acquitted and diſcharged him from it, and might well have taken himſelf off here, and ſaved himſelf the labour of farther proſecution.

But however, though Mr. *S.* doth not, yet it ſeems Mr. F. doth hold, that we muſt be juſtified, if juſtified at all, by anſwering the demands of the Law, as well as of the Goſpel, although the Scripture tells us, that *he that abideth in the Doctrine of* Chriſt, (which is the Goſpel) *he hath both the Father and the Son*, 2 John 9. And becauſe Mr. F. is of opinion, that the Demands of the Law muſt be anſwered, or elſe we cannot be juſtified; therefore he thinks Mr. *S.* ought to be ſo too, which if he can perſuade him to be, then he doubts not but that he ſhall be able to make good his Charge againſt him.

And therefore to lay a Foundation for a neceſſity of a perfect legal Righteouſneſs unto Juſtification, though not inherent in our ſelves, yet by derivation of it from our Saviour in whom it was, he does in effect aſſert the Original Legal Covenant to remain ſtill in force, notwithſtanding the eſtabliſhing with Men the Evangelical: And that in order to our Juſtification, it is not enough to have an Evangelical Righteouſneſs to anſwer the Demands of the Goſpel, but that we muſt alſo have a perfect Legal Righteouſneſs to anſwer the Demands of the Law, though not in our ſelves, but by derivation from another, as was ſaid before.

Whether this be not ſo, judge, I pray you, by his own words, comparing what he ſays in Page 411. and Page 414. which are theſe: *Now as the Introduction of the Law of Faith hath not abrogated the Law of perfect Obedience, but this as well as that doth remain in force, each of them requiring a Conformity to its own Demands: So ſuppoſing us to anſwer all that the Goſpel requires, yet the other Law abiding uncancelled, and we being all guilty of the Violation of its Terms, there lies accordingly a Charge againſt us, from which by Juſtification we are to be acquitted*, p. 414. And again, p. 411. *That ſecluding not only the Righteouſneſs of Chriſt's Life, but the Satisfaction of his Death as the* Matter, *and the Imputation of it as the* formal Cauſe *of Juſtification, it ſeems repugnant to the Immutability and Eſſential Holineſs of God, to juſtifie us upon an imperfect Obedience, the* Law *which requireth a perfect remaining ſtill in force, and denouncing Wrath in caſe of every failure.*

By all which you will perceive, I ſuppoſe, that Mr. F. holds that the Law remains ſtill in force, requiring a perfect Obedience unto Juſtification; and for want thereof, and in caſe of every failure, denounceth Wrath: And that therefore, unleſs the Satisfaction of Chriſt's Death, and the Righteouſneſs of his Life were formally imputed to us, (*i. e.* as I ſuppoſe he means, ſo as that we may be ſaid to have made Satisfaction in and by him, and perfectly kept the Law in and by him, by having his Obedience and Satisfaction imputed to us) it would be repugnant to the Immutability and Eſſential Holineſs of God to juſtifie upon an imperfect Obedience.

In which Aſſertions of his there ſeem to me to be two grand Miſtakes, beſides that of a formal Imputation he ſpeaks of. The firſt is, in holding the Law to be ſtill in force, not only in requiring Obedience to it ſelf by way of *Duty*, which is true, but in requiring *Perfection* of Obedience, as a *Condition* of Juſtification, and in its Rigour and Severity in denouncing Wrath in caſe of *every failure*. Secondly, In that he holds, that though we ſhould anſwer all that the Goſpel requires, both in reſpect of a Righteouſneſs of inherent Grace, and of a Perſonal ſincere Obedience, yet we could not be juſtified without the formal Imputation of a perfect Legal Righteouſneſs, as aforeſaid; and that theſe two are grand Miſtakes indeed, I ſhall endeavour to demonſtrate to you.

In oppoſition to the firſt of them, I conceive the Scripture will warrant me to affirm, That God by founding *a new Covenant*, a Covenant of *Grace*, with the World in his Son Jeſus Chriſt and his Mediatory Undertaking, hath Reſcinded or Superceded the Rigour and Severity of the Original Law in two things: Firſt, as a legal Perfection of Obedience was by it required as the *Condition* of Juſtification and Life: And, Secondly, as it did *denounce* Wrath and Condemnation in caſe of *every failure*.

Although the Original Law of Nature, the Moral Law, be Eternal and Unchangeable in requiring Obedience by way of *Duty*, yet it is not ſo in the foreſaid Rigour and Severity of its Sanction.

To eſtabliſh the Law again in this ſenſe, after the Covenant of Promiſe is made, would be, according to the Apoſtle's Reaſoning, to *make Faith void, and the Promiſe of none effect*, Rom. iv. 14. Gal. iii. 18. For the old and new terms of Juſtification cannot conſiſt together, without the one evacuating the other. *If by Grace* (ſaith the Apoſtle) *then it is no more of Works: otherwiſe Grace would be no more Grace. But if Works, then it is no more Grace; otherwiſe Work is no more Work*, Rom. xi. 6. And again, *whoſoever of you are juſtified by the Law, ye are fallen from Grace*, Gal. v. 4. By the Interpoſition of Chriſt we are *redeemed* from the Sanction or *Curſe of the Law*, which curſeth every one that continueth not in all things which it requireth, and that for this very end, *that the Bleſſing of Abraham* (*viz.* of being juſtified by Faith according to the terms of the New Covenant) *might come on the Gentiles through Jeſus Chriſt*, Gal. iii. 13, 14. Intimating, that this Bleſſing of the New Covenant could not have taken place, if the Curſe of the Old had ſtill remained.

When St. *Paul* ſaith, that *the Miniſtration of Death written and engraven in ſtones is done away*, (2 Cor. iii. 7. compared with ver. 11.) I pray you, what of this was done away by the Introduction of the Evangelical Miniſtration, if not the *Rigour* of the *Condition* of eſcaping the Curſe of it? For, from that it is that it is denominated the *Miniſtration of Death and Condemnation*, and it is done away as ſuch a Miniſtration: For otherwiſe the Law engraven in Stones, as it is a Rule of and Obligation to Duty, is not done away. In this ſenſe indeed *Chriſt did not come to deſtroy the Law*, Matth. v. 17.

This Benefit by Chriſt, in God's making a new Covenant, and granting new Terms, upon account of his undertaking, is not limited to ſome Men only, but extended to all: In this ſenſe Chriſt died for all Men, without exception. And it is not unlikely, but that one reaſon at leaſt, why God in his Wiſdom and Goodneſs thought it meet to vouchſafe unto the whole Race of *Adam* theſe new and gracious Terms of Recovery after the Fall, when no ſuch thing is granted the lapſed Angels, was this, becauſe the Condemnation, into which the Angels fell, was by their own perſonal actual Rebellion, without Temptation from another; whereas the Condemnation, into which all the Poſterity of *Adam* fell, proceeded originally from his and his Wife's Tranſgreſſion, (and that from the Temptation of the Devil) and not from the Perſonal Act of their Progeny.

And that the benefit of freeing Men from the rigorous Sanction of the Law by the active and paſſive Obedience of Chriſt, in which the new Covenant is founded, is as extenſive as ever the effect of *Adam*'s Diſobedience was in ſubjecting all Men to Condemnation according to the rigorous Terms of the Law, is I conceive plainly aſſerted by the Apoſtle, when he ſaith in *Rom.* v. 18. *As by the Offence of One Judgment came upon all Men to Condemnation: even ſo by the Righteouſneſs of One the free Gift came upon all Men unto Juſtification of Life.* By the *free Gift*, which comes by the Righteouſneſs of Chriſt upon all Men unto Juſtification of Life, I underſtand the *New Covenant.* For this *free Gift* can neither be the Righteouſneſs of the One here ſpoken of, but that which is procured by it; nor yet Juſtification it ſelf, for that is the effect of it. So that we cannot in reaſon underſtand it otherwiſe than of ſome middle thing, and that in all probability can be none other than the *Grace* contained in the *New Covenant*, which Covenant God by a moſt gracious Grant and free Gift hath vouchſafed to all Men for the Righteouſneſs-ſake of Chriſt here ſpoken of, in which Remiſſion of Sin and Eternal Life are promiſed upon condition of Faith. And this exactly agrees with what the ſame Apoſtle ſaith, *Epheſ.* ii. 8. when he ſaith, that *by Grace we are ſaved through Faith, and that not of our ſelves, it is the* Gift *of God*: That is, it is the Grace and Gift of God, that now we may be ſaved by Faith; a favour which the Law never afforded: For the *Law is not of Faith; but the Man that doth them, ſhall live in them.* And when the Apoſtle ſaith, *this free Gift came upon all Men unto Juſtification of Life*, we are not to underſtand it, I conceive, as if Juſtification in *Act* came upon all Men univerſally by the Righteouſneſs of Chriſt and this free Gift; but that for the ſake of the one, and in the other, ſuch gracious *Terms* are granted and offered to *all Men*, without exception, as by which they *may attain* unto Juſtification of Life *actually*, if they do not wilfully *neglect* and *reject* them. And leſs than this I ſee not how the Apoſtle's words can ſignifie, if you conſider the nature of the Compariſon he makes between the Effects of the firſt *Adam*'s Diſobedience, and the ſecond *Adam*'s Obedience, in reference unto all Men, without exception of any. As by the Diſobedience of the former all Men were brought under an utter Incapacity of being juſtified and ſaved ſo long as the Original Covenant in the rigour of its Sanction remained in force, ſo by the Obedience of the latter all Men are put into a Capacity of being juſtified and ſaved by Vertue of new Terms in the new Covenant, which are obtained thereby, and by which the old Terms are cancelled or ſuperceded.

Theſe things being ſo, I leave you to judge whether there be any need of, or any occaſion for ſuch a formal Imputation of Chriſt's Righteouſneſs unto our Juſtification to anſwer the Law in its Demands of perfect legal Obedience as a condition of it, and the Accuſations thereof for want of it, as Mr. F. contends for, and Mr. *S.* oppoſeth. For this Demand and this Accuſation was taken off ſo ſoon as the New Covenant, founded by God in Chriſt's active and paſſive Obedience, took place. And this Benefit of having *new Terms* of Life granted, which accrues to the World by Chriſt's Mediatory Undertaking, does not at all depend upon our Believing in Chriſt, but is *abſolutely free*, and that wherein he hath been aforehand with us, and with all Men which have been born into the World ſince the Covenant of Grace did firſt commence, and remains made good to them, whether they believe it or no. So that from thenceforth no Man ſhall be condemned for want of a perfect legal Righteouſneſs, but only for want of an Evangelical Righteouſneſs.

And becauſe this is a matter of weight, I will add yet ſomething farther to prove, that this New Covenant, by which the Terms of the Old are cancell'd, is made and eſtabliſh'd in Chriſt, not only with ſome part of Mankind, *viz.* Such as ſhall be ſaved, as ſome would reſtrain it, (who think it, in the Nature of it, Abſolute, and not Conditional, no not in reference to particular Perſons, which yet it muſt needs be, if made to all, unleſs all were eventually to be ſaved) but it's made with all Men univerſally. And to this purpoſe, I pray you, conſider the Declaration of God's Grace and Favour to all Mankind, in thoſe words of his to *Abraham*, *Iſaac*, and *Jacob*, mentioned no leſs than five times in the Book of *Geneſis*, viz. *In thee and in thy Seed ſhall all* Families, *all Nations of the Earth be bleſſed*, Chap. xii. 3. and xviii. 18. and xxii. 18. and xxvi. 4. and xxviii. 14. By which the unbelieving Jews indeed underſtood, that in time all Nations ſhould become Proſelytes to *Judaiſm*, and their Nation become the Head of all Nations, and the Meſſias a glorious viſible Head over them. But in oppoſition hereto, and to their Expectations of Juſtification by the Law, St. *Paul* interprets it to be meant of the Covenant of Grace, eſtabliſhed in Chriſt, with all Nations and Families of the Earth, who are all ſo far bleſſed hereby, as to have new Terms of Salvation granted them, *Gal.* iii. For, whereas they underſtood by *Seed* the whole Poſterity of *Abraham* in *Jacob*'s Line, as if all Nations ſhould be bleſſed in them; St. *Paul* reſtrains it only to Chriſt, as all Nations were to be bleſs'd in him, as Head of the Covenant, *ver.* 16. *He ſaith not unto Seeds as of many, but as of one, and to thy Seed which is Chriſt.* And then, that the Bleſſing promiſed to all Nations in this Seed was the Covenant, appears by the next words in ver. 17. *And this I ſay, that the Covenant, which was confirmed before of God in Chriſt, the Law which was four hundred and thirty Years after cannot diſanul, that it ſhould make the Promiſe of none effect.* This Covenant we ſee was then *confirmed* of God in Chriſt, not then firſt *made*, for it was extant in the World before. And to the ſame ſenſe St. *Paul* had ſaid before in *ver.* 8. *The Scriptures foreſeeing that God would juſtifie the Heathen through* Faith, *preached before the Goſpel unto* Abraham, *ſaying*, *In thee ſhall all Nations be bleſſed.* And when he ſaith, that God in thoſe words preached the *Goſpel* unto *Abraham*, it is all one as to have ſaid, he declared to him the *Covenant*: For *Goſpel* here, and *Covenant* in ver. 17. are two words indeed, but ſignifie the ſame thing, as frequently they do elſewhere. And St. *Peter* expreſly calls that Promiſe to *Abraham* the *Covenant*, Acts iii. 25. And beſides, St. *Paul* declares what the Nature and Subſtance of that *Covenant* or *Goſpel* was, which is extended to all Nations in that Promiſe, and that he ſays was, that God would *juſtifie the Heathen through* Faith; which is a brief Deſcription of the Covenant of Grace. Theſe things then being ſo, that God hath eſtabliſhed a New Covenant with all Men, and thereby cancelled the rigorous Sanction of the primitive Law, as that required *Perfection* of Obedience as the *Condition* of Juſtification, I now leave you to judge whether Mr. F. doth not build the neceſſity of the Imputation of Chriſt's Righteouſneſs unto Juſtification in the ſenſe he aſſerts it neceſſary upon an imaginary Foundation and groundleſs Suppoſition; and if he do, that Foundation being removed, that which he builds thereon muſt needs fall.

Having, I hope, Sir, by this time ſatisfied you, and clearly evinced, that I have not without cauſe charged Mr. F. with the former of the two grand Miſtakes above mentioned, I ſhall now proceed to endeavour to do the like touching the ſecond; which ſecond, as you may remember, was in that he holds that although we ſhould *anſwer all that the Goſpel requires*, both in reſpect of a Righteouſneſs of *inherent Grace*, and of perſonal *ſincere Obedience*; yet we could not be juſtified without ſuch a *perfect Righteouſneſs* imputed to us, and derived upon us, as would adequately *anſwer the Demands and Accuſations of the Law*: That thus he holds is evident by what he ſays in *p.* 414, and in other Paſſages in the ſame Section.

I ſhall not need here to do again what I have done already; that is, to prove the Non-neceſſity of the Imputation of ſuch a Righteouſneſs unto us for our Juſtification, as every way anſwers the Demands of the Law, as conſidered in its original Rigour and Severity. That which remains for me to do, is to demonſtrate to you, that Mr. *Ferguſon* is under a Miſtake in denying that our anſwering all that the Goſpel requires, in a Righteouſneſs both of inherent Grace and perſonal ſincere Obedience, is available to Juſtification, without the Imputation of Chriſt's Righteouſneſs in Mr. F's Senſe; and withal to ſhew, that we are ſaid in a proper Senſe to be juſtified by believing and obeying the Goſpel, and that Mr. F. had neither ground nor fair Pretence to charge Mr. S's Sentiment of being juſtified by believing and obeying the Goſpel, with any ſuch Abſurdity or Inconvenience, as that it is not maintainable without perverting innumerable Texts from their plain and natural Senſe to a Metaphorick.

Only let me premiſe this, that it would always be remembred, that whatever Benefits do accrue to us by vertue of the New Covenant, are owing unto Chriſt, and truly attributable unto him; in whom, for whoſe ſake, and upon account of whoſe undertaking the Covenant it ſelf, and all the Benefits of it are vouchſafed unto Men. And accordingly this Covenant in Scripture is ſaid to be *confirmed of God in Chriſt*, *Gal.* iii. 17. to be the *New Teſtament in his Blood*, Matth. xxvi. 28. and his Blood to be *the Blood of the everlaſting Covenant*, Heb. xiii. 20. And he himſelf *given for a Covenant of the People*, Iſa. xlii. 6. and *all the Promiſes of God are in him, yea, and in him, Amen.* 2 Cor. i. 22. Whatever then depends upon this Covenant, depends upon Chriſt, and accordingly the Benefits promiſed in it; Remiſſion of Sin, and Eternal Life are in Scripture aſcribed unto him. And although Faith, as comprehending Repentance and ſincere Obedience, be imputed for Righteouſneſs; yet it is not for its own ſake that it is ſo, but for Chriſt's ſake, and all by vertue of the Divine Will, which hath of mere Grace and favour appointed that ſo it ſhall be.

This being premiſed, I proceed now to ſhew, that we are juſtified by God upon our believing and obeying the Goſpel, and that in a proper Senſe; and that our believing and obeying the Goſpel is our Evangelical Righteouſneſs, upon the taking place whereof in Men God accounts, and by the Doctrine in the Scriptures declares them juſt, and deals with them accordingly, which is his juſtifying of them.

To this end let it be conſidered, that this Covenant, as founded by God in the righteouſneſs of Chriſt's Life, and Sacrifice of his Death, doth conſiſt of two parts, of *Conditions* required by God, and to be performed by Men; and of *Promiſe* of Benefits made by God, and to be performed by him, but to be received and enjoyed by Men. The *Condition*, upon which Promiſe of Benefits is made by God, is that which Mr. *S.* rightly calls a *believing and obeying* the Goſpel: And the *Benefits* promiſed upon the aforeſaid Condition, Mr. *S.* truly ſaith are *Pardon of Sin and Eternal Life.* That ſuch Promiſes are made, and upon ſuch Conditions, appears every where in Scripture, where things of this nature are ſpoken of, as every one knows that knows the Scripture: And Mr. F. himſelf ſtands declared no Enemy to the Doctrine of the Conditionality of the Promiſes.

Things then being thus ſettled between God and all Men in this Covenant, the Enquiry upon every Man's Tryal will be, whether he hath performed the Condition required on his part in believing, repenting, and ſincerely obeying. If it be found that he hath, he is thereupon as truly and in a proper Senſe juſtified, that is accounted and by the Goſpel declared and pronounced Evangelically juſt and righteous, *i. e.* in the Senſe of this Evangelical Law, as he would have been in the ſenſe of the Original Law, in caſe he had obſerved the Terms of that.

And had I been to have written to Mr. F. I would have enquired of him, which of theſe things now mentioned he would or could deny, being all ſo perfectly agreeable, as they are, to the Tenour and very Letter of the Scripture? Will he, or can he deny

Belief in the Goſpel, and Obedience to it to be the Condition upon which God in the Goſpel or new Covenant hath promiſed Pardon of Sin and Eternal Life? Or, which is the ſame, that he hath promiſed theſe Benefits to ſuch and to no other?

This I take for granted he will not deny.

Next, I would demand whether Faith, Repentance, and ſincere Obedience, be not all that is required of Men themſelves by God in the Goſpel to make them Evangelically righteous, and capable of the ſaving Benefits promiſed in the Goſpel? If they be (and I believe Mr. F. will not deny them to be ſo, from one of his own Aſſertions, *p.* 414.) then I farther query, whether theſe do not denominate a Man Evangelically righteous, or righteous in the Goſpel-ſenſe, as well as the doing all that the Law required would have denominated a Man legally righteous, or righteous in the Senſe of the Law?

And farther, Whether Men from thoſe Qualifications aforeſaid are not in Scripture ſo denominated? As for Inſtance, *Faith*, which is, as I have ſaid, comprehenſive of Repentance and ſincere Obedience when ſaving; this, as the Scripture tells us expreſly, *was counted to* Abraham *for Righteouſneſs*, Rom. iv. 3. Gal. iii. 6. And we are told alſo, that the Scripture, ſpeaking of this in reference to *Abraham*, *was not written for his ſake only, but for us alſo to whom it ſhall be imputed if we believe on him, who raiſed up Jeſus our Lord from the dead*, ver. xxiii. 24.

And then for Evangelical or ſincere Obedience, that comes in alſo for a ſhare in denominating a Man righteous, in a Goſpel-ſenſe, *He that doth Righteouſneſs is righteous*, ſaith St. *John*, 1 *Ep.* iii. 7. and he ſpeaks it of that Righteouſneſs which Men themſelves do in a courſe of ſincere Obedience, and not of the Righteouſneſs of another imputed to them. *In the Righteouſneſs which he hath done ſhall he live*, ſaith the Prophet, ſpeaking of a Man that ſhall turn from all the ſins which he hath committed, and ſhall *obſerve all God's Statutes, and do all that which is lawful and right*, *Ezek.* xviii. 22. If then Faith, Repentance and ſincere Obedience, be all that the Goſpel requires to denominate a Man righteous in a Goſpel-ſenſe, and to make him capable of the promiſed Benefits; then all thoſe in whom theſe are found, are by God in the Goſpel declared and pronounced righteous Men, which Declaration is their Juſtification: For what is done in this kind by the Goſpel on Earth, is done alſo by God in Heaven.

No Man ſure, that underſtands and conſiders what he ſaith, will deny this to be Juſtification in a proper Senſe, nor aſſert it not maintainable without perverting the Scriptures from their plain and natural Meaning to a *Metaphorick* Senſe; whereas it's moſt evident, it ſtands back'd with the Scriptures, underſtood in their plain proper and genuine Senſe.

But becauſe Mr. *Ferguſon* was ſomewhat ſenſible, that he could not duly infer any thing from Mr. *S*'s own words, touching his Apprehenſions about Juſtification, but what was agreeable to the Notion of Juſtification in a proper Senſe, in reference to the Demands of the Goſpel; as you may perceive by what he ſaith towards the beginning of the Page 416. And becauſe he had a great mind to faſten ſomething by way of Retortion upon Mr. *S*'s Notion of Juſtification, as if it had not been maintainable to be Juſtification properly ſo called, without wreſting the Scriptures from their plain and proper Senſe, (which was the thing Mr. *S.* charged on them, whoſe Opinion Mr. F. undertakes to defend;) therefore Mr. F. inſinuates to his Reader, that Mr. *S*'s Notion doth imply (unleſs he will allow that we are juſtified by being made righteous by the perfect Righteouſneſs of Chriſt imputed to us,) ſuch a Juſtification as cannot be properly ſo called nor maintained to be ſuch, without perverting the Scriptures from their plain and proper Senſe, to that which is but ſo Metaphorically. And to this end he takes it for granted, that Juſtification in Mr. *S*'s Notion of it, contains in it *Remiſſion of Sins*; and then argues, that Remiſſion of Sin is not Juſtification in a proper Senſe, and conſequently that Mr. *S*'s Notion of Juſtification cannot be made good from the Scriptures, without underſtanding them in an improper Senſe.

But if Mr. F. would have done this deſigned Buſineſs indeed againſt Mr. *S.* he ſhould have done one of theſe two things, which yet he hath not done: Either firſt ſhewed, that Mr. *S.* hath defined Juſtification by Pardon of Sin; or ſecondly, that according to his Notion of it, it muſt be ſo defined; neither of which he hath done that I find. And therefore he doth but beat the Air, while he would have his Reader think he is beating Mr. *S.*

That Pardon of Sin is promiſed in the Covenant of Grace to thoſe that believe and obey the Goſpel, Mr. *S.* doth indeed aſſert, and that according to the Scriptures: And this Pardon, when vouchſafed, doth diſcharge us from whatever lay againſt us, either from Law or Goſpel, and is called in Scripture, a *not mentioning our Sins unto us*, Ezek. xxxiii. 16. The *remembring them no more*, Heb. x. 17. A *not imputing of them*, Rom. iv. 8. 2 Cor. v. 19. But then theſe are two diſtinct things, to juſtifie a Perſon againſt an Accuſation of not Believing and Obeying the Goſpel, and the conferring upon him the Benefits promiſed to thoſe that have. If they be not different, but one and the ſame thing, then the *giving of Eternal Life* it ſelf is an eſſential part of our Juſtification, as well as the *Forgiveneſs of our Sins*; for that, as well as the Forgiveneſs of Sins, is promiſed to thoſe who believe and obey the Goſpel. And I think no Man yet ever aſſerted, that the giving of Eternal Life was Juſtification it ſelf, but a Benefit promiſed to thoſe who are juſtified; according to St. *Paul*, Rom. viii. 30. *Whom he juſtified, them he alſo glorified*: Juſtification is God's *imputing Righteouſneſs* to Men, or their Faith to them for Righteouſneſs: And thus *Abraham* was juſtified by having his Faith imputed to him for Righteouſneſs. But Pardon of Sin is his *not imputing to them their Treſpaſſes*. And I muſt needs ſay, I cannot apprehend how the Imputation of Faith for Righteouſneſs, and the Non-imputation of Sin can be all one.

God in juſtifying Men avoucheth and pronounceth them to be ſuch as to whom he hath promiſed Pardon; that is, true Believers, ſuch as have performed the Condition of the Promiſe. But then the counting of this Performance of the Condition for Righteouſneſs unto them is one thing, and the conferring on them the Benefit promiſed on that Condition is another, as I ſaid. If God had promiſed Pardon only upon account of what Chriſt hath done and ſuffered for Sinners, without any Condition to be performed on their part, then they would have had Title to Pardon, without the Juſtification I ſpeak of: But ſince it is otherwiſe, a Man's Title to Pardon is not cleared without being *juſtified* in order thereto, *as a Performer of the Condition*.

Moreover, the *clearing the Equity* of God's proceeding in pardoning ſome, and not other ſome, depends upon this, *viz.* That he can juſtifie one ſort to be ſuch as have repented, and performed the Condition on which he promiſed Pardon; whereas he cannot do ſo concerning the other, *Ezek.* xviii. And when I conſider this, I cannot ſee but that we have as much reaſon to think it meet and neceſſary, that there ſhould be ſuch a difference between Juſtification and Pardon, as hath been intimated, as there is to believe, that it's fit and neceſſary that the Reaſon and Equity of God's Proceedings ſhould be cleared before *Angels* and *Men*, in pardoning ſome and not others. And if this be found agreeable to Reaſon, then you have an Evidence from the Reaſon and Nature of the thing why it ſhould be ſo, as well as from the Scriptures to ſhew that it is ſo.

Yet it's very true alſo, that there is ſo very cloſe and inſeparable a Connexion between Juſtification and Remiſſion of Sin, as that the Scripture (which does not always nicely difference things, which yet are diſtinguiſhable, but ſometimes terms things by the ſame Name, which differ only but in ſome reſpect, and ſometimes denotes things of the ſame Nature by different Phraſes and forms of Speech:) I ſay, the Connexion between Juſtification and Remiſſion is ſo cloſe and inſeparable, as that the Scripture ſometimes ſpeaks of them promiſcuouſly, ſcarcely leaving any difference to be diſcerned between them; which I conceive hath led ſo many to place Juſtification in Remiſſion of Sin, as are of that Judgment.

Such is *Rom.* iv. 6, 7. for one, where the *Bleſſedneſs of the Man, to whom God imputeth Righteouſneſs without Works, is* thus *deſcribed by David*, as St. *Paul* ſaith, reciting his words, ſaying, *Bleſſed are they whoſe Iniquities are forgiven, and whoſe Sins are covered.* Where you will hardly perceive any difference made between the Imputation of Righteouſneſs, and Forgiveneſs of Sins, unleſs we diſtinguiſh between Righteouſneſs imputed, and the Bleſſedneſs of having Sin pardoned as conſequent upon it; which I think may very well be done. For the Apoſtle doth not ſay, that *David* deſcribes the *Juſtification* of the Man to whom God imputeth Righteouſneſs without Works, when he ſaith, *Bleſſed are they whoſe Iniquities are forgiven*; but the *Bleſſedneſs* of ſuch a Perſon who is ſo juſtified, or to whom Righteouſneſs is imputed. Which *Bleſſedneſs* he placeth in the Forgiveneſs of Sins, and being reſtored to the Divine Favour. So that theſe words of *David*, as I ſaid, are not a Deſcription of *Juſtification*, but of the *Bleſſedneſs* a Man comes to be poſſeſſed of by being juſtified. The Reaſon and Deſign of the Apoſtle in reciting theſe words of *David*, I ſhall ſhew afterwards.

Again, *Acts* xiii. 39. is another ſuch Scripture, where it is ſaid, that *by him all that believe are juſtified from all things, from which they could not be juſtified by the Law of Moſes.* Where to be juſtified, and to be delivered from the deſert of Sin, ſeem to be the ſame: Unleſs you will diſtinguiſh (as well you may) between that *from* which we are delivered, to wit, the obligation to Puniſhment; and that *by* means whereof we come ſo to be delivered, to wit, our being juſtified: And then to be juſtified from thoſe things, ſignifies no more here, than by Juſtification to come to be pardoned, and ſo delivered from Condemnation.

But if you will underſtand Juſtification in a large ſenſe, as comprehending and taking in with it its Effects, (in which ſenſe Faith it ſelf is oft to be underſtood) then indeed it includes Pardon of Sin: And then in this ſenſe to be pardoned is to be juſtified, and to be juſtified is to be pardoned. In which ſenſe or reſpect it may be it is, that many renowned, both Perſons and Churches, have made little or no difference between Juſtification and Remiſſion of Sin.

And now, *Sir*, if what I have ſuggeſted have any weight in it, (which I ſubmit to tryal) then you may ſee, that there is a Juſtification of Believers, properly ſo called, plainly and without figure, aſſerted in Scripture; and yet not conſiſting in that Imputation of Righteouſneſs neither, which Mr. F. ſo much contends for; nor yet in Remiſſion of Sin neither, the neceſſity of which he would infer in caſe the other be denied; but in the Imputation of that Believing and Obeying the Goſpel for Righteouſneſs, to which Mr. *S.* ſaith, Pardon is promiſed: And if ſo, then Mr. F. hath only ſhewed us what he had a mind to do, but not at all performed what he undertook.

But when Mr. F. aſſerts, That unleſs we are juſtified by the Imputation of Chriſt's Righteouſneſs, in his ſenſe of Imputation, we cannot be ſaid to be *juſtified* properly, but only to be *pardoned*, and that to be *pardoned* is not to be *juſtified* properly: He proceeds therein upon a miſtaken ground, and confounds the Terms and Conditions of the Original-Law and Goſpel-Covenant together. For he ſuppoſeth, that in order to our Juſtification, in a proper ſenſe, we muſt one way or other have ſuch a Righteouſneſs as will anſwer the Demands of the Law in point of perfect Obedience, and of the Goſpel otherwiſe, and which will juſtifie us againſt all Accuſations to the contrary. And that therefore we having no ſuch Righteouſneſs of our own, we cannot be juſtified but by having the Righteouſneſs of Chriſt made ours by Imputation, that we may therewith anſwer the Demands and Accuſations of the Law: Or in caſe we ſhould not be juſtified by the Imputation of the Righteouſneſs of Chriſt to anſwer the Demands of the Law, yet that then we muſt be juſtified by being pardoned, and Pardon is not Juſtification properly ſo called.

But while he argues at this rate, he overlooks what God hath done to ſupercede and relax the rigorous Terms of the primitive Law, by a new Law of Grace eſtabliſhed in Chriſt with all Mankind, and according to which he will now proceed with us, and not according to the rigorous Demands of the primitive Law. By reaſon of this, to wit, God's relaxing the old, and introducing new Terms of Juſtification and Life; it follows, that neither a perfect Legal Righteouſneſs is now neceſſary to Juſtification, nor yet that Juſtification muſt conſiſt only in Pardon of Sin, though we have no ſuch Righteouſneſs inherent or imputed (in Mr. F's ſenſe of Imputation) as will anſwer the Demands of the Law in point of Perfection.

Such a Righteouſneſs is not now *neceſſary* to Juſtification. Firſt, becauſe that which once made it neceſſary to that end, is now relaxed by a new Law: This I have ſhewed before *. Secondly, becauſe by this new Law, the Righteouſneſs, which conſiſteth in a penitential regenerating obediential Faith, is made the Condition upon which Pardon and Life are promiſed: And becauſe likewiſe the Performance of this Condition is by God counted to us for Righteouſneſs, like as a fulfilling of the Legal Condition would have been counted our Legal Righteouſneſs, had we never ſinned.

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* This new Law doth not relax the Duty due by the old, but alter the Condition on which the divine Favour was at firſt enjoyable, and hath now made ſincere Obedience to it and to the Goſpel the Condition of it, inſtead of ſinleſs Perfection: And it grants Pardon of all paſt Offences againſt both, to ſuch as are juſtified againſt the Accuſation of not having performed the Condition, and of all after-Offences alſo, that are conſiſtent with godly Sincerity: By reaſon whereof an anſwering the old demands of the Law, abſolute Perfection is not now neceſſary to Juſtification, neither as inherent in us, nor as imputed to us, otherwiſe than as Chriſt's perfect Righteouſneſs is imputed to us in the fruits and benefits of it, which is quite another thing than the Imputation of his Righteouſneſs it ſelf to us; differing as much as the Acts of his Mediation differ from the Benefits received thereby.

Although the Righteouſneſs of Chriſt's Active and Paſſive Obedience, is that Righteouſneſs by which the Covenant it ſelf, and the Benefits of it, were conditionally obtained for us, and granted to us: And although it is of God's Mercy, and by Vertue of Chriſt's Merits, and the Promiſe and Ordination of God, that we come to have any Title to Pardon and Life, when we have performed the Condition, and not by Vertue of any Merit or Deſert in the Performance it ſelf; yet this Righteouſneſs of Chriſt does not entitle us to Pardon and Life, until we have performed the Condition on our part required thereto, which is ſuch a Believing as aforeſaid: And in the laſt iſſue we are accounted by God Righteous or Unrighteous, according as we have or have not perform'd the Condition.

God's deſign towards us is to reſtore us to Happineſs, and in order thereto to recover and bring again into our Nature thoſe Vertues in which our likeneſs to God at firſt did conſiſt; by the loſs of which we became miſerable, and without a recovery of which we cannot be happy. And as moſt ſuitable to this deſign, God hath made ſuch a Faith the Condition of Pardon and Life, as by which the Renovation of our Nature is gradually wrought, and without which we have no ground to expect thoſe Benefits, how deſirable ſoever they are to us, and notwithſtanding all that Chriſt hath done and ſuffered to obtain them for us.

To ſuppoſe that God accounts us Righteous, and ſo confers a Title to Pardon and Life, only by the Righteouſneſs of Chriſt imputed, without reſpect to our being renewed in the Spirit of our Minds, and ſanctified by Faith, is to ſuppoſe him acting diſagreebly to his own deſign and method of Grace in recovering us from our undone Condition. To think we are made Righteous only by what our Saviour hath done without us, without being renewed by a Work of Faith within us: To ſuppoſe we are by the Imputation of Chriſt's Righteouſneſs delivered from the danger of the Hell without us, without being at all freed from the Hell within us, which conſiſts in unnatural Luſts, and the uneaſie Effects of them: To imagine, that God ſhould reſtore us to a participation of the Privileges of his Children by the Imputation of Chriſt's Righteouſneſs, without reſtoring us at all to a participation in the Divine and New Nature of his Children, is abſurd, and that which is oppoſed by the conſtant Tenour of Divine Doctrine in the holy Scriptures: And yet theſe are but the natural Conſequences of the Doctrine of being juſtified by the Imputation of Chriſt's Righteouſneſs *alone*, and of being juſtified by Faith *alone*, as abſtracted from its effect of renewing us. And if either of theſe Doctrines were true, we might have an immediate Title to Pardon and Salvation without Repentance, and without being born again; unleſs we will ſuppoſe that Juſtification does not immediately entitle us to theſe; which to ſuppoſe is as abſurd as any of the reſt: For what, I pray you, would ſuch a Juſtification ſignifie?

And then as concerning the other thing, *viz.* That if we have not, by the Imputation of Chriſt's perfect Righteouſneſs, a Righteouſneſs to anſwer the Demands of the Law, that then, as Mr. F. infers, we can have no Juſtification but what conſiſts in the Remiſſion of Sins: I anſwer, That for the ſame reaſon that we are accounted Righteous upon our performing the Condition of the Promiſe, Pardon cannot be our Juſtification, but a Benefit conſequent upon it.

For if God's owning or avouching the Condition to be performed on our part (as he does when it is performed) on which he hath promiſed Pardon and Salvation, be his juſtifying of us, or his accounting us righteous according to the Tenour of the Covenant of Grace, as indeed it is; then Pardon is not our Juſtification it ſelf, but one of the Benefits unto which our Juſtification by vertue of the New Covenant doth entitle us; for the one is promiſed but on Condition of the other. And as the Thing promiſed, and the Condition on which it is promiſed, are not the ſame; ſo neither is the reckoning or accounting us Righteous, as having performed the Condition of the Promiſe of Pardon, and the actual Pardon it ſelf, the ſame; but ſo much as theſe differ, ſo much does Juſtification and Pardon differ.

But yet for all that, I do not deny but that in a large ſenſe, as Juſtification is oppoſed to Condemnation, it may comprehend Remiſſion of Sins: That is, if by Condemnation you underſtand both Conviction of Impenitency (which is the oppoſite to Juſtification properly) and the Obligation or Obnoxiouſneſs thereby to ſuffer the Pains of the ſecond Death; and by Juſtification, both a Vindication from Impenitency and Unbelief (which is Juſtification properly) and alſo a diſcharge thereby from Obnoxiouſneſs to Eternal Puniſhment; then, as I ſaid, Juſtification thus oppoſed to Condemnation does indeed include in it Remiſſion of Sin; though, when ſtrictly and moſt properly conſidered, Juſtification ſeems to be one thing, and Pardon of Sin another.

It is wont to be alledged, That when St. *Paul* ſaith in *Rom.* iv. 6. that *God imputeth Righteouſneſs without Works*; the meaning is, That he imputeth the Righteouſneſs of Chriſt to us without any Works of ours at all, Legal or Evangelical, External or Internal. And becauſe great ſtreſs is laid on it by ſome, I will briefly ſhew how the Context directs us to another ſenſe of thoſe words.

The Scope of the Apoſtle in this and the former Chapter is to prove, that Juſtification proceeds from God of *Grace* and Favour, and not of *Debt*. To make this good, he ſhews here that it muſt needs be ſo; becauſe it is vouchſafed not unto ſuch who have been always righteous (for he had proved before, *Chap.* III. that there are none ſuch, but that all, both Jews and Gentiles have ſinned) but to ſuch as have been *ungodly*, when once they believe; and therefore ceaſe to be ſo, and become ſincerely righteous. And the Apoſtle's Reaſon depends upon this manifeſt Truth, That ſuch as have once ſinned can never by any After-works, which they can do, merit the Divine Favour as a Debt due to them by deſert of their Works, nor are capable of that Favour upon any other Terms than what God of his mere Grace is pleaſed to appoint as the Condition of it, as he hath done that of Faith. *For to him that worketh not* (ſaith he) *but believeth on him that juſtifieth the ungodly, his Faith is counted to him for Righteouſneſs*, ver. 5.

And to prove, as well as to aſſert, that God juſtifieth none upon account of their having been always righteous, and in his Favour (as ſome Jews fanſied themſelves to have been upon account of their obſerving the Law of *Moſes*, as he in the Goſpel who ſaid, *All theſe have I kept from my Youth up*) he ſhews out of the *Pſalms* of *David*, how that the ancient godly Jews did always eſteem their Happineſs of being in God's Favour, not to proceed from the *Merit* of their Works in obſerving the Law of *Moſes*, but from the Grace and Mercy of God in forgiving their ſins, and accepting their ſincere Endeavours to pleaſe him. *Even as David* (ſaith he) *deſcribes the Bleſſedneſs of the Man to whom God imputeth Righteouſneſs without Works, ſaying, Bleſſed are they whoſe Iniquities are forgiven, and whoſe ſins are covered*, ver. 6, 7.

And you may eaſily diſcern, if you obſerve it, that what is ſaid in this ſixth and ſeventh Verſes, is to back and make good what he had ſaid in *ver.* 5. touching God's juſtifying Men upon their believing, notwithſtanding they had been in a ſtate of Ungodlineſs before: And to ſhew, that if he juſtifie ſuch Men upon ſuch Terms, Juſtification muſt needs proceed of Grace, and not of Debt or Merit of Works, of which he had ſpoken, *ver.* 4. ſaying, *Now to him that worketh the Reward is not reckoned of Grace, but of Debt*. So that in making a Judgment of what Works St. *Paul* ſpeaks, when he ſaith, *Righteouſneſs is imputed without Works*, ver. 6. if you do but take your riſe from what's ſaid in *ver.* 4. touching ſuch Works, the Reward of which is reckoned not of Grace, but of Debt; and ſo follow the Diſcourſe and the Deſign of it to *ver.* 6. you will find that you cannot fairly turn aſide to another, but muſt needs underſtand him to this ſenſe; to wit, That the Righteouſneſs which is by Faith, of which he had ſpoken in *ver.* 5. is imputed without ſuch Works as make the Reward to be not of Grace, but of Debt, mentioned *ver.* 4. His Argument runs thus in other words: They, to whom God imputed Righteouſneſs heretofore, were ſuch as ſtood in need of Forgiveneſs from God, therefore they could not poſſibly merit his Favour.

And although St. *Paul* doth not improve the words of the Pſalmiſt farther than to prove that no Man is reſtored to the Divine Favour and the Bleſſedneſs conſequent upon it, without Forgiveneſs of Sins; and that therefore it muſt needs be of Grace, and not of Debt and Merit that any Man attains it by being juſtified, this being his end in alledging them; Yet it's alſo evident by the words immediately following thoſe the Apoſtle here recites, That *Godly Sincerity* is the conditional Qualification required of ſuch to whom the Favour of Forgiveneſs is vouchſafed: For it's there ſaid, *Bleſſed is the Man unto whom the Lord imputeth not Iniquity, and in whoſe Spirit there is no Guile*. No Guile notes the *Sincerity* I ſpeak of, *Pſalm* xxxii. 2. And it's to the ſame ſenſe, when in the Writings of the New Teſtament Faith, as the *Principle* of Sincerity, and of the Divine Nature and Life, is made the Condition of Pardon.

And now if what hath been ſaid amounts to any fair account of the Apoſtle's Scope and Deſign in thoſe forementioned Verſes, and of the Senſe of the ſeveral Phraſes by which it is expreſt (and I leave you to judge whether it doth or no) then I can ſee no reaſon, why by Righteouſneſs imputed without Works we ſhould underſtand the Righteouſneſs of Chriſt, but rather the Righteouſneſs of Faith properly underſtood; which Faith the Apoſtle there expreſly affirms to be imputed for Righteouſneſs, but doth not ſo much as mention Chriſt in thoſe Verſes, much leſs the Imputation of his Righteouſneſs unto Juſtification, as excluſive of all manner of Works. It is not the Righteouſneſs of Chriſt, but Grace and Faith, that are in this Contexture of Scripture oppoſed to Works: Nor are Works oppoſed to Faith neither, but under the Notion of *Merit*, as they make the Reward to be of Debt, and not of Grace. And when I ſay this, I do for all that, with all Thankfulneſs, acknowledge and profeſs, That the Righteouſneſs or Obedience of Chriſt's Life and Death, doth with a high hand operate to our Juſtification, and ſo as neither our Faith nor any thing in us, or done by us, can do, but in a way altogether tranſcending it, though not in Mr. F's way of Imputation; nor is it in this Scripture ſet forth as it is in others.

It's true indeed, the Righteouſneſs the Apoſtle treats of in this place is ſtiled Righteouſneſs *imputed:* But the reaſon is not, becauſe it is not inherent in the Perſons themſelves to whom it is imputed, but in Chriſt, and made theirs only by Imputation; for it is the Faith of the Perſon himſelf that is here ſaid to be counted or imputed to him for Righteouſneſs, and the Reaſon why it is called a Righteouſneſs *imputed*, may be, becauſe it is not naturally, and of it ſelf, or in its own nature a Righteouſneſs that would juſtifie a Man, as *Adam*'s was before his Fall; but it is only by Divine *Inſtitution*, Grace and Favour that it is ſo; *God juſtifies us freely by his Grace*, Rom. iii. 24. *It is of Faith, that it might be by Grace*, as it follows, *Rom.* iv. 16. As it is by the Juſtification or Ordinance of a King that ſuch a piece of Coin paſſeth current for ſo much, whether it be of the intrinſick Value or no; even ſo by vertue of God's Inſtitution, and for Chriſt's ſake, Faith is made to paſs for, and to be reckoned and accounted to us for Righteouſneſs, and to entitle us to thoſe Benefits, which in its own Nature it doth not merit. If it were a perfect Righteouſneſs in its own Nature, as *Adam*'s was, it would need no Pardon to accompany it, as it does; and would ſecure us as well from Temporal as Eternal Death, which yet it doth not: But it being a Righteouſneſs by Inſtitution and Grace, how far it ſhall be beneficial to us, and to what Ends and Purpoſes it ſhall ſerve, depend wholly upon the Good-will and Pleaſure of God, and are knowable only ſo far to us, as he hath been pleaſed to put them into Promiſe; by vertue of which Promiſe, made upon Condition of ſuch Righteouſneſs, and not by Merit of the Righteouſneſs it ſelf, we come to have a Title to the promiſed Benefits, ſuch as are Remiſſion of Sin and Eternal Life.

But Mr. F. cannot underſtand, but that *it is repugnant to the Immutability and eſſential Holineſs of God to juſtifie us upon an imperfect Obedience, the Law commanding that which is perfect, and thinks for him to do ſo would be to pronounce an unjuſt Perſon juſt.*

But he ſhould conſider, That God in juſtifying us doth not pronounce us juſt, as not having ſinned (for that's impoſſible for him indeed to do) but as having performed the Condition, on which he in his Goſpel-Covenant hath promiſed to pardon our Sin. And in doing this, he doth not pronounce unjuſt Perſons juſt; for they are juſt with an Evangelical Righteouſneſs, juſt in the Goſpel-ſenſe, and ſo ſtiled from place to place in the Scripture, as I have ſhew'd. And although the Evangelical Righteouſneſs and Obedience, upon which God is pleaſed to juſtifie us, be imperfect, if meaſured by the Law; yet it is perfect as to its End appointed by God, when meaſured by the Goſpel, by which we are to be tried whether we be righteous or unrighteous: And whoſoever (being *adult*) is *not righteous* in this ſenſe, *ſhall not inherit the Kingdom of God*, 1 Cor. vi. 9. but thoſe that are thus *righteous*, *ſhall go into Life Eternal*, Matth. xxv. 46.

But ſuppoſing Evangelical Righteouſneſs or Obedience to be *comparatively* imperfect, whether compared with what Man in Innocency had, and was capable to perform; or whether compared with a gradual Perfection of Righteouſneſs and Obedience of the ſame kind, and ſuppoſing it to be only ſincere Obedience according to the preſent Circumſtances a Man is in: Let us weigh and conſider, whether or no it be not conſiſtent with the Holineſs of God, to juſtifie Men upon ſuch Righteouſneſs and Obedience when found in them, when withal we take in what hath been done by Chriſt the Mediator to make way for it. I conceive Mr. F. doth not ſuppoſe, that God by the Holineſs of his Nature is naturally and neceſſarily reſtrained from ſhewing Favour to Men, after once they have been guilty of Sin, and have made themſelves obnoxious to the effects of his high Diſpleaſure; for if he were, we were all ſtill in an ill caſe, and there would be then no ſuch thing as *Grace* extant in the World, which yet is ſo Illuſtrious and Glorious, as that it is the very Subject-matter of the Goſpel. Grace and Mercy are as eſſentially in God as Holineſs: And therefore we muſt take heed of framing ſuch Notions of his Holineſs, as to leave no place for the exerciſe of his Grace and Mercy. God no doubt is at liberty to recede from his own Right, as well as Men are, in remitting Debts and pardoning Offences, to what degree and upon what terms he pleaſeth; only he, as *Rector* of the World, hath reſpect therein unto good Order and Government.

Suppoſing all this, we muſt ſuppoſe again, that ſuch acts of Grace and Favour towards offending Sinners, as do not in the leaſt encourage them to continue in Sin, nor any other Creature in the whole Creation that is innocent to fall into a ſtate of like Rebellion as Man hath done, but are of a quite contrary tendency, will very well conſiſt with the end of his Government, as he is *Rector* of the World, and with the Righteouſneſs and Juſtice of the Governour himſelf. Now the Reaſon and End of executing Juſtice upon Delinquents is either to recover them themſelves to good Order and Behaviour, or to deter others from falling into like Rebellion againſt God: For otherwiſe *God delighteth not in the death* (as ſuch) *of him that dies*, Ezek. xviii. Provided then that theſe Ends of Government be ſecured in ſhewing favour, the Righteouſneſs and Juſtice of God will never ſuffer any Diſparagement, how great ſoever the Grace and Favour be that is ſhewed to Offenders. But now that God in juſtifying Men upon account of *ſincere* Obedience and *inherent* Righteouſneſs, conſidering what hath been done by our Lord Chriſt to make way for it, and to bring things to that iſſue, does not in the leaſt countenance Sin paſt, or encourage to the committing of it for time to come, but that which is altogether contrary thereunto will ſufficienly appear, if you conſider theſe two things.

Firſt, That notwithſtanding God is ſo good and gracious, ſo merciful and ready to forgive, as he is, yet he would not grant any terms at all of receiving us into favour again, having once ſinned, except his own dear Son himſelf would take upon him our Nature, and become a Sacrifice, to make an Atonement for our Sin; nor ſpare him when he had undertaken ſo to be, notwithſtanding that great Love wherewith he loved him, but delivered him up to Death for us all, when he undertook to become a Propitiation for our Sins, rather than we ſhould have no terms of Pardon granted. God's granting Terms of Pardon, and Reſtoration to his Favour upon no cheaper Terms, did clearly demonſtrate him to be an Enemy and Hater of Sin in the higheſt, and ſo irreconcilable to it, as that no Sinner could have any ground to hope to eſcape the Puniſhment due to it; but upon obſerving that Condition of eſcaping it, the obtaining of which coſt ſo dear. In that Chriſt thus ſuffered in the Fleſh, he *condemned Sin in the Fleſh*, (as the Phraſe is, *Rom.* viii. 3.) and that effectually, and with a witneſs. Hereby he condemned it in the ſight of Heaven and Earth, yea, and of Hell too, as a thing moſt abominable to God, and contrary to his Nature; and to the Goodneſs and Equity of his Laws and Government; when deliverance from the Deſert of it could be obtained at no cheaper Rate or eaſier Terms, than the Son of God his ſuffering in the Sinner's ſtead, no, not upon Repentance it ſelf without this. In that God hath thus *ſet forth his Son to be a Propitiation for Sin through Faith in his Blood, it is to declare his Righteouſneſs in the Remiſſion of Sins that are paſt*, (that he is righteous, although he forgive) *and that he might be juſt*, even when he is the *Juſtifier of him that believeth in Jeſus*, Rom. iii. 25, 26.

Secondly, When God for Chriſt's ſake, and for what he hath done and ſuffered, did grant terms of Grace, by which we Sinners might come to be juſtified, pardoned, and ſaved; yet they were ſuch, and none other, but what tend to *reclaim* us from Sin and Rebellion, and to *reduce* us to Obedience, and of Rebels to make us to become good Subjects. And in doing this, God is far from countenancing Sin, or doing any thing diſagreeable to the Righteouſneſs, Wiſdom, and Goodneſs of his Government; indeed ſo far from it, that it highly commends and ſets theſe off.

The terms of Favour granted for Chriſt's ſake are ſuch as theſe: That believing and being perſuaded in our own Minds that God is good, and ready to forgive for his Son's ſake, we heartily repent that ever we rebell'd againſt him, and that we deſiſt from continuing in our Rebellion any longer, and that we return to our Duty, and *ſincerely endeavour* to pleaſe him in all things for the future. It's true indeed, God knows, that by reaſon of the Wounds and Diſeaſe we got by our Fall, and while we were in

Rebellion, we have brought ſo great Debility upon our ſelves, as that though we do return to him, yet we cannot do him ſuch ſervice now, as Man was capable of performing before the Fall, and his running into Rebellion; and therefore he is content for his Son's ſake to accept of ſuch ſervice, as we in the ſtate of Weakneſs and Frailty are capable of performing, provided we do the beſt we well can, and make uſe of all helps and means afforded us, whereby we may gather ſtrength, and grow better, and do better; and are heartily ſorry that ever we have made our ſelves ſo incapable, as we have done, of doing him better ſervice. Theſe and ſuch like are the terms granted us for Chriſt's ſake.

But without ſome ſuch Change as this God hath not promiſed to receive any Man into favour. Now then, if it be not inconſiſtent with the Righteouſneſs and Wiſdom of his Government, for God to offer and promiſe to receive Sinners into favour again upon theſe Terms and Conditions, (and I cannot think Mr. F. will ſay it is:) Then it cannot be inconſiſtent therewith for him to *own* that they have performed theſe Conditions, when indeed they have, and ſo to own them now for his true and faithful Servants and Subjects to their power, and according to the term ſet in his Act of Grace, which is his juſtifying of them, or the imputing to them for Righteouſneſs ſuch their faithful ſervice as they are capable of performing.

Theſe things conſidered, I dare appeal to Mr. F's better and more impartial Judgment, whether it be not conſiſtent with the Holineſs of God to juſtifie Men upon the terms aforeſaid. I confeſs I cannot poſſibly underſtand, why it ſhould not as well conſiſt with the Holineſs of God to juſtifie us upon our Believing, and upon our Obeying the Goſpel too, as it is to do it upon our Believing alone: And Mr. F. does not think that God doth juſtifie us at all, or impute Righteouſneſs to us at all, in one ſenſe or another, without our Believing. So that the Imputation of Righteouſneſs to us for our Juſtification, in which ſenſe ſoever we take it, depends upon our own Act in Believing; and ſo likewiſe is the Application of what Chriſt hath done and ſuffered for our Juſtification ſuſpended upon our Believing. In what notion ſoever you underſtand the Application of the Righteouſneſs of Chriſt's Life, and Satisfaction of his Death to be made; as, whether by being imputed to us in it ſelf, or vertually by having our Faith for the ſake thereof imputed to us for Righteouſneſs; yet ſtill this Application depends upon our Believing, becauſe God hath made that the Condition of it, without which Chriſt ſhall profit us nothing.

I take notice farther, how Mr. F. by his Notion of having the Righteouſneſs of Chriſt imputed to us otherwiſe than in its Effects, is led to think and ſay, that our Sins alſo were otherwiſe imputed to Chriſt than in the Effects of them. *To ſay* (ſaith he) *that our Sins were imputed to Chriſt in the Effects of them, but not in the Guilt, is to contradict all Principles of Reaſon: For Guilt and Obnoxiouſneſs to Puniſhment being equipollent Phraſes, he cannot be ſuppoſed to be made liable to the laſt upon the account of our Sins, without having been brought under the firſt*, p. 410.

Nor is it imaginable, let me ſay, how any Perſon ſhould come under the *Guilt* of Sin, that hath not been acceſſary to the *Fault:* For Guilt implies two things; a Fault committed by him that is guilty of it, and the being under an Obligation thereby to ſuffer the Puniſhment due to it; and this Obligation of a guilty Perſon to ſuffer proceeds from the Demerit of his Fault or Crime. And will Mr. F. ſay, that Chriſt was guilty of our Sins by being in the Fault? Or that he came under an obligation to ſuffer by being in the Fault, and from the demerit of the Fault? God forbid. Chriſt was no otherwiſe obliged to ſuffer for our Sins, than by his own voluntary Conſent, in concurrence with the Will of God his Father, in offering himſelf as a Sacrifice to make an Atonement by his own Blood. And after this manner indeed, by being a Sacrifice, the Beaſts in time of the Law, that were offered in Sacrifice for Sin, did bear the Sins of thoſe for whom they were offered. But I ſhould think he were little better than a Beaſt in his Underſtanding, that ſhould ſay thoſe Beaſts were guilty of the Sins of thoſe for whom they were offered in Sacrifice.

But it's true, as one Truth leads to another, ſo it's too commonly ſeen, Men are tempted to commit one Error to defend another, which I think is the Caſe now before us: Otherwiſe Mr. F. would hardly have ventured to ſay, Chriſt was brought under the Guilt of our Sins, and had the Guilt of them derived upon him, but only the better, as he thought no doubt, to accommodate his Notion of our being in the Innocency and Righteouſneſs of Chriſt, by having it imputed to us, and derived upon us.

But this is not the only Inconvenience that attends this Notion of having the Righteouſneſs of Chriſt it ſelf imputed to us for our Juſtification, and not only in its happy Effects; for it ſeems to me to oppoſe the Doctrine of Forgiveneſs of Sin: Nay, I pray you conſider, whether it doth not evacuate it, and leave no place for ſuch a thing. For if we, in Mr. F's *Law-ſenſe*, have by Chriſt paid all the Debt the Law cou'd any ways demand of us, both in point of Obedience and of ſuffering for our Diſobedience, by having his Obedience and Sufferings themſelves imputed to us, and not only in the beneficial Effects of them: How then, I pray you, can we be ſaid to be forgiven by God, to whom the Debt thus paid was due? Does that Man forgive a Debt to me which I have paid him by another, though not by my ſelf? A Legal Diſcharge I may have in ſuch a caſe from the Creditor, but no Man will ſay he hath forgiven me my Debt.

I think it will beſt become us to ſay, as the Scripture doth, *That God for Chriſt's ſake hath forgiven us*; and not to ſay we have paid him what in the Rigour of Juſtice he could demand of us, if not more; to wit, perfect Obedience and Suffering too, which the Law in its utmoſt Rigour never demanded nor required. We may well and thankfully take up with this, That God, in Conſideration of what Chriſt hath become, done, and ſuffered for our ſakes, for our Benefit, hath paſs'd an Act of Oblivion to remember our Sins and Iniquities no more; provided, and on condition that we repent of our Rebellion againſt God, and return to our Loyalty and Duty in obeying him truly, ſincerely, and heartily, as every one doth that ſo believes, as thereby to become capable of being juſtified, pardoned and ſaved.

Farthermore, conſider I pray you, That if Chriſt's fulfilling of the Law be ſo imputed to us, as that we are looked upon as having fulfilled it in him, how could it then be neceſſary that Chriſt ſhould die for our ſins? If we, by the Imputation of Chriſt's fulfilling the Law, have paid the whole Debt of Obedience which was owing to it, we ſhould then owe no Debt of ſuffering for the Breach of it; and conſequently Chriſt would not have needed, by ſuffering, to have paid any ſuch Debt for us, no more than for himſelf, who had no ſin to ſuffer for.

Again, conſider yet farther, That if Chriſt hath paid our whole Debt of Obedience to the Law by fulfilling it for us, and then imputing it to us, is there not by this Notion, if admitted, a Way paved and prepared for Libertines, to think that then they need not pay it too? To think that God is no ſuch auſtere Creditor, as to exact the ſame Debt twice; firſt of the Surety, and then of the Principal too? And let me tell you this, Sir, that I have very great reaſon from my Obſervation formerly, to be confident, that it was from this Opinion, which Mr. F. now defends, touching the Imputation of Chriſt's Righteouſneſs to us otherwiſe than in its bleſſed Effects, that Antinomianiſm took its firſt riſe among us in this Nation, and Ranteriſm alſo out of that. For how elſe could it be poſſible, that Men ſhould fancy themſelves pure and perfect, and free from all ſin in the midſt of thoſe Abominations ſome of them gave themſelves up to; but only that they thought themſelves to be ſo by having another's Righteouſneſs imputed to them, ſo as they to become formally righteous by it, as he himſelf was, ſave only in the point of Imputation. I muſt confeſs, I cannot think that any Doctrine that is of the Goſpel indeed, which is a Doctrine *according to Godlineſs* in the whole and every part of it, can be ſo liable as this is, to natural Inferences tending to Ungodlineſs, or to weaken that which is in the Doctrine of Juſtification rightly underſtood againſt Ungodlineſs.

But on the other hand, when the Promiſe of the great Benefits of Remiſſion of Sin and Eternal Life, is ſuſpended upon our being righteous by a Righteouſneſs inherent in us, ſuch as conſiſts in Repentance, Faith, *&c.* This becomes the greateſt Motive to Godlineſs imaginable, and ſo comports directly with that which is God's great Deſign by the Goſpel, which is to recover Man again to Happineſs by Holineſs, from which he firſt fell by Tranſgreſſion.

But that you may have down weight in this Argument, and more if more can be, I will offer one thing more to your Conſideration, which perhaps may deſerve it, and that is, whether thoſe that deny the inherent Grace of Faith and Sanctification by Faith to be imputed for Righteouſneſs in Juſtification, (as they uſually do, who hold that Chriſt's Righteouſneſs it ſelf is ſo imputed) do not thereby make themſelves guilty in ſome reſpect, and to a degree, of the pernicious Error of the falſe Apoſtles and Judaizing Chriſtians; for which, in the groſs, they were charged with *falling from Grace*, with making *Chriſt to become of none effect to them*, and with *perverting* *the Goſpel of Chriſt.* For I think I ſhall make it evident, that their Error lay in two things, (unleſs you will add thereto their Opinion of meriting) the one in denying the Neceſſity of Internal Righteouſneſs unto Juſtification; the other, in holding an External one in Conjunction with Faith in Chriſt to be ſufficient to that end.

Now whether Mr. F. himſelf doth deny inherent Grace to be *at all* imputed for Righteouſneſs in our Juſtification; or whether that it *only* is ſo, I confeſs I cannot ſay: But certain it is, that he denies it to be ſufficient without the Imputation of Chriſt's Righteouſneſs in the Senſe of Imputation wherein he is oppoſed. One while he grants, that *in reference to the mere Demands of the Goſpel, we may in a proper Senſe be ſaid to be juſtified,* p. 416. At another turn he ſaith, *That ſecluding not only the Righteouſneſs of Chriſt's Life, but the Satisfaction of his Death; as the Matter, and the Imputation of it as the formal Cauſe of Juſtification, it ſeems repugnant unto the Immutability and eſſential Holineſs of God to juſtifie us upon an imperfect Obedience* (ſuch as he accounts Evangelical Obedience to be) *the Law which requireth a perfect remaining ſtill in Force, and denouncing Wrath in caſe of every Failure.* By which he ſeems to hold (how conſiſtently with what before I recited, do you judge) that it is inconſiſtent with the Holineſs of God to juſtifie us upon an Evangelical Righteouſneſs, becauſe imperfect.

But whether Mr. F. joins the Imputation of Chriſt's Righteouſneſs, and the Imputation of inherent Grace together in the Buſineſs of Juſtification; or whether he wholly denies the Imputation of the latter, and affirms only the Imputation of the former, I ſhall not farther enquire. But it's well known, that thoſe who are wont to plead the ſame Cauſe with Mr. F. touching the Neceſſity of the Imputation of Chriſt's Righteouſneſs unto Juſtification; and in that Senſe wherein he is oppoſed, are wont alſo to exclude inherent Grace, as being neither imputed for Righteouſneſs in Juſtification, nor as neceſſary thereunto antecedently. Mr. *E. Polhill* (a Gentleman doubtleſs of a good Spirit) another of Mr. *S*'s Antagoniſts, in his Anſwer to him, ſaith in p. 75. *In Juſtification no other Righteouſneſs can take place, but the active and paſſive one of Chriſt, which anſwers the pure and righteous Law in every thing.* And in p. 321. he ſaith, *Obedience to God's Commands is indeed the Way to Heaven, but it's no where made an Ingredient into our Juſtification.* And p. 365. ſpeaking of *Phil.* iii. 9. ſaith, That *the Apoſtle, in this place, doth not only exclude External Phariſaical Righteouſneſs, but even inherent Graces in the matter of Juſtification.*

And the common Opinion of thoſe that have gone that way hath been, That Sanctification is ſubſequent to Juſtification, and not ſo much as in order of Nature going before it, or to be any Ingredient in it, and conſequently not *eſſentially neceſſary* to it. Now then, that which I ſay is this; that if I can make it appear, that the denying the Neceſſity of Internal Righteouſneſs unto Juſtification, was one part of the grievous Error of the Judaizing Chriſtians, it will be enough to ſpoil the Reputation of the ſame Opinion, though found in better Men than they were: And whether I ſhall not make it evidently to appear ſo to be, I ſhall leave you to judge, after you have weighed what I ſhall now lay before you.

Their Crime was, I conceive, a partial Revolt or turning unto the worſt of Judaiſm, ſaving their retaining a Profeſſion of Faith in Chriſt; to think that an External Righteouſneſs without an Internal, was available to Juſtification and Salvation. The unbelieving Jews, to whom they turned in part, were quite degenerated from their worthy Anceſtors, and all that remained faithful among them; who all held the Internal Grace of Love to God, Fear of him, Uprightneſs of Heart towards him, Truth in the inward Parts, neceſſary to intereſt them in his Favour, and the Bleſſing of the everlaſting Covenant.

But the degenerate Jews thought an External Righteouſneſs, ſuch as St. *Paul* had while a Phariſee, and ſuch as would juſtifie them in the ſight of Men, according to the Terms of the political Covenant; by which they were externally governed by God as they were his Commonwealth, would juſtifie them as to their Eternal Eſtate. Of which grand Miſtake our Saviour (*Matth.* v.) laboured to convince them, by ſhewing that no leſs was required by God in order to that, than an *inward Purity*, and upbraided them with their making clean the *Outſide* of the Cup and Platter, when *within* they were full of Extortion and Exceſs, of Ravening and Wickedneſs; with their appearing *outwardly* righteous unto Men, when *within* they were full of Hypocriſie and Iniquity, and told his Hearers, that *except their Righteouſneſs exceeded theirs, they ſhould never enter into the Kingdom of Heaven. That except they were born again, they could not ſee the Kingdom of God.*

Now it was to this monſtrouſly corrupt part of Judaiſm, to which the Judaizing Chriſtians did revolt, or turn rather, (for many of them were Gentiles,) becauſe without this their Error, in adhering to the Law of *Moſes* as neceſſary to be obſerved, would not have been ſo damnable as the Scripture repreſents it to be, calling it a *perverting the Goſpel of Chriſt*, a being *removed to another Goſpel*, a *falling from Grace*, a *making of Chriſt to become of none effect to them*, (Gal. i. 7. and v. 2, 4.) which it would not have been, if there had been nothing elſe in it than a Perſuaſion that they were under an obligation of obſerving the Law of *Moſes*, as well as the Law of Chriſt.

For there were many thouſands of the Jews which believed, who were yet zealous of the Law of *Moſes*, and thought themſelves ſtill under the Obligation of it, (*Acts* xxi.) who yet could never be ſaid upon that account to be fallen from Grace, or to be removed from the Goſpel of Chriſt to another Goſpel, ſo long as they were *really* for an *internal* Righteouſneſs as *neceſſary* to Juſtification and Salvation, as well as an *external*. For all the faithful Jews under the Law, before the Law, and after the Law, yea and all the Gentiles too, that had this *internal* Righteouſneſs as well as an *external*, were all juſtified through the Grace of God exhibited in the univerſal Covenant made in Chriſt, and granted for his ſake, whether they had any explicit or diſtinct Knowledge of that Covenant or not, or of Chriſt in whom it was confirmed. *In every Nation he that feareth God and worketh Righteouſneſs is accepted of him: And if the Uncircumciſion did but keep the Righteouſneſs of the Law*, the internal Righteouſneſs deſigned by it, *their Uncircumciſion was counted for Circumciſion.*

When on the other hand *he was not a Jew* at any time (in the ſenſe there ſpoken of) *who was one outwardly in the Fleſh* only, *but he was a Jew which was ſo inwardly, and Circumciſion was that of the Heart in the Spirit* of the Law, *and not in the Letter* only, *whoſe praiſe* or approbation *was from God*, whether it were from Men or no, *Rom.* ii.

St. *Paul* would never have become as *a Jew to the Jews, to gain the Jews*, as he did in obſerving *Jewiſh Rites* (*Acts* xxi.) and in *circumciſing Timothy*; nor have ſaid as he did, that *God had received* ſuch Chriſtian Jews, who yet made Conſcience of Jewiſh difference and diſtinction of *Meats and Days*, (Rom. xiv.) if a mere Perſuaſion of being under the Obligation of the Law of *Moſes* had been ſo dangerous and damnable, as he affirms the Error of the Judaiſing Chriſtians to be.

The very Nature of the Oppoſition, which the Apoſtles made againſt the Error of the Judaiſing Chriſtians in their Epiſtles to the Churches among whom they were, ſufficiently diſcovers to us the Nature of their Error to be the placing Juſtification in an *external* Righteouſneſs, and not in an *internal*. When St. *Paul* had ſaid, *if they were circumciſed, Chriſt ſhould profit them nothing*; and that *they were fallen from Grace that would be juſtified by the Law*; and that the true Chriſtians *waited for the hope of the Righteouſneſs which is by Faith*, or which Faith produceth; he gives this Reaſon of all, ſaying, *For in Chriſt Jeſus neither Circumciſion availeth any thing, nor Uncircumciſion, but Faith which worketh by Love*; *i.e.* by cauſing Love to God and Men, *Gal.* v. And again, *For in Chriſt Jeſus neither Circumciſion availeth any thing, nor Uncircumciſion, but a new Creature*, Gal. vi. 15. And *if any Man be in Chriſt, he is a new Creature*, 2 Cor. v. 17.

And the Goſpel is declared by St. *Paul* to be *the Miniſtration of Righteouſneſs, not in the Letter* of the Law, *but in the Spirit*, or internal Righteouſneſs which was required in the Law, and more plainly and expreſly in the Goſpel, 2 *Cor.* iii. and that Chriſtians muſt *ſerve in newneſs of Spirit, and not in the oldneſs of the Letter.* And the Benefits of the new Covenant, of having *God to be our God*, and our *Sins pardoned*, belong only to them who have his *Laws put in their Mind, and written in their Heart*, Heb. viii. And that thoſe *who are born after the Spirit* by Regeneration, *are Children according to Promiſe*, or Tenour of the New Covenant; when as thoſe *who were born after the Fleſh*, and adhering only to the Letter of the Law for an external Righteouſneſs, were *Children of the Fleſh*, or Legal Political Covenant: And this is ſet forth in an Allegory touching the two Covenants, *Gal.* iv.

All this ſerves not only to let us ſee the *Nature* of that Righteouſneſs, by which the Judaizing Chriſtians could not be juſtified as they *expected*, but alſo by way of Oppoſition to that, truly and plainly to repreſent to us the *Nature* of that Evangelical Righteouſneſs, by which (in ſubordination to Chriſt's Righteouſneſs) we muſt be juſtified, if ever juſtified; both which doubtleſs were the true deſign of the Scriptures

I have brought together, that you might ſee the harmony and concurrent teſtimony of the Scriptures in this matter.

By this time I preſume you perceive, that the difference between the two ſorts of Judaizing Chriſtians, the better and the worſe, lay much in this one point, to wit, That the one did, and the other did not hold *internal* Righteouſneſs neceſſary to Juſtification: For, excepting in this, they ſeem both to have been of one mind, both in profeſſing Faith in Chriſt, and in holding themſelves under the Obligation of the Law of *Moſes* for Circumciſion and other Legal Rites. Now then, if that very thing made ſo great a difference between them, as I have ſhew'd, what ſhall we then think of that Opinion, by which ſome better Men among us than the corrupt Judaizing Chriſtians were, do thus far agree and fall in with them, as they do in denying Internal Righteouſneſs of Inherent Grace to be neceſſary to our Juſtification, or that it doth enter it, or is any Ingredient in it, but think it perfectly ſubſequent to it, not ſo much as admitting it to take place, or to come into being, until we are firſt juſtified; nor ſo much as admitting, that Faith in it ſelf is imputed for Righteouſneſs, but only the Righteouſneſs of Chriſt as apprehended by Faith: I ſay, what ſhall we think of this? Can we poſſibly think the ſame Opinion to be a grievous Error in the Judaizing Chriſtians, and yet to be Orthodox and Innocent in others?

Doubtleſs where this Opinion is as practically held, as it was by the corrupter ſort of Judaizing Chriſtians, it is as criminal and dangerous as it was in them; but ſo it is not, I confeſs, where it is held only ſpeculatively, as I ſuppoſe it to be by all thoſe of that Perſuaſion that are regenerate and truly good. For they hold Regeneration and the inherent Grace of Sanctification neceſſary to Salvation, though not to Juſtification; and in holding this, they practically hold it neceſſary to Juſtification, even then, while in Speculation and Opinion they hold no abſolute neceſſity of it in order thereto. For the practiſing upon this better Principle, as believing Regeneration and Sanctification neceſſary to Salvation, and becoming Regenerate, Sanctified, and internally Righteous thereupon, they come thereby to have this Evangelical Righteouſneſs imputed to them for ſuch as it is, that is, for Righteouſneſs; for ſo it is in the eye, and according to the tenour of the Evangelical Law; which Imputation is their Juſtification. This God does, although they do not know and believe all this, but think they were juſtified before they were ſanctified, (which by interpretation is to think they were accounted Righteous before they were ſo) that they were accounted Righteous in the Righteouſneſs of another, before they were at all Righteous in themſelves. But God proceeds in juſtifying Men, not according to by-opinions in Men, while conſiſtent with real Holineſs, but according to what they are in deed and in truth in the *Temper* of their Hearts, and *Tenour* of their Lives.

I have ſaid thus much to eaſe thoſe of the Opinion I oppoſe, as much as I can. For by reaſon that it is counter-balanced by better Principles in many, it is not ſo dangerous in them as it was in the corrupt Judaizing Chriſtians. It was in them indeed mortiferous and damnable, if practiſed upon, and perſiſted in, becauſe there was in them no ſuch thing to counter-balance it in its Operation, as a Perſuaſion of the neceſſity of Internal Righteouſneſs unto Salvation, no more than unto Juſtification, as there is in theſe.

And in this very reſpect, and their opinion of Merit, doubtleſs it was, that the Promoters of this grand Error were charged with *perverting the Goſpel of Chriſt*, and thoſe that practically adhered to them therein, with *falling from Grace*, and depriving themſelves of the Benefit of Chriſt's Death. And the reaſon of this is plain, becauſe the Grace of God in the Goſpel is limited and reſtrained in the *laſt iſſue* and *event* unto Men's becoming Regenerate and internally Righteous, as the *Condition* without which they ſhall neither be juſtified, pardoned, nor ſaved by the Death of Chriſt, or *any thing* he hath done for the Salvation of Sinners. And therefore thoſe falſe Teachers, that taught Juſtification and Salvation attainable by Chriſt without ſuch Internal Righteouſneſs, might well be charged with perverting the Goſpel of Chriſt, and thoſe Chriſtians with falling from Grace, who cloſed with them in that Opinion: For therein they departed and fell off from the true Notion and Idea of the Grace of the Goſpel, and the Terms on which all the ſaving Benefits are in the Goſpel promiſed by Jeſus Chriſt.

Now although this Opinion of the Non-neceſſity of the inherent Grace of Sanctification unto Juſtification, is check'd and controlled in its Operation in thoſe that are full of the ſenſe of the neceſſity of it unto Salvation; yet by what hath been now repreſented it ſeems in it ſelf, and *abſtracted* from the *better* Principle I have mentioned, to be the *firſt Step* towards falling from Grace in the Senſe before explained, and is of dangerous Conſequence, when it takes place in Men who have no ſuch *Senſe* of the Neceſſity of internal Sanctification unto Salvation. For in ſuch caſe, Libertines and carnal Men will be apt to bear up themſelves in hope (as is much to be feared they too frequently do) that if their believing *only*, abſtracted from its Effects in renewing Men, be *ſufficient* to *procure* the Imputation of Chriſt's Righteouſneſs to them for their Juſtification in the Sight of God, or otherwiſe of it *ſelf* to obtain it; that then it will be ſufficient alſo to *ſave* them, inaſmuch as the Scripture ſaith, *Whom God juſtifieth, them he alſo glorifieth*, and ſtileth the Juſtification of Men, *Juſtification unto Life*, and *if God juſtifie, who is he that condemneth?* And in this very reſpect, it is much to be feared, that this Opinion too frequently becomes a Snare of Death, and a ſtumbling Stone to many, to content themſelves with that which is but a dead Faith, and ſome External Form of Devotion and Righteouſneſs without the Internal, in mortifying all inordinate Affection, and in governing their Thoughts and Paſſions; and to think themſelves ſafe, and in a good Condition upon the account of that, to the betraying of their Souls to Deſtruction. And whether it may not be pronounced, concerning all thoſe who expect Juſtification and Salvation upon account of their believing and hoping in Chriſt, and of an External Righteouſneſs without an Internal; that they are fallen from Grace, and that Chriſt ſhall profit them nothing, as well as it was concerning the corrupt Judaizing Chriſtians, is a Queſtion, I think, you will eaſily reſolve.

When we ſee then how fatal it was to the Unbelieving Jews and Judaizing Chriſtians, to *miſtake* the *Tenour* of God's Covenant, and the *Nature* of the Covenant-righteouſneſs, and to introduce a Righteouſneſs of *another kind* into the *Place and Office* of the *Internal Righteouſneſs* which is by Faith, it may well make wary Men cautious, how they entertain any Opinion that is in any degree like unto it.

It hath been a *Miſtake* of the Scriptures about the *Nature and Kind* of the Evangelical Covenant-righteouſneſs, that hath *occaſioned* our Diſputes about it in theſe latter Times, as well as it did among Chriſtians in the Apoſtles Times; though the difference hath not been altogether ſo great, nor perhaps ſo dangerous now as it was then. And if it may not be burthenſome to you, I will very briefly give you yet ſome farther account of my Thoughts and Apprehenſions of the Nature of this Righteouſneſs, and of the Senſe and Meaning of ſome of thoſe Scriptures that treat of it, and have been miſtaken on the one ſide, or on the other.

The Tenour of God's Grace in the Goſpel is to exhibit, declare, and ſhew, that ſince Man by his Fall hath made the Enjoyment of Felicity, and the avoiding of Miſery, by perfect ſinleſs Obedience, impracticable, that yet God will for Chriſt's ſake, as having undertaken for us, receive him into Favour again upon condition that he do but heartily deſire, reſolve, and ſincerely endeavour for the future to become obedient, and to pleaſe him in all things ſo far as he is able with the Helps and Aſſiſtances Internal and External, which God will vouchſafe, and heartily repent that ever he did otherwiſe; and that upon the ſame Condition he will pardon all paſt ſins and future Failings alſo, ſo far as they are conſiſtent with Sincerity of Love and Obedience. This is ſummarily the glad Tidings which by the Goſpel is publiſhed to the World.

And a practical Belief of this glad Tidings is, that which God accounts unto Men for Righteouſneſs, as being the New Covenant-righteouſneſs: And that's a practical Belief of it, when Men ſo believe it as to practiſe according to it, in repenting and and ſincerely obeying, in hope of the promiſed Benefits. And this *Godly Sincerity* is the Righteouſneſs of the New Covenant or Goſpel, as diſtinguiſhed from the Righteouſneſs which is of the Law; either as that imports perfect ſinleſs Obedience, or elſe only an External Phariſaical Righteouſneſs.

The Evangelical Righteouſneſs afore deſcribed, is in the New Teſtament ſometimes ſtiled the Righteouſneſs of *God*, as oppoſed to the Unbelieving Jews and corrupt Judaizing Chriſtian's *own* External Phariſaical Righteouſneſs, *Rom.* x. 3. *Phil.* iii. 9. And this is called their *own* Righteouſneſs, as being only of their *own chuſing*, and not of God's appointing, as the condition on which they *promiſed themſelves* Juſtification in the ſight of God, when he had *promiſed them no ſuch thing*. And the Internal with the External Righteouſneſs of godly Sincerity is called *the Righteouſneſs of God*, and *the Righteouſneſs which is of God*; partly becauſe it is of his *Inſtitution*, and partly becauſe it is of his *Operation*. It is the Righteouſneſs *of God*, becauſe it is of his *Inſtitution*. He hath in and by the New Covenant ordained, That this ſhall be accounted and taken for that Righteouſneſs upon which he will accept Men as righteous, and juſtifie them as ſuch againſt all condemnatory Accuſations: This is his Inſtitution and Revelation in the Goſpel, in which this *Righteouſneſs of God* is ſaid to *be revealed from Faith to Faith*, Rom. i. 17. to wit, as that which is the Object of Faith, or that which is to be believed to be the ſtated Terms on which God will now juſtifie and ſave Men. And that it is meant of a Righteouſneſs inherent in Men, the rather appears by the Antitheſis in the next words, where on the contrary it's ſaid, *The Wrath of God is revealed from Heaven againſt all Ungodlineſs and Unrighteouſneſs of Men*; where the Ungodlineſs and *Unrighteouſneſs of Men*, is put in Oppoſition to the *Righteouſneſs of God*.

It is the Righteouſneſs of God alſo, becauſe it is of his *Operation* and working in us. It is of his *Creation*, and therefore called the *New Creature*, the *New Man created after the Image of God in Righteouſneſs and true Holineſs*, the *Divine Nature*, *begotten of God by the Word of Truth*; *born not of the Will of Man*, *or of the Will of the Fleſh*, *but of God*. And it being of his Inſtitution and Operation, it muſt needs be of his Approbation too. This Evangelical Righteouſneſs is called the *Righteouſneſs of God* in the ſame Senſe in which the Chriſtian Life is called the *Life of God*, Eph. iv. 18. not the Life which he himſelf lives, but the Life which he commands, and the Life which by his Grace he enables Men to live. As the Sacrament is called the *Supper of the Lord*, becauſe it is of his *Inſtitution*: So is this inherent Righteouſneſs and Juſtification by it, ſaid to be the Righteouſneſs *of God* for the ſame reaſon.

To reſtore fallen Man to this Righteouſneſs, and to Acceptation with God and Juſtification thereby, and to render him capable of the Happineſs deſigned him in another World, was the reaſon of ſending Chriſt into the World, and of his ſuffering for us, and of all the reſt of his Mediatory Undertaking. For that I take to be the plain meaning of 2 Cor. v. 21*. *He hath made him to be ſin for us who knew no Sin, that we might be made the Righteouſneſs of God in him*; that is, by means of him. Parallel to which, is 1 *Pet.* iii. 18 *Chriſt hath once ſuffered for ſins, the juſt for the unjuſt, that he might bring us to God.*

This inherent Righteouſneſs is called the Righteouſneſs which is *of God by Faith*, becauſe it proceeds from God by the means of Faith, and not without it, *Rom.* iii. 22. *Phil.* iii. 9. by believing that God will juſtifie and ſave Men by Jeſus Chriſt in this way, and upon theſe Terms of becoming inherently righteous, and not otherwiſe, Men come to be ſo, that they may be juſtified and ſaved.

I have the rather given this brief Gloſs upon theſe Scriptures, becauſe I find Mr. *Polhill* ſtill, as others have done before him, will needs underſtand that this Righteouſneſs is meant of the Righteouſneſs of Chriſt imputed to us, and that it is called the Righteouſneſs *of God*, becauſe it is the Righteouſneſs of *Chriſt*, *which is God*. But methinks he and they ſhould conſider, that becauſe the Righteouſneſs of Chriſt is the Righteouſneſs of him that is God as well as Man; that therefore it is nowiſe likely it ſhould ever be imputed to us any otherwiſe than in its bleſſed Effects, and conſequently that which they ſurmiſe cannot be the Senſe of the Scriptures aforementioned. For as ſuch it is a *Mediatorial Righteouſneſs*, a Righteouſneſs reſulting from his Conformity to the *Law of his Mediation*, which was a Law peculiar to himſelf alone. And it ſeems very rational to think this Righteouſneſs no more communicable to us, otherwiſe than in its happy Effects, than the Acts and Office of his Mediation are. And although, upon the account of its being ſo tranſcendent and glorious a Righteouſneſs, it is a very great ground of Conſolation and of Confidence to us, that for the ſake of it our Evangelical Righteouſneſs will be accepted with God, and all our Defects, ſo far as conſiſtent with Sincerity, freely pardoned; yet it is a great Queſtion, whether it will agree with Chriſtian Modeſty to preſume our ſelves inveſted therewith, any otherwiſe than in the beneficial Effects of it, unleſs there were more ground for it than we can find in Scripture. We may well bethink our ſelves, whether it be not a Garment too rich and glorious for us to wear, and proper only for the Perſon of the Mediator, the Son of God himſelf.

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* (When I compare the foregoing Verſes therewith, noting God's Deſign of reconciling us to himſelf by Chriſt, which is done by an inward Change of Mind and Will.)

If it ſhall yet be demanded, that if this be true, that we are juſtified upon account of all other inherent Grace, as well as that of Faith, then how comes it to paſs that in Scripture, *Faith* is ſtill ſaid to be imputed for Righteouſneſs, and not *Love*, or *Humility*, or the like? If there ſhould be no other Reaſon but this, yet this might well ſatisfie us in this Enquiry, *viz.* in that this Grace of Faith, above any other, is in the nature of it *adapted and fitted to ſubſerve God's deſign*, in recovering us from the ſtate of Sin and Miſery, into which we were ſunk, unto a ſtate of Holineſs and Happineſs, from which we were fallen.

God's deſign was to *reſtore us to Happineſs by Holineſs, and to make his own Grace glorious in the Eyes of his Creatures in doing of it.* And when you have well conſidered it, I think you will find that there is no one Grace or Vertue that could be ſo ſerviceable to God in this deſign, as Faith: Nay, which is more, that thoſe Divine Vertues themſelves which conſtitute the New Creature or Divine Nature (without which we are not capable of being made happy) could not have been introduced and brought again into the Nature of fallen Man, but by Faith. I will ſuppoſe, that you cannot imagine how God ſhould reſtore us to Happineſs without reconciling us to himſelf, and being reconciled to us: Nor how he ſhould reconcile us to himſelf, without making ſome Overtures of Grace to us: Nor how he ſhould be reconciled to us, without our ſubmitting to his terms of Grace. And if not, I can eaſily ſhew you, that we cannot be affected and wrought upon by God's *Overture* and *Offer of Grace*, ſo as to anſwer his end in making it, nor *ſubmit to*, or *comply with* his Terms of Grace without Believing; and conſequently that the execution of God's deſign in reſtoring us to Happineſs, and of glorifying the Riches of his Grace therein, depends very much upon *Faith*, and more on that, than on any other Grace or Vertue whatſoever.

Firſt, We cannot be affected and wrought upon by God's Offer of Grace, ſo as to give him the glory of it in thankful Acceptance, due Acknowledgments, and ſuitable Returns in loving him that ſhewed forth ſuch Love to us, without this Grace of Faith. For the *ſenſe* of God's Grace in offering to Sinners, through Chriſt, Pardon, Reſtoration to his Favour, and Salvation at laſt, upon condition of Repentance, cannot *enter* into the Heart of Man, but by Faith. And the reaſon hereof is, becauſe the Offer of Grace, and the things offered by Grace, are matters of *Supernatural Revelation*, which do not farther affect than they are believed, as I ſhall farther ſhew in the next Particular.

But by believing that God of meer Grace, in and by Chriſt, hath promiſed Pardon, Acceptance into Favour, the Aſſiſtance of his Spirit, and Eternal Life unto Sinners (otherwiſe under Condemnation) upon condition of Repentance, and a ſincere Returning unto God; I ſay, by this Belief we come to truſt in, and rely upon that Grace, and on Chriſt as an All-ſufficient Saviour, for thoſe promiſed Benefits, even in the performance of that Condition, and that in oppoſition to all opinion of meriting them by that performance, or by any thing we can do. And it is by this Belief and Affiance that God receives from us the Glory of his Grace, and Chriſt the Honour of his Performance for us; which anſwers one of the great ends deſigned by our Recovery: For which cauſe it may very well be one reaſon why this Faith, rather than any other Grace, is ſaid to be imputed to us for Righteouſneſs. For we are told expreſly, *That it is of Faith, that it might be by Grace*, Rom. iv. 16. That is, to cut off all pretence of Merit, the ſame ſaving Benefits are promiſed, and on the ſame Condition, to wit, that of Faith to Heathen Idolaters, *Sinners of the Gentiles*, as was to the ſtricteſt Obſervers of the Law of *Moſes:* The Reaſon in the cloſe of the Verſe gives that to be the Meaning. And accordingly Faith, whether it be in one that hath been a great Sinner, or in one of a more Inoffenſive Life, hath God's Grace, not Man's Merit, for its Object, on which it doth depend for all, and accordingly attributes and aſcribes all to it, *Gal.* ii. 15. 16. Which is one reaſon, we ſee, of God's electing of it to be the Condition on which his great and precious Promiſes are made, and may well be a reaſon alſo of his imputing it to Men for Righteouſneſs when they do believe.

For by the account we have why *Abraham*'s Faith was imputed to him for Righteouſneſs, we have reaſon to believe that our giving to God the Glory of his Grace and Goodneſs, Truth and Power, by this Belief and Affiance, and to Chriſt the Honour of his Undertaking, is of ſuch high Acceptation with God, as that he of his Goodneſs is pleaſed to honour and reward it by imputing it to us for Righteouſneſs.

For we ſee when *Abraham*'s Faith in God's Promiſe, touching a numerous Iſſue, had nothing to lean upon but the Goodneſs, Veracity, and Power of God, and that theſe carried it with *Abraham* againſt all Doubts and Objections that might ariſe from the utmoſt Humane and Natural Improbabilities of ever coming to paſs, ſo that *he gave Glory to God in being fully perſuaded, that what he had promiſed he was able alſo to perform*; that St. *Paul* hath told us, that *therefore*, or for this very cauſe, *his Faith was imputed to him for Righteouſneſs*, Rom. iv. 21, 22.

But the glorifying the Riches of his Grace, was not all that God had in deſign in our Recovery, but alſo the Renovation of our Nature, and the Reſtoring us to Happineſs thereby: And Faith is as neceſſary and uſeful for the accompliſhing this part of God's deſign, as it was to effect the other; and therefore, *ſecondly*, this may be another Reaſon why Faith is imputed for Righteouſneſs, and why it's ſaid to be ſo, rather than any other Grace.

Without Believing we cannot *comply* with the Terms and Condition on which Pardon and Salvation are promiſed, and without which they are not to be had; and that is, in being renewed in our Nature. For without believing thoſe Motives that tend to perſuade us to comply with, and ſubmit to the Terms or Condition, on which God for Chriſt's ſake hath promiſed to pardon us, to receive us into favour, and finally to ſave us, we can never actually comply with thoſe Terms, or that Condition, and conſequently without that can never be capable of receiving the Benefits promiſed on that Condition.

For it is Faith, as it *takes in thoſe Motives*, in their ſtrength and perſuaſive efficacy, that becomes a vigorous and operative Principle of all other Graces, Repentance, Love, Obedience, and the like, by which our Nature becomes renewed: All which depend upon our Believing. And therefore well may our Faith be named, and put for all the reſt, as comprehending them in it, when it, rather than any other Grace, is ſaid to be imputed for Righteouſneſs. To make this evident, I ſhall ſuggeſt two things to you.

1. That they are the great *Motives* of the Goſpel, the Grace of God and Love of Chriſt to loſt Man; the Good hoped for, and the Evil feared; the Good promiſed to thoſe that are good, and the Evil threatned to thoſe that are evil, that *operate* upon the Mind and Will in Men, to the producing that change in them, by which they become new Men, ſincerely good Men. *If we love God, it is becauſe he loved us firſt*, 1 John iv. 19. If we *live to Chriſt that died for us, it is becauſe the Love of Chriſt conſtrains us*, 2 Cor. v. 14. If we *are made partakers of the Divine Nature, it is by the great and pretious Promiſes that we are ſo*, 2 Pet. i. 4. And,

2. The *Operation* of theſe *Motives* of the Goſpel upon the Mind *depends upon our Believing*, and ſo conſequently do all thoſe happy effects in Heart and Life, which are produced by the Operation of thoſe Motives. For until the Reality of thoſe Motives are believed, they have *no exiſtence* or being in the Soul; and where they have no being, they have *no operation. The word Preached did not profit them, not being mixed with Faith in them that heard it*, Heb. iv. 2. The Love, Grace, and Favour of God to Sinners, in giving Chriſt for us, and of his Love in giving himſelf for us, and intending and promiſing us the benefit of Pardon and Salvation thereby, only upon condition of our Repentance and Converſion unto God, being all of them things *inviſible*, and not Objects of Senſe, do not affect us, or perſuade us to repent, and in good earneſt turn to God, that we may be pardoned and ſaved, until we really *believe* theſe things. It is our Faith, or the credit we give to the Revelation which God hath made of theſe things, that gives them an exiſtence or being in the Soul, and upon that depends the efficacy and power of their prevailing with us to become new Men. *Faith is the ſubſtance* or ſubſiſtence *of things hoped for, and the evidence* or conviction *of things not ſeen*, Heb. xi. 1. Unleſs Men firſt believe that God is ſo good, merciful and gracious to Men, notwithſtanding they have ſinned againſt him, as to pardon and ſave them, if they repent and become ſincerely obedient for the future; and not otherwiſe, they will never deny Ungodlineſs and Worldly Luſts, when they are ſollicited thereby to gratifie the Fleſh. Men muſt firſt *believe that God is, and that he is a rewarder of them that diligently ſeek him* indeed, before they will ſeek his Grace and Favour by becoming ſuch, and doing that upon which, and not without which, he hath more or leſs declared his Grace and Favour is to be obtained and found. *Without this Faith it is impoſſible to pleaſe God*; it is impoſſible to leave off thoſe things by which they have diſpleaſed him, and to betake themſelves to thoſe things that are pleaſing in his ſight, *Heb.* xi. 6.

It was the Belief, that all good Men had before the Law, and under the Law, that God would *keep Covenant and Mercy with thoſe that love him and keep his Commandments* and not otherwiſe, that brought them ſo to love him and to keep his Commandments: It was their Belief, that *there is forgiveneſs with him that he might be feared*, as an encouragement to Men to fear him, that prevailed with them to fear him indeed, *Pſal.* cxxx. 4. It was the *Hope* which even the Heathen *Ninevites* had (from the Natural Notion they had of God, and from their Obſervation of his general and common Goodneſs to the World, notwithſtanding Mens Sins) that if they did but repent and leave their Sins, Forgiveneſs might poſſibly be obtained, that cauſed them to *turn from their evil way, and from the violence that was in their hands*, Jonah iii. 8, 10.

Now then, ſince ſo much as you ſee *depends* upon *Faith*, as Repentance, Converſion, Regeneration, and all Inherent Righteouſneſs and Holineſs of Living; there is great reaſon why it ſhould uſually be mentioned, as that which is imputed for Righteouſneſs, rather than any other Inherent Grace, and in the Name, and as the Repreſentative of all the reſt, as being the productive Cauſe of them all.

By the way you may obſerve then, that ſince it is, as you ſee, the Operation of the great *Motives* of the Goſpel as believed, that in conjunction with the Operation of the Holy Spirit, effects that great Change in Men, by which they become regularly capable of all the Bleſſedneſs of Pardon and Salvation which the Goſpel reveals; it muſt needs be very *neceſſary* for ſuch as you, who are Miniſters of the Goſpel, to *inſiſt* much upon thoſe *Motives* in your Diſcourſes to the People, and to inculcate and work them into their Minds. To ſet Life and Death, Heaven and Hell before them, and to convince them of the reality of ſuch a future ſtate, and of the *inſeparable Connexion* that is between Happineſs and their Duty, and between a Sinful and Hypocritical Life, and their Eternal Miſery. And to convince them, that every one ſhall *have* in the next World according as he *chuſeth* in this, he that chuſeth the right *way* ſhall come to the right and beſt *end*; as he that chuſeth the wrong ſhall certainly come to the wrong and worſt, and that every He that ſhall periſh hereafter is a Self-murtherer.

And likewiſe to ſet in the People's Eye the *preventing Grace of God*, what he hath already done for us, as a moſt affecting Motive tending to reconcile us to him, and to think well of him, as of one that never ſought our ruin; but as pitying us, and taking compaſſion on us, when we had brought it upon our ſelves, and not purſuing the advantage we have given him againſt us, nor revenging himſelf on us: But contrarily, contriving a way of our recovery from Sin, and from the Miſery into which that hath brought us; yea, though it coſt him very dear to do it, in giving his Son to die for us, when he could not otherwiſe do it with *ſatisfaction* to himſelf in reference to the Honour of his Government.

Beſides, he hath done this for us Men, and for our Salvation, when he hath paſt by the fallen Angels; Chriſt the Son of God did not take hold of Angels, the Apoſtate Spirits, to reſcue them out of that Deſtruction and Miſery into which they plunged themſelves; and yet hath taken hold of the Seed of *Abraham*, of the Humane Nature, to reſcue and pluck Mankind out of the horrible Pit of Deſtruction, into which we were fallen, *Heb.* ii. 16.

And now, is not all this Grace of God, and Love of Chriſt, which thus far is unconditionate, and abſolutely free and unſought-for on our part, and altogether antecedent to any thing done by us to obtain it; a wonderful Motive thankfully and joyfully to accept of thoſe moſt reaſonable and gracious Terms of our Recovery, which God in the Goſpel hath offered us?

When it ſhall be conſidered, that God of his mere Commiſeration and Compaſſion towards us, hath now try'd us once again, when we were all but as dead Men before him, and hath put us in a way once again of being happy; with what face can we ſlight, deſpiſe, and abuſe ſuch Love, by rejecting thoſe gracious Terms of Reconciliation, that were procured for us on ſuch coſtly Terms as the Sufferings of the Son of God amount unto? But if we do, and after all this will perſiſt in our Rebellion againſt Heaven, how can we poſſibly expect that any other way or terms of Pardon and Salvation ſhould ever be offered unto us again? *How ſhall we eſcape if we neglect ſo great Salvation*, and ſo mercifully and freely offered us, and that on no harder Conditions neither, than to ceaſe our wilful Rebellion againſt God, and to become Dutiful and Loyal under his eaſie Yoke and gentle Government by the Evangelical Law? *Heb.* ii. 3.

If then ſuch mighty Motives as the Love of God, and his Son Chriſt Jeſus our Lord, ſo wonderfully expreſt, and the Hope of Heaven, and the Fear of Hell, will not work upon us to repent, to change our Minds, and amend our Lives, and to become new Creatures; what greater Motives, think we, can God uſe to perſuade Men by? Doubtleſs they are theſe Motives will do it, if any thing will do it: And for that reaſon they ſhould (as I ſaid) be inſiſted on by thoſe, whoſe ſpecial Buſineſs appointed them by God is to win Souls.

And as theſe Motives ſhould be much and often inculcated upon the Minds of the People for the reaſon aforeſaid, ſo for the ſame reaſon they ſhould be managed with all the Advantage, in reſpect of Circumſtance, that can be thought on, to reach their end, in operating powerfully upon the People's Souls. Such for one is *Plainneſs of Speech*, as the Phraſe is, 2 *Cor.* iii. 12. and not as *Moſes*, who put a Veil over his Face: By which Plainneſs of Speech (if it be what I mean) things are fitted and prepared for the Underſtanding and Capacity of the meaneſt, whoſe Salvation God hath deſigned as much as the Salvation of the more learned and wiſe. If *Peter* will expreſs his Love to his Maſter indeed, he muſt as well feed his Lambs as his Sheep. *John* xxi. 15.

And by how much the more Matters ſo affecting in themſelves, as the Motives of the Goſpel are, are delivered with an *inward Senſe*, *Seriouſneſs* and *Gravity*; by ſo much the more they will command Attention and Conſideration from the People, and the ſooner *ſink down into their Hearts*, and the more powerfully operate upon the Mind and Will.

And if the Experience of many (among whom I number my ſelf) be of any Conſideration in place of Proof, then the *intermixing Scripture Texts* in Divine Diſcourſes, aptly applied, and wiſely managed, is much more edifying to the People than ſuch Diſcourſes without that, can be; though otherwiſe, for the matter of them, they may be agreeable to the Scripture. For beſides that, ſo doing greatly helps Memory and Retention of the Matter; without which, the Operation of the Matter vaniſheth with the Matter it ſelf: And beſides, alſo the Benefit of growing thereby into better Acquaintance with the Scriptures, the Mine of theſe Motives of which I ſpeak; and of becoming able by Uſe to reduce ſcattered Texts of one and the ſame Import to Heads of Doctrine; I ſay beſides all this, and more which might be ſaid, it tends greatly to *bind* the Matter delivered the faſter upon the Conſcience, when it ſhall come ſo viſibly armed with Authority from Heaven, as by that means it does; and when the Laws and Statutes of that Kingdom ſhall be produced, laid open, and urged to make it good and enforce it. The Scriptures themſelves will be found of more Authority in the Conſciences of Men, than the beſt Words Men can ſpeak, though never ſo rational and true. In a word, as *Apollos* was a Man *mighty in the Scriptures*, ſo he *mightily convinced* his Hearers *by the Scriptures*, Acts xviii. 24, 28. I need not mention unto you how much it was St. *Paul*'s manner to reaſon out of the Scriptures of the Old Teſtament, before thoſe of the New were in being; when he had to do with thoſe that owned them, *Acts* xvii. 2. and xxviii. 23. Nor how our Lord Chriſt himſelf collected and brought together the things concerning himſelf, which were ſcattered up and down in *Moſes* and the Prophets, and expounded them to his Diſciples, and thereby opened their Underſtandings, and cauſed their Hearts to burn within them; and that, I think, is not unlike the Operation of the Motives of the Goſpel I have been ſpeaking of, *Luke* xxiv. 27, 32, 45, 46.

There is one thing more which I muſt add to obviate an Objection; and another to explain and confirm ſomething I have aſſerted. I know ſome, and perhaps your ſelf, will be ready to object, That the Tenour of my reaſoning, touching God's imputing Faith it ſelf, and other inherent Grace for Righteouſneſs in juſtifying Men, tends to confound Juſtification and Sanctification, and to make them all one. But that follows not at all; For Sanctification is the conſtituting or making Men Evangelically righteous, or holy, by the joint Operation of God's Holy Spirit, and the Evangelical Doctrine; but Juſtification is God's pronouncing or declaring them, as he doth in the Goſpel, to be righteous according to the Terms of the Goſpel, as having performed the Condition upon which Forgiveneſs of Sin and Eternal Life are therein promiſed.

Juſtification is a Juridical Act of God as Judge, which doth not make a Man righteous as Sanctification doth, but upon tryal pronounceth him to be ſo; and by it the Perſon tried is acquitted and diſcharged from the Accuſation of Unbelief, Impenitency, and wilful Diſobedience to the Goſpel, and ſo alſo from Condemnation it ſelf. So that Juſtification is not Sanctification, but ſuppoſeth it as antecedent thereunto, at leaſt in order of Nature, *Whom he called them he alſo juſtified*, ſaith St. *Paul*, *and whom he juſtified them he alſo glorified*, Rom. viii. 30. He doth not ſay, whom he juſtified them he alſo ſanctified, but them alſo he glorified. Sanctification is not brought in between Juſtification and Glorification in that golden Chain, but is placed in order as going before both, in effectual calling.

The other thing I would add for Explanation and Confirmation is this: Whereas I have ſaid that the Faith which is imputed for Righteouſneſs, is comprehenſive of Repentance and Obedience to the Goſpel: Now leſt you ſhould not be ſatisfied therewith, I ſhall give you this plain account why we cannot reaſonably underſtand otherwiſe. For the Scripture doth exclude ſuch from ſharing in the ſaving Benefits of the Covenant, as are impertinent, unregenerate, and diſobedient to the Goſpel, *Luke* xiii. 3. *John* iii. 3. *Rom.* ii. 8. And if ſo, then no Man can ſhare in thoſe ſaving Benefits, whereof Juſtification is one, until his Faith doth produce Repentance, Regeneration, and Obedience; unleſs you will ſuppoſe that which no Man does, that theſe are no Effects of Faith; for he that believes is born of God, is to a degree renewed to his Likeneſs, 1 *John* v. 1.

And when I ſay thus, I am not of Opinion that Men cannot be juſtified until they have fulfilled ſome time in a courſe of holy Living and new Obedience, internal and external. But when a Man ſo believes, as that ſuch a real Change is thereby wrought in the Heart, as is the beginning of a new Life for the preſent, and the Foundation of a holy Life for the future; then undoubtedly he paſſeth out of an unjuſtified into a juſtified State. This Change in the Mind and Will by means of Faith, doth firſt conſtitute a Man a good Man; and when this Change firſt takes place, then God's *Laws* are firſt *put into the Mind*, *and written in the heart*, upon which God promiſeth in the New Covenant *to be our God*, *and that we ſhall be his People*; *and that he will be merciful to our Unrighteouſneſs*, *and our ſins and iniquities to remember no more*, Heb. viii. 10, 12, and x. 16, 17.

And it is obſervable, that the Qualification upon which God in the New Covenant here mentioned, promiſeth to be our God, and to forgive our Sins, is not mentioned under the Name or Notion of Faith or Believing, but of having the Divine Laws put into the Mind, and written in the Heart. Which would be ſomewhat ſtrange, if this writing the Law in the Heart were no part of the Condition; without which, God will not vouchſafe unto any Man that great Benefit of the Covenant, Juſtification.

There is no doubt, indeed, but that though Faith be not here mentioned, yet it is ſuppoſed and implied, inaſmuch as without it the Law cannot be written in the Heart in the Senſe we ſpeak of it now.

But then, when at other times Faith only is mentioned, as that which qualifies Men for Juſtification, and as the Condition of the Promiſe of Pardon and Salvation; yet then this writing of the Law in the Heart is alſo to be underſtood. For it is not to be imagined, that the putting of the Law into the Mind, and writing it in the Heart, would be mentioned in a Deſcription of the Tenour of the New Covenant; as that Qualification upon which God will be our God, take us for his People, and forgive our ſins (which imply Juſtification;) if any Faith, or Faith in any reſpect ſhort of producing this Effect, would be available and ſufficient unto Juſtification.

It's true, the Scripture in ſome places tells us, that Faith is imputed for Righteouſneſs, without telling us what, or what manner of Faith this is: But then in other places it is plainly deſcribed to us by the nature of its Operation, as that *it purifieth the Heart*, Acts xv. 9. *worketh by Love*, Gal. v. 6. *overcometh the World*, 1 John v. 4. and *ſanctifieth the whole Man*, Acts xxvi. 18.

We ſee then, that the inſeparable Effects of Faith, as here the writing of the Law in the Heart, are ſometimes mentioned as thoſe things which qualifie us for the Bleſſing of the Covenant, and ſometimes Faith it ſelf only. But if we will take the whole Teſtimony of the Scriptures together, we ſhall find that both are intended: And why then ſhould we contend, as ſome do, about dividing theſe in qualifying us for Juſtification, as parts of that Evangelical Righteouſneſs which will be imputed to us for Righteouſneſs?

After all this, let me tell you, *Sir*, That there is a ſenſe in which it is not diſagreeable to the Scripture, to ſay that a Man is juſtified by ſuch Acts of Evangelical Righteouſneſs or Obedience, as do not take place till long after he firſt believes, and believes to Juſtification. And thus *Abraham's* Believing, mentioned *Gen.* xv. 6. which was not until ſome Years after he firſt believed, is ſaid to be imputed to him for Righteouſneſs: And many Years after that again he was juſtified by yielding Obedience to God's Command about offering his Son, *James* ii. 21. And ſomewhat of like nature is alſo ſaid of *Noah*, Heb. xi. 7. compared with *Gen.* vi. 9, 22.

But theſe things are ſaid, I conceive, in reference to the continuance of their Juſtification, and not of their Juſtification at firſt. For as thoſe acts of Believing, Repenting, *&c.* which do firſt conſtitute a Man a new Creature, are at firſt imputed to him for Righteouſneſs, ſo all after-acts of Evangelical Obedience, and of Faith it ſelf, are ſtill imputed to him for Righteouſneſs to the continuance of his Juſtification. To which agrees that reading of *Revel.* xxii. 11. which runs thus, *Let him that is righteous be juſtified ſtill*; and *the Righteouſneſs of God is revealed from* Faith *to* Faith, Rom. i. 17. But otherwiſe, *if the righteous turneth away from his* Righteouſneſs, *and commiteth Iniquity, and doth according to all the abominations that the wicked Man doth, all the Righteouſneſs which he hath done ſhall not be mentioned: In his treſpaſs which he hath treſpaſſed, and in his ſin that he hath ſinned, in them ſhall he die*, Ezek. xviii. 24. Again, *When I ſay to the Righteous he ſhall ſurely live; if he truſt to his own Righteouſneſs (i. e.* his former Righteouſneſs) *and commit Iniquity, all his Righteouſneſs ſhall not be remembred*, Ezek. xxxiii. 13. *Now the juſt ſhall live by Faith, but if he draw back, my Soul ſhall have no pleaſure in him*, Heb. x. 38. if then you do but conſider upon what terms Men are at firſt juſtified, and upon what terms they continue to be ſo afterwards, you will eaſily perceive it to be a great and moſt important Truth to ſay, That we are juſtified by Believing and Obeying the Goſpel.

Theſe things, *Sir*, which I have thus done by way of Eſſay, without regard to Method, I ſubmit to your Conſideration. I know right-well it's in vain, if I had a mind to it, (which yet I am far from) to impoſe upon you, or to perſuade you to receive any thing for Truth farther than it brings its Evidence to be ſo along with it. And it were to be wiſhed that every one were able to diſcern when it doth ſo: But that's a thing rather to be deſired than expected in this our preſent State in this World. But it's Argument enough to treat one another ſo, almoſt as if we did, if we have not apparent Reaſon to think we are but inſincere and diſſembling Friends to Truth, and love it not for it ſelf, nor any farther than it will accommodate us in ſome ſecular or carnal reſpect or other; and it is not eaſie to determine when we have apparent Reaſon ſo to think. And therefore I conclude it ſafeſt for our ſelves rather to err in treating one another in our differences better than we deſerve, than worſe. And ſo to do is better for them alſo that differ from us, ſo far as they differ from Truth; yea, and better for the Truth it ſelf too. For it is often ſeen, that when a Prejudice is taken up againſt the Perſons of Men, be the Cauſe never ſo juſt, the Truth it ſelf is the leſs eſteemed, if not ſhrewdly ſuſpected, becauſe held by them; eſpecially when its Evidence is not written as with a Sun-beam. So that when we, by an undue Behaviour in pleading the Cauſe of Truth, draw upon our ſelves diſreſpect from them whom we would draw from Error, we prevaricate in the matter, and act croſs to our own deſign: A thing which ſome engaged in Controverſies have been to blame in.

However it will be our Wiſdom in reading of Books of this nature to mind the Argument, and to take little notice of any unbecoming Girds or Reflections, unleſs it be to bewail them, and to endeavour to follow, as indeed there is need, that ſaying of our Saviour, *Let him that readeth underſtand*, Mark xiii. 14. Thus deſiring that you and I, and all other Chriſtians, may ſpeak the Truth in Love, in Love both to it and Men, and receive it in the Love of it, that we may be benefitted by it, I take my Leave, and remain as ever,

Your, moſt affectionately to ſerve You

April 22. 1675. *In all Offices of Chriſtian Love and Reſpect*, &c

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Chriſtians Juſtification STATED.

SHEWING

How the Righteouſneſs of CHRIST, the Goſpel-Covenant, Faith, and GOD Himſelf, do operate to our Juſtification.

BRITISH MUSEUM

THE PREFACE TO THE READER.

There hath, I confeſs, been ſo much already written about the Doctrine of Juſtification, as may probably incline ſome to think the Publication of theſe Papers to be ſuperfluous. But when it ſhall be conſidered how much, of what hath been written on this Subject, hath been done in a way of Controverſie about ſome particular Branches of the Doctrine of Juſtification, and how little to ſtate and explain the whole of it, and yet how neceſſary this is for the ending of ſuch Controverſies; it's poſſible they may be of another mind. Some Chriſtians, when they find in the holy Scriptures that ſometimes we are ſaid to be juſtified by the Blood of Chriſt, *and by his* Obedience *to be made righteous; at another time, that we are juſtified by* Faith; *at another, that we are juſtified* freely by Grace; *at another, that we are not juſtified by* Faith *only, but by* Works *alſo; and at another time, that it is* God *that juſtifieth; they become ſomewhat confounded in their own Minds with this variety of things, to which our Juſtification is attributed. And although all ſuch as are well-minded, may by the Goſpel, in which theſe things are revealed, come ſo to believe, and ſo live as to be juſtified: Yet many of them are at a great loſs how to underſtand in what reſpect we are ſaid to be* juſtified *by the one and by the other of theſe. And for want of a right ſtating and explaining how, and in what different reſpects theſe ſeverals do concur to the producing one and the ſame effect, which is our Juſtification; ſome have confounded them, and attributed that to one of theſe Cauſes, which is proper to another. As for inſtance, this hath been done when they have aſcribed to Chriſt, to his Blood, and to his Obedience and Righteouſneſs, not only what is proper to theſe, but alſo what is proper to Faith it ſelf; and ſo have drowned the perſonal Righteouſneſs of Faith, as neceſſary to Juſtification, in the Righteouſneſs of Chriſt; whereas theſe are diſtinct in themſelves, and in the nature and manner of their Operation; and the perſonal Righteouſneſs by Faith as really neceſſary to our Juſtification in one reſpect, as the Righteouſneſs of Chriſt, his Blood, and his Obedience, is in another, though in a way indeed ſubordinate to, and dependent upon this.*

Some good Men have indeed thought they could not attribute too much to the Righteouſneſs of Chriſt in reference to our Juſtification (and in ſome ſenſe perhaps we cannot) and that it derogates from it, and from Free Grace, to intereſs our perſonal Righteouſneſs by Faith therein at all; as if to do ſo, did imply or ſuppoſe his Righteouſneſs not ſufficient, unleſs it were eked out by ours, as they were wont to ſpeak. When-as the queſtion is not about the Sufficiency of the Righteouſneſs of our Saviour for all thoſe ends to which the Father and himſelf have deſigned it; but the queſtion is, whether it were deſigned by them to juſtifie any actually in their rebel ſtate, or before they repent of it, and become reconciled to God in mind and heart: And doubtleſs there is great reaſon to ſay it was not; ſince to juſtifie the Wicked is an abomination to the Lord; and ſince alſo the actual Collation of all ſaving Benefits upon the account of Chriſt's Mediatory Performance, is ſuſpended upon our being reconciled to God by Obedience of Faith, which is our Perſonal Righteouſneſs; as is ſhewed in the following Diſcourſe.

It is a great Miſtake to think, that the Righteouſneſs of Chriſt and our perſonal Righteouſneſs of Faith, *ſtand in Oppoſition to one another, as if what is aſcribed to the latter were taken from the former. Whereas our perſonal Righteouſneſs of* Faith, *is ſo far ſubſervient to the End and Deſign of the Righteouſneſs of Chriſt, as that his Righteouſneſs loſeth its end upon Men for which it was deſigned, until they become perſonally Evangelically righteous. For the Righteouſneſs of Chriſt was never deſigned for the Juſtification, Pardon, or Salvation of Men, without perſonal Righteouſneſs, but through the Righteouſneſs of* Faith. *If we did aſcribe that to our perſonal Righteouſneſs of* Faith, *which is proper only to the mediatorial and meritorious Righteouſneſs of Chriſt, we ſhould indeed ſet the one in Oppoſition to the other; which we are far enough from doing. But ſo long as our perſonal Righteouſneſs of* Faith *doth but ſerve under the Righteouſneſs of Chriſt unto our Juſtification, it no more eclipſeth the Glory of it, than the ſhining of the Moon doth the Glory of the Sun, when it borrows its Light from it. But how theſe two Righteouſneſſes do differ, and yet concur to our Juſtification, you will ſee farther in the Tractate it ſelf.*

Nor does it at all derogate from the Grace of God, and our Lord Jeſus Chriſt, to ſay our perſonal Righteouſneſs of Faith *is one Ingredient in our Juſtification, or that it is that without which we are not qualified for it: But that contrarily it doth illuſtriouſly ſet forth the Grace of God in being ſo. And the reaſon hereof is, becauſe its being imputed or counted to us for Righteouſneſs, and their being reckoned righteous that have it, is altogether of Grace and Favour; for it does not of it ſelf make a Man righteous according to the Original Law of ſtrict Juſtice. It is therefore another great Miſtake to oppoſe the Grace of God to our perſonal Righteouſneſs by* Faith, *in reference to our Juſtification: When as it is the very Act of Grace it ſelf to reckon or impute* Faith *to us for Righteouſneſs, inſtead of a perfect legal Righteouſneſs, upon account of Chriſt's mediatory Performance. St.* Paul *ſaith,* It is therefore of Faith that it might be by Grace. *It is ſpoken ſo as if it could not have been by Grace, unleſs it had been by* Faith: Grace reigns through Righteouſneſs, *ſaith St.* Paul, through Jeſus Chriſt our Lord. *So very far is it from derogating from Grace to intereſs our perſonal Righteouſneſs of* Faith, *as an Ingredient in our Juſtification. We are juſtified freely by Grace, and yet we are juſtified by* Faith *alſo. And if the Scripture thus joins them together in the ſame Work, though in different reſpects, we ſhall not do well, I think, to ſeparate them, much leſs to oppoſe them to one another in it.* By Grace are ye ſaved through Faith, *ſaith St.* Paul *in another place. It does not leſſen Grace at all, that* Faith *is intereſſed in the ſame Work under Grace in the Salvation of Men: For Grace ſhews it ſelf as well in ordaining* Faith *to be a Righteouſneſs entitling a Man to Life, as it does in conferring Life upon him that hath that Righteouſneſs, being otherwiſe a Sinner: So that we can no more truly ſay, that we are not juſtified by a perſonal Righteouſneſs of* Faith, *becauſe we are juſtified by Grace, and by Chriſt; than we can ſay a Man is not born again of the incorruptible Seed of the Word, becauſe he is born of God.*

To ſay as many have been wont to ſay, That St. Paul *renounced his own perſonal inherent Righteouſneſs from having any thing to do in his Juſtification, becauſe he ſaid that he deſired to be found in Chriſt; not having his own Righteouſneſs, which is of the Law, is ſo far from proving that he did ſo, as that the contrary is plainly his Scope and Intent in the place where thoſe words of his are found. It was only his* own *Righteouſneſs which was* by the Law, *and which he truſted in while he was a Phariſee, which he here renounced when he became a Chriſtian. Which Righteouſneſs is elſewhere called the Jews* own *Righteouſneſs, which they went about to eſtabliſh, as being ignorant of the Righteouſneſs of God. Which Righteouſneſs of theirs, and of St.* Paul, *while a Phariſee, ſtood in an Opinion and Conceit; Firſt, That the legal Sacrifices, the Blood of Bulls and of Goats, did of themſelves expiate and take away ſin, and that there was no need of the Blood of Chriſt to do it. Secondly, That an external Righteouſneſs without an internal, was all that was neceſſary to their Juſtification; the Circumciſion of the Fleſh, and in the Letter, without that which is of the Heart, and in the Spirit. Thirdly, In an Opinion, that for God to approve of them, and to juſtifie them as righteous upon this account, was but a due Debt, not a Matter of meer Grace and Favour. Now Juſtification by the Righteouſneſs of the Law in this Senſe, this Apoſtle does indeed not only here renounce in himſelf, but alſo every where in his Epiſtles diſputeth againſt, as any Matter of Mens Juſtification before God. And when he became a Chriſtian, he deſired no longer to be found* *in this Righteouſneſs which was of the Law; but to be found in Chriſt, as having that Righteouſneſs which is through the Faith of Chriſt, the Righteouſneſs of God by Faith. The which Righteouſneſs of Faith is oppoſed to this Righteouſneſs which was of the Law, and does ſummarily conſiſt in a firm Belief and Practice of thoſe things which are contrary to thoſe in which the Phariſaical Righteouſneſs which was of the Law, did conſiſt. As firſt, in a Belief that the Blood of Chriſt only does expiate Sin. Secondly, In inward Purity of Heart by Faith, as well as external Righteouſneſs. Thirdly, In a hearty Perſwaſion that it is meerly of Grace and Favour, that God through Chriſt will accept this for Righteouſneſs; and that Pardon of Sin and Eternal Life are promiſed upon this only Condition. And this is the Righteouſneſs of Faith, which this Apoſtle oppoſeth in his Epiſtles to the other Righteouſneſs of the Law, as the Righteouſneſs by which Men ſhall be juſtified, and in which he himſelf deſired to be found. And this Righteouſneſs of Faith is ſaid to be of God, not only for that it is of his working in us; but alſo, and more eſpecially, becauſe it is of his meer Grace and Favour to ordain by the Goſpel, that this ſhall be reckoned to us for Righteouſneſs, and that we ſhall be approved of as righteous if it be found in us, and dealt withal as righteous, not only in not being puniſhed as Sinners, but on the contrary rewarded as righteous. The other Righteouſneſs by which* St. Paul, *while a Phariſee, and other Phariſaical Jews expected to be juſtified, is ſaid to be their* own *Righteouſneſs; not only becauſe what it did conſiſt of was wholly within their own power to perform, without any ſupernatural Aſſiſtance; but alſo and eſpecially, becauſe it was the true Righteouſneſs only in their own Opinion, and of their own making, but never of God's appointing or ordaining.*

When ſome good Men heretofore did exclude all perſonal Righteouſneſs *of Faith from having any hand in our Juſtification, for fear they ſhould otherwiſe detract from the Fulneſs and Sufficiency of the Righteouſneſs of Chriſt, they little conſidered what a door they thereby opened for Libertiniſm to enter in among us, as after-Experience ſhewed they did. For many from that Doctrine thought themſelves ſo righteous in the ſight of God, by the Righteouſneſs of Chriſt imputed to them upon a ſpeculative Faith, as that they needed no other Righteouſneſs; and thought it a Diſparagement to the Righteouſneſs of Chriſt for any to ſay they did. They would at firſt pretend indeed, that the Senſe of Chriſt's Love, would in a way of Gratitude produce a good Life; but abhorred it ſhould be made neceſſary to our Juſtification. This I my ſelf had Experience of above forty Years ago, which with their neglect of Chriſtian Duties, firſt brought me under Suſpicion concerning the Doctrine of the Imputation of the Righteouſneſs of Chriſt unto Juſtification, otherwiſe than in the bleſſed Effects of it. At that time the preſſing the Neceſſity of Repentance, Mortification, and a ſincere keeping of the Commandments of God, begun to be called Legal Preaching, as the like is ſtill counted but Moral Preaching by ſome others. After this, the foreſaid Notion was improved to the breaking out of the groſſeſt* Antinomian *and* Ranting *Practices, under pretence of magnifying Free Grace; to the great Diſhonour of the Chriſtian Profeſſion, and the apparent Hazard of Mens Salvation.*

Upon the Obſervation of all which, ſome worthy Men were ſtirred up to encounter by writing, not only ſuch Abuſes and Miſcarriages of Men, but alſo thoſe Doctrines out of which they ſprang. In which they were oppoſed by ſome Patrons of unſound Principles, which hath ſince occaſioned many Diſputes about ſome Points in the Doctrine of Juſtification. In which Diſputes many School-niceties have been agitated, which the Generality of Chriſtians little underſtand, and which the Scriptures themſelves meddle not in. By means whereof ſuch have been puzled rather than edified by much of what of this nature hath been done; whoſe Edification yet, they being by far the greater Number, ought to be endeavoured as well at leaſt, if not rather, than the Edification and Satisfaction of thoſe of more refined Apprehenſions.

All which things conſidered, ſome more Diſcourſes than have been yet extant, tending to ſtate and explain from the Scriptures, the whole Buſineſs of our Juſtification; and to level it to the Underſtanding of Chriſtians of ordinary Capacities, without incumbring it with diſputable Queſtions, and Arguments pro *and* con, *ſeems to me no more than in ſome ſort is needful.*

It happens in reference to the Doctrine of Juſtification, as it doth with many dark Providences of God in the World: They are dark and obſcure; and to us ſeem unaccountable, becauſe we do not ſee from the beginning to the end of them, but only a part, which otherwiſe would appear lovely and beautiful, as Effects of a moſt wiſe Contrivance

trivance for excellent Ends. Even ſo the Doctrine of Juſtification, while handled and beheld only in this or that particular part of it, remains comparatively obſcure: But when all which goes to the making up of the whole is put together in order, and when it is diſcovered how one thing depends upon, and anſwers another in it, it will not be difficult at all to underſtand it. And when the whole of God's deſign in that Way and Method by which our Juſtification is brought about, is laid open, thoſe things in it which have been apprehended by ſome not well to conſiſt together; but to bear hard upon one another, will appear quite otherwiſe. For then the Grace of God, the Righteouſneſs of Chriſt, and the perſonal Righteouſneſs of him that is juſtified, will appear, not in Oppoſition, but in a lovely Conjunction, all operating in ſeveral reſpects to the ſame end.

The Senſe of theſe things hath, I confeſs, inclined me to offer at ſomething of this nature in the enſuing Diſcourſe, by way of Eſſay. Wherein I have endeavoured with what Plainneſs I could, to ſtate and explain the Nature and Cauſes of our Juſtification: And to ſhew how the Righteouſneſs of Chriſt, the Covenant of Grace, Faith, and God himſelf, do both ſeverally and jointly operate to our Juſtification; and how the Grace of God is eminent in all. And likewiſe to ſhew, how that all that goes to our Juſtification, is by the Grace of God founded on the Righteouſneſs of Chriſt, and immediately or remotely receives the Vertue and Efficacy of its Operation from it, in Conjunction with God's gracious Ordination. And particularly, that out of this Righteouſneſs of Chriſt, and the Grace of God thereby, doth ariſe the Covenant of Grace; and from that Covenant, the Conſtitution of Faith for Righteouſneſs; and from that Conſtitution, God's approving ſuch for righteous, which have that Faith, and his adjudging them to be ſo. For which Cauſe our Bleſſed Saviour may well be ſaid, as he is, to be made to us of God, Righteouſneſs. Theſe things will more fully appear in the Diſcourſe it ſelf now before you, to which I refer you for your more full Satisfaction: Hoping that the Uſefulneſs of what is thereby deſigned and endeavoured, will ſo far appear, as to ſtir up and engage ſome others to undertake the ſame Work, who may much better go through with it, and compleat it, than I have been able to do.

THE Chriſtians Juſtification STATED.

CHAP. I.

Of the Signification and Uſe of the word Juſtification; *with a Deſcription of Juſtification it ſelf.*

THE deſign of the following Diſcourſe, is to ſtate the great Doctrine of *Juſtification*, and ſo to repreſent it from the Holy Scriptures, as that it may be adapted and fitted to the capacity of the meaneſt Chriſtian that is inquiſitive into a matter of that grand Importance, as his *Juſtification* before God is. And as a guide herein, I ſhall firſt enquire into the Notation and Signification of the word *Juſtification*. For the uſe of Words being to convey to the Mind the Idea and Notion of things, and the Nature of them; it is but reaſonable to govern our ſelves in our Notion of the Nature of *Juſtification* by the ſignification of ſuch Words and Phraſes, by which it is in Scripture expreſs'd. After this is done, I ſhall enquire into the ſeverals which *operate* to the producing this great effect, *Juſtification*, and how they do it. By all which, I hope, any Chriſtian of a very ordinary capacity ſhall be able to diſcern the true Nature of Juſtification, what it is, and in what it doth conſiſt.

The word *Juſtification* in Scripture ſignifies either to *make juſt*, or to *approve as juſt*, or *vindicate and adjudge as juſt* or righteous, The word is but ſparingly uſed in Scripture as ſignifying to be *made juſt*, but another word more commonly, which is *Sanctification*. But to *make juſt* is eſſentially or abſolutely neceſſary to Juſtification, as we ſhall ſee afterward: For God will not approve of, or adjudge any Man as juſt, who is not ſo. But about the more ordinary and common ſignification of the Word, I find that Learned Men are much of one mind, and do conclude, That the word generally in Scripture is uſed in a *forenſick* or Law-ſenſe, and does imply a legal procedure in a Cauſe, or with a Perſon, by a Judge, and according to ſome Law. So the learned Dr. *Hammond* in his Annotations on *Rom.* iii. 4. And ſo learned Mr. *Tho. Gataker* (to name no more) in the Aſſemblies Annotations on *Iſaiah* v. 23. which I ſhall give you in his own words. *To juſtifie*, ſaith he, *is not to pardon, as ſome would expound it, in the Doctrine of the Goſpel: For the word is never found ſo uſed either in the Hebrew or Greek Writers, ſacred or prophane, nor in our common Speech: Nor as it is a Law-term doth it ever ſignify to make juſt. But to juſtifie in a legal way, doth always ſignify to defend, or to deem as juſt and guiltleſs, free from the Offence wherewith the party called in queſtion is charged. To defend as juſt, and ſo it is the Office of an Advocate: To deem as juſt, and conſequently aſſoil from Guilt, and ſo it is the part of a Judge. As alſo in private Carriages, Men are ſaid to juſtify others when they plead for them, and avow their Integrity and Honeſty againſt thoſe that queſtion it.*

According to this uſual Senſe and Notion of the word, when applied to God as Judge in juſtifying of Men, it ſignifies his approbation of ſuch as are juſt in their Cauſe that is before him, to be ſo; his adjudging them to be righteous in the ſenſe of that Law by which they are tryed. Thus for inſtance, we have it in *Kings* viii. 31, 32. *If any*

Man treſpaſs againſt his Neighbour, and an Oath be laid upon him to cauſe him to ſwear, and the Oath come before the Altar in this Houſe: then hear thou in Heaven and do, and judge thy Servants concerning the wicked, to bring his way upon his head, and juſtifying the righteous, to give him according to his righteouſneſs. Where to juſtifie the righteous, does not ſignifie to make them righteous, but to appear for them in Judgment, as thoſe that are ſo, and to determine for them accordingly. To juſtifie the Wicked, in Scripture-phraſe, does not ſignifie to make them juſt, but to approve of them and appear for them, as if they were juſt, *Prov.* xvii. 15. *Exod.* xxiii. 7. *Iſai.* v. 23. And thus again (to give ſome Inſtances in the New Teſtament) St. *Paul* ſaith, *I know nothing by my ſelf, yet am I not hereby juſtified, but he that judgeth me is the Lord,* 1 Cor. iv. 4. Where to be juſtified, and to have God to judge for him, ſignifies the ſame. So likewiſe *Rom.* ii. 13. *Not the hearers of the Law are juſt before God, but the doers of the Law ſhall be juſtified.* The meaning whereof is, that not the Hearers, but the Doers of the Law ſhall be approved of by God as juſt. So that to be juſtified by God, and to be approved of by him as juſt, and ſo adjudged, is all one. *Wiſdom is juſtified of her Children*; that is, approved of, and defended againſt the Accuſations and Quarrels of her Adverſaries. *Luke* vii. 29. The Publican *went down to his Houſe juſtified*; that is, approved, rather than the Phariſee. *Luke* xviii. 14. *Ye ſee then how that by Works a Man is juſtified*; that is, approved of by God as a good and righteous Man, as *Abraham* was, *and not by Faith only*, Jam. ii. 24. *By thy words thou ſhalt be juſtified, and by thy words thou ſhalt be condemned.* By theſe, as well as by other things, Perſons are and will be adjudged by God to be good and righteous, or wicked and ungodly Men, *Matth.* xii. 37. Again, *Rom.* viii. 33, 34. *It is God that juſtifieth, who is he that condemneth?* Where God's Approbation of his People is oppoſed to others Diſapprobation of them; he approves of them as good, while their Adverſaries condemn them as bad; they charge them as bad, but God abſolves and diſchargeth them as good. And in this judicial ſenſe is the word *Juſtification* generally taken throughout the Scripture. By *Sanctification* Men are conſtituted and made Evangelically Righteous; but in *Juſtification* they are approved of by God as ſuch, and adjudged to be ſo: Which is the proper difference between Sanctification and Juſtification.

If then we make our eſtimate of Evangelical Juſtification, according to the uſual ſignification of the word, as that implies in it the *Cauſe* of the Party tryed, the *Act* of God as Judge, and the *Law* and *Rule* on which the Tryal proceeds, and by which the Cauſe is determined for him that is juſtified; then Juſtification may be thus deſcribed: *It is that whereby God, for the ſake and upon the account of the Righteouſneſs of Chriſt, doth approve of a true Believer, as one that hath performed the Condition on which God in the Goſpel hath promiſed Pardon of Sin and Eternal Life, and doth impute that performance to him for Righteouſneſs, and accordingly adjudgeth him to be righteous in the ſenſe and according to the tenour of the Law of Grace, and ſuch an one as hath a Covenant, Right and Title to the Bleſſings promiſed in that Covenant, Pardon of Sin and Eternal Life.* This Deſcription of *Juſtification*, as it beſt agrees with the Uſe and Signification of the Word and Phraſe, ſo it does alſo with the Doctrine of the Goſpel, as we ſhall afterwards ſee. Which that we may the better do, I ſhall open the whole to you, by opening it in its ſeveral parts, and ſo ſhall ſhew,

1. How the Righteouſneſs of Chriſt doth operate to our Juſtification.
2. How the Covenant of Grace doth it.
3. How Faith doth it: And
4. How God himſelf doth it.

And thus to open the whole Nature of Juſtification, by ſhewing the Operation of the ſeveral Cauſes of it, is, I conceive, the beſt and moſt likelieſt way to come to the cleareſt Knowledge and beſt Inſight into it that we can attain unto: The want of which diſtinctneſs in proceeding, hath been, I conceive, an occaſion in great part of obſcuring the Doctrine of Juſtification, while the Parts have been confounded, and the Operation proper to one Cauſe have been attributed to another.

The whole of the Deſcription which I have given of Juſtification, is the reſult of the Operation of the Righteouſneſs of our Bleſſed Saviour, of the Covenant of Grace, of Faith, and of the whole Action of God's Dijudication in juſtifying true Believers; to the opening of which I ſhall now proceed. And I ſhall begin with the Righteouſneſs of our Redeemer, Chriſt Jeſus, and ſhall enquire into the Nature and Operation of it in reference to our Juſtification.

CHAP. II.

Of the Nature of the Righteouſneſs of CHRIST, *and how it Operates to our Juſtification.*

IN ſhewing what influence our Saviour's Righteouſneſs hath into our Juſtification, two things will come under Conſideration.

1. What we are to underſtand by the *Righteouſneſs* of our Saviour.
2. How it *operates* to our *Juſtification*.

Firſt of the former, what we are to underſtand by the *Righteouſneſs* of Chriſt. *Righteouſneſs is the conformity of a Perſon to ſome Law or Rule.* And therefore when we ſpeak of the Righteouſneſs of Chriſt, it ſuppoſeth ſome Law, in his conformity whereunto this Righteouſneſs of his, whereof we ſpeak, doth conſiſt. Which Law, is the *Law of his Mediation*, which he received from his Father, and which he voluntarily and moſt willingly undertook to obſerve and fulfil. The mutual agreement between the Father and the Son about this Law of Mediation between God and Man, and the Son's undertaking to fulfil it in order to our Redemption, Divines are wont to call *the Covenant of Redemption.* And as the great Office of Mediator is peculiar to him alone, (*for there is but one Mediator between God and Man, even the Man Chriſt Jeſus*, 1 Tim. ii. 5.) So the Law of this Mediation was peculiar to him. And as the Law and Office of Mediation were peculiar to our Saviour, ſo is his Righteouſneſs, which conſiſteth in his conformity to that Law: It is *a Mediatory Righteouſneſs.* The benefit of it belongs to Believers, as I ſhall afterwards ſhew; but the Righteouſneſs it ſelf, which is Mediatorial, can be no more transferred to any other, than his Office of Mediation can: For his Righteouſneſs conſiſts in thoſe Acts of Conformity to the Law of Mediation, by which he doth execute his Office of Mediation.

Now that there was ſuch a Law of Mediation between God and Man, given by God the Father to Chriſt his Son, and which he did moſt readily accept of, execute and obey, is plainly made known to us by our Saviour himſelf, by many of his Sayings; As in *John* vi. 38. when he ſays, *I came down from Heaven, not to do my own will, but the will of him that ſent me.* And again, *The Father which ſent me, he gave me Commandment what I ſhould ſay and what I ſhould ſpeak. Whatſoever I ſpeak therefore, even as the Father ſaid unto me, ſo I ſpeak*, John xii. 49, 50. Our Saviour ſpeaking of *his laying down his Life for his Sheep*, ſaith, *No Man taketh it from me, but I lay it down of my ſelf: I have power to lay it down, and I have power to take it again: This Commandment have I received of my Father*, (mark that) *John* x. 18. To fulfil this Law was the deſign of our Saviour's coming into the World. *Heb.* x. 7. *Then ſaid I, Lo, I come (in the volume of thy Book it is written of me) to do thy will, O God.* And of the fulfilling of this Law our Saviour ſpake, when in his Prayer to his Father he ſaid, *I have finiſhed the Work which thou gaveſt me to do*, John xvii. 4.

Theſe with other like Scriptures acquaint us with theſe two things. Firſt, That there was a Law given by the Father, and choſen by the Son, to be obſerved in managing the Office and Work of Mediator between God and Man, which we call the *Law of Mediation.* Secondly, That our Saviour did exactly obſerve, obey and fulfil this Law. And if ſo, we may know what that Law was, by what he hath done, ſpoken and ſuffered in the execution of his Mediatorial Office.

Now what he *did*, *ſpake* and *ſuffered*, in *conformity to this Law*, is that which we call his *Righteouſneſs*, his Mediatorial Righteouſneſs. His coming into the World, and his taking our Nature upon him, was an Act of Obedience to this Law. *I am not*, ſaith he, *come of my ſelf, but he that ſent me*, &c. John vii. 28. *A Body haſt thou prepared me*, Heb. x. 5. What he did and preached here in the World, was in Obedience to this Law. *I can* (ſaith he) *of mine own ſelf do nothing:* As I hear I judge, and my Judgment is juſt; becauſe *I ſeek not mine own will, but the will of him that ſent me*, John v. 30. *Lo, I come to do thy Will; yea, thy Law is in my Heart*, Heb. x. 7. with *Pſal.* xl. 8. His Conformity and Obedience to the Natural Law as a Man, and to the Law of *Moſes* as a Jew, was part of his Mediatorial Obedience. For *he was made under the Law, to redeem them that were under the Law*, Gal. iv. 4, 5. His

Preaching of the Goſpel was an act Obedience to this Law. I do nothing of my ſelf, but as *my Father hath taught me, I ſpeak theſe things*, John viii. 28. *I have not ſpoke of my ſelf, but the Father which ſent me, he gave me a Commandment what I ſhould ſay and what I ſhould ſpeak. Whatſoever I ſpeak therefore, even as the Father ſaid unto me, ſo I ſpeak*, John xii. 49, 50. His laying down his Life was another eminent Act of Obedience to this Law: *He humbled himſelf, and became obedient unto Death, even the Death of the Croſs*, Phil. ii. 8. *I lay down my Life, and I take it again; this Commandment have I received of my Father*, John x. 18. By theſe and other like Acts of Obedience and Conformity to this Law of Mediation, did our Saviour fulfil all Righteouſneſs: And by this Righteouſneſs of his we are made righteous, and ſo juſtified. *Rom.* v. 19. *As by one Man's Diſobedience many were made Sinners: So by the Obedience of one ſhall many be made righteous.* By theſe things we may know what we are to underſtand by the Righteouſneſs of Chriſt, which was the firſt thing I was to enquire into about it.

2. The next thing I am to enquire into is, how this Righteouſneſs of Chriſt doth *operate* to our *Juſtification.* In doing of which I ſhall enquire into two things, by the underſtanding of which we may come to know how the Righteouſneſs of our Saviour operates to our Juſtification.

1. The *Reaſon* and *End* of this Law of Mediation, and of the Acts of our Mediator in conformity to it, from which this Righteouſneſs of Chriſt doth reſult.

2. Upon what the *Efficacy* and *Operative Vertue* of this Righteouſneſs doth *depend*, in reference to this *end.*

For the firſt of theſe. The End in general of the Law of Mediation, and of our Saviour's Obedience to it, was to deliver us from the Wrath to come, and to bring us to Everlaſting Life. The ſubordinate End was Reconciliation between God and Men: And as a means to this End, the obtaining and granting a Conditional Pardon for all the World; and a new Covenant containing that Condition, and the Promiſe made upon it.

1. The firſt and laſt End, next to God's Glory of the Law of Mediation, and of the Obedience of the Mediator to it, was to recover us from the doleful Condition into which our Sin had brought us, and to reſtore us to a capacity of enjoying Everlaſting Life. When our Saviour had ſaid, *I have not ſpoken of my ſelf, but the Father which ſent me, he gave me a Commandment what I ſhould ſay and what I ſhould ſpeak*, (this we ſee was one part of the Law given to the Mediator) he preſently adds this, *And I know that his Commandment is Everlaſting Life:* Meaning, that to that end it was deſigned, and to that end it doth directly tend, *John* xii. 49, 50. And again, *I am come*, ſaith our Saviour, *that they might have Life, and that they might have it more abundantly*; this was the great End of his coming, *John* x. 10.

2. The next End of it, in ſubordination and ſubſerviency to the former, was to *Reconcile us to God*, by altering our Nature, by altering the Frame and Temper of the Mind and Heart, and ſo of a Man's Ways and Life, from Carnal to Spiritual, without which there is no Reconciliation wrought in us to God, nor conſequently of God to us. For St. *Paul* ſaith, that *the carnal mind is at enmity againſt God, becauſe it is not ſubject to the Law of God, neither indeed can be*, Rom. viii. 7. And he that is at enmity againſt God, is far from being reconciled to him, and from a capacity of being made happy by him. For *except a Man be born again, he cannot ſee the Kingdom of God*; nor *without Holineſs ſhall ſee God*; till then, he is no capable Subject of ſuch Happineſs. And therefore to effect this, to make us capable of the former end, our Saviour in obedience to the Mediatorial Law, *gave himſelf for us to redeem us from all Iniquity, and to purifie to himſelf a peculiar People zealous of good works*, Tit. ii. 14. He ſuffered for us, *the Juſt for the Unjuſt, that he might bring us unto God*, by way of return from our revolt, 1 *Pet.* iii. 18. *He loved his Church, and gave himſelf for it, that he might ſanctifie and cleanſe it, that he might preſent it unto himſelf a glorious Church, not having ſpot or wrinkle, or any ſuch thing, but that it ſhould be holy and without blemiſh*, Epheſ. v. 25, 26.

3. The next end of our Saviour's Mediatorial Obedience or Righteouſneſs, and as a means to accompliſh and bring about the former end laſt mentioned, was the obtaining, the forming and granting of a *Conditional Pardon* for all Mankind; *In him we have Redemption through his Blood, even the Forgiveneſs of Sins*, Eph. i. 7. He is the *Lamb of God that taketh away the Sins of the World*, John i. 29. *The Propitiation for the Sins of the whole World*, 1 John ii. 2. *He gave his Fleſh for the Life of the World*,

World, John vi. *and himſelf a Ranſom for all*, 1 Tim. ii. 6. I will not deny but that this giving himſelf a Ranſom for all, and taſting Death for every Man, may in one reſpect be ſaid to be abſolute and unconditional, and did extend as far and to as many as ever the Sin of *Adam* did in its Effects; and that is, in redeeming all Men from Obnoxiouſneſs, to eternal Miſery, meerly upon the account of *Adam*'s Sin, or the Sin of any other, ſave their own Perſonal Sins. *The Soul that ſinneth it ſhall die: The Son ſhall bear the Iniquity of the Father in this reſpect*, Ezek. xviii. 20. In reſpect of the Extent and Univerſality of this Effect, of Chriſt's Death, *Adam* might be ſaid to be the *Figure* of him that was to come, *Rom.* v. But otherwiſe, and in reference to ſuch as have contracted ill Habits by their own actual Sin, the Pardon obtained by our Saviour for the whole World, or which he came to obtain, was but conditional; it was upon Condition of their being prevailed withal to be reconciled unto God. Otherwiſe, and if this were not ſo, all would have been ſaved, whether they believed and repented or no. Whereas our Saviour hath ſaid it, *He that believeth not ſhall be damned, and that repenteth not ſhall periſh.* Though God ſo loved the World as to give his only begotten Son, yet he loved it *but ſo* as to promiſe Salvation by him, only to thoſe that believe, *John* iii. 16. Now this Pardon thus obtained and granted, upon account of our Saviour's Obedience unto Death; but upon condition of Mens being perſuaded to be reconciled to God, and yet certain to be conferred upon that Condition, is a moſt powerful Motive and Means to perſuade Men to be reconciled to God, when it comes to be divulged and made known; and when it is believed that Pardon is certainly to be obtained this way, and no way without it. And therefore the Scripture ſpeaks of it as the Method uſed by God to reconcile the World to himſelf, 2 *Cor.* v. 19. *God was in Chriſt reconciling the World unto himſelf, not imputing their Treſpaſſes:* That is, provided they would not wilfully perſiſt in them.

4. Another end of the Mediatorial Obedience of our Saviour ſubordinate to the former, (that laſt mentioned) and as a means to effect it, was the obtaining and founding of a *new Law of Grace*, the New Covenant; promiſing both Pardon and Eternal Life upon Condition, and ſtating and declaring that Condition, to be publiſhed to the World as God's great Inſtrument of prevailing with Men to be reconciled to God, in order to their obtaining Pardon and Salvation. Upon which account the Goſpel, which is this new Law of Grace, is ſaid to be *the Power of God to Salvation to every one that believes it*, Rom. i. 16. Now all having ſinned, no Fleſh living could be juſtified, but in a way of Grace and Mercy.

And therefore there was a kind of Neceſſity of a new Law, a Law of Grace; by vertue of which Men ſhould be juſtified, if juſtified at all. But it did not ſeem meet to the Divine Wiſdom to make ſuch a Law of Grace, but upon condition that ſome ſuch thing ſhould be undergone and ſuffered by our bleſſed Saviour on our behalf, as would as well anſwer the end of the Penalty of the Original Law tranſgreſſed; as if that Penalty had been inflicted on the Tranſgreſſors of it themſelves. But this being done by the Sufferings of our Saviour, as I ſhall ſhew afterward, a fair way was thereby prepared for the conſtituting a New Covenant, promiſing Pardon and Eternal Life upon new Terms and Conditions; ſuch as are not only poſſible, but alſo feaſable as well as reaſonable in our State and Condition. *Chriſt hath redeemed us from the Curſe of the Law, being made a Curſe for us, that the Bleſſing of* Abraham *might come upon the Gentiles through Jeſus Chriſt*, that we might receive the Promiſe of the Spirit through Faith; that is, that we might receive the Bleſſing and Benefits of a new Covenant, *Gal.* iii. 13, 14. And accordingly the Scripture frequently repreſents to us, that the new Covenant is made with Mankind upon account of what Chriſt did and ſuffered for us. It was not only ratified and confirmed by the Sacrifice of his Death, but alſo thereby *procured.* This, I ſay, ſaith St. *Paul*, that the *Covenant that was confirmed before of God in Chriſt*, &c. *Gal.* iii. 17. And *all the Promiſes of God are in him, Yea, and in him, Amen.* 2 Cor. i. 20. And *the New* Teſtament is called *the New Teſtament in his Blood*, Matth. xxvi. 28. and his Blood *the Blood of the Everlaſting Covenant*, Heb. xiii. 20. And when the Scriptures ſpeak of God's *promiſing Eternal Life before the World began*, Tit. i. 2. and of God's *Purpoſe and Grace, which was given us in Chriſt before the World began*, 2 Tim. 1. 9. they ſeem to refer to what God the Father promiſed Chriſt on the behalf of Mankind upon his Mediatory undertaking for them, even then when this was reſolved on and concluded by the Father and the Son, before the World began. For a Concluſion of this Matter, and to ſhew that the Covenant of Grace was granted upon the account of the Righteouſneſs of Chriſt, hear what St. *Peter* ſaith, 2 *Pet.* i. 1. *To them*, ſaith he, *that have obtained like precious Faith with us through the Righteouſneſs of God, and our Saviour Jeſus Chriſt.* Whether you take Faith here for the Act of Believing the Goſpel, or the Goſpel it ſelf as the Object of Faith, which ſeems moſt likely, or for both; yet this is given through or upon account of the Righteouſneſs of him who is both God and our Saviour.

If you ask how the Mediatory Righteouſneſs of our Saviour in this Subordination of Ends doth *operate* to our Juſtification? I anſwer, Our Reconciliation to God by being renewed in Heart and Life, is the matter of our Evangelical Righteouſneſs, upon which we are juſtified. For God juſtifies none that are not reconciled to him, nor which are not Evangelically righteous. But then our Reconciliation to God, and our becoming Evangelically righteous thereby, and our being juſtified thereupon, as I ſhall after ſhew we are, are all owing to the Mediatory Obedience or Righteouſneſs of Chriſt; for from that it is, that they are what they are. And ſo far as theſe *operate* to our Juſtification, they do it in *Virtue of Chriſt's Mediatory Performance.* And ſo do thoſe two great Motives, the Hopes of the Forgiveneſs of Sin and Eternal Life, by which we are perſuaded to be reconciled to God, and to become Evangelically righteous; for theſe alſo are founded in the Mediatorial Obedience of our Saviour, without which we could have had no ſuch hopes; and therefore Chriſt is well and worthily ſaid to be *our Hope*, 1 *Tim.* i. 1. And then for the new Covenant, as that operates to our Juſtification, as it is a new Law conſtituting a new Righteouſneſs; and as it is the Rule according to which we are approved as righteous, and adjudged to be righteous, when God juſtifies us; ſo this Operation receives its Life and Being, and Virtue from another Operation, and that is from the Operation of the Mediatorial Obedience and Righteouſneſs of our Saviour, by which the Covenant it ſelf was obtained. Indeed all that any ways *operates* to our Juſtification and Salvation, *depends upon* our Saviour's Mediatorial Performance, except what God himſelf doth: And yet what he himſelf doth, in relation thereto, is ſtill done with reference to the Undertaking and Performance of his Son Jeſus Chriſt for us. Chriſt is the Foundation which God himſelf hath laid, which bears up the whole Fabrick of our Redemption and Salvation, which indeed is built upon it. *Iſa.* xxviii. 16. *Behold, I lay in Zion for a Foundation, a Stone, a tried Stone, a precious Corner-ſtone, a ſure Foundation,* ſaith God, *concerning Chriſt.* All manner of Spiritual Bleſſings are, in Scripture, ſaid to be conferred on us *through* Jeſus Chriſt, or *by* Chriſt, or *in* Chriſt. God *reconciles us to himſelf by Jeſus Chriſt: Preacheth Peace to us by Jeſus Chriſt. The Riches of his Grace in his Kindneſs towards us, is through Chriſt Jeſus; we have Peace with God through our Lord Jeſus Chriſt. The Promiſe of Life is ſaid to be in Chriſt Jeſus. And Eternal Life the Gift of God through Jeſus Chriſt our Lord, the Adoption of Children is by Chriſt Jeſus*; with many more the like in Scripture. All which betokens that Spiritual Benefits of all ſorts are vouchſafed us upon the account of his Mediatorial Performance: *The God and Father of our Lord Jeſus Chriſt, hath bleſſed us with all Spiritual Bleſſings in Heavenly things in Chriſt*, Eph. i. 3. But theſe things I ſhall more fully open in that which follows, to which I ſhall now proceed.

The ſecond thing then which I propoſed to be enquired into is, upon what the *Efficacy and operative Virtue* of this Mediatorial Righteouſneſs of our Saviour doth *depend* in reference to our Juſtification, and indeed of all other ſaving Benefits. And it ſeems to me to depend partly upon God's *Ordination* and Appointment to the end he and our Saviour deſigned it for: And partly upon the *Aptitude* of it, as a means to ſuch an end.

1. It depends upon *Divine Ordination* and Appointment. For our Lord Chriſt *is made to us of God*, Wiſdom, *Righteouſneſs*, Sanctification and Redemption, 1 *Cor.* i. 30. He is made Righteouſneſs to us by God, *in the Effects* of his Righteouſneſs: God ordering and appointing that ſo it ſhould be. For this way of making us righteous, by virtue of the Righteouſneſs of another, is wholly of *Divine Inſtitution*, and is ſupernatural; a way which the Law natural knows nothing of, nor we by it. When the Apoſtle had ſaid, ſpeaking in the Perſon of Chriſt, *Lo, I come to do thy Will, O God*, Heb. x. 7. He preſently adds, *ver.* 10. *by the which Will we are ſanctified through the offering of the Body of Jeſus Chriſt once for all.* It appears to be of *Divine Inſtitution*, that the Mediatorial Righteouſneſs of Chriſt ſhould operate to our Juſtification, and other Spiritual Benefits; becauſe the Effect of it in the Event is *limited* by God unto certain Conditions: Otherwiſe when Chriſt gave himſelf a Ranſom for all, and taſted Death for every Man,

all would have been juſtified and ſaved thereby, as well as ſome. For the Price of Redemption was ſufficient for all, as well as for ſome, if it had been as agreeable to the Wiſdom of God that all ſhould have been juſtified by his Blood, as it is that thoſe *only* ſhall who ſhall be perſuaded to be *reconciled* to him. And the Obedience of Chriſt is in itſelf as ſufficient to deliver thoſe who are reconciled to God, from temporal Death, which is the leſs Evil, as it is to deliver them from eternal Death, which is the greater, had not the Wiſdom of the Divine Will made the difference. And we may well conceive, that it is by Vertue of the Divine Will that *Abel*, *Enoch*, and other good Men, who lived towards the beginning of the World, ſhould be juſtified and ſaved by Vertue of this Obedience of our Saviour to the Law of Mediation, thouſands of Years before he actuated that Obedience in the Humane Nature. The giving of Chriſt for us, and the appointing him to the Office and Work of a Mediator, was an Act of pure Grace. And in all Donations it belongs to the Donor to determine and appoint how far, and to what ends the benefit of them ſhall extend, and upon what terms they ſhall be conferred and enjoyed. *It is not of him that willeth, nor of him that runneth, but of God that ſheweth mercy*, Rom. ix. 16. That is, the terms on which the Mercies are to be received, are not of the ordering and appointment of any other, but of God, whoſe the Mercy is to beſtow. The Wiſdom of God governs in all Acts of his Grace. For *he worketh all things after the counſel of his own will*, Eph. i. 11.

2. The *Operative* Vertue of the Mediatorial Righteouſneſs of our Bleſſed Saviour, in reference to our Juſtification, depends in great part at leaſt upon the *Aptitude* of it as a means to ſuch an End. There is a bleſſed Aptitude in what our Saviour hath done and ſuffered to reconcile God and Men, and ſo to procure Men's Juſtification. The proper buſineſs of a Mediator is to reconcile Parties at difference, And the Mediatorial Acts of our Saviour conformable to the Law of Mediation, in which his Righteouſneſs doth conſiſt, were moſt apt and proper to procure Reconciliation between God offended, and Men offending: Some of them having in them a great fitneſs to reconcile God to Men; to atone him, and to take off his diſpleaſure againſt Sinners for what is paſt, provided they can be prevailed withal to lay down their Arms of Rebellion, humble themſelves, beg Forgiveneſs, and return to their Duty: And ſome of them have on the other hand a great Aptitude in them to reconcile Men to God. And by ſuch Acts of our Saviour's Mediatorial Obedience, as theſe two ſorts conſiſt of, is the great and happy buſineſs of Reconciliation between God and Men brought about, and Men's Juſtification and Pardon obtained. God never thought it fit to be reconciled to Men, till they could be perſuaded to be reconciled to him: And Men will never be perſuaded to be reconciled to God, till they have ſome good aſſurance that God will be reconciled to them upon their Repentance, Submiſſion, and Return. Now the Acts of our Saviour's Mediatorial Obedience ſerve very happily to both theſe ends.

1. They have an excellent Aptneſs in them to reconcile God to Men, upon ſuppoſition of their compliance with thoſe reaſonable and eaſie Terms, upon which he hath declared himſelf willing to be reconciled to them. Our Saviour's putting himſelf in our ſtead, and being content to ſuffer for us, to die for us, that we might not die eternally, and thereby to make reparation for the Affront we have put upon God, his Law and Government, is called *making Reconciliation for the Sins of the People*, by the Apoſtle, *Heb.* ii. 17. and the *making Reconciliation for Iniquity*, by the Prophet, *Dan.* ix. 24.

And the Reaſon of the Aptneſs of this Act of our Saviour's Obedience, to reconcile God unto us, upon ſuppoſition ſtill that we be brought thereby, and by other means, to be reconciled to God, is two-fold.

1. From the *Value* of the Ranſom laid down; *not Silver and Gold, but the precious Blood of Jeſus Chriſt*, 1 Pet. i. 19. the Blood of one who is God as well as Man: *The Church of God* is ſaid to be *purchaſed with his own Blood*, Acts xx. 28. Which, according to the Scripture account, is a valuable Conſideration for that which is deſigned to be obtained by it. Hence it is called a *Price*, a Price paid; *Ye are bought with a price*, 1 Cor. vi. 20. A *Purchaſe*, that by which the Purchaſe was bought and paid for; *Purchaſed with his own Blood:* A *Ranſom*, that which is *Satisfactory to God*, as being content to releaſe and diſcharge the Ranſomed upon that account, provided they continue not in their Rebellion; *He gave himſelf a Ranſom for all*, 1 Tim. ii. 6. Theſe Metaphors, being borrowed Phraſes from what is cuſtomary among Men, ſtill ſignifie a *valuable* Conſideration given for what is obtained thereby. When we conſider that all Nations are but as the Drop of the Bucket, or ſmall Duſt of the Balance, in com-

pariſon of God; and that that Perſon, who hath given himſelf a Ranſom for us, is God bleſſed for evermore, as well as Man; we muſt needs conclude, that the *Dignity* of his Perſon muſt needs add an infinite *Value* to his ſuffering for us, and be in the ſight of God of great price.

2. The other Reaſon of the aptneſs of our Saviour's ſuffering for us to reconcile God unto us, is taken from the *Congruity*, *Analogy*, or *Proportion* that is in our Saviour's Sufferings, to anſwer the end of God's puniſhing Sinners themſelves. His ſuffering for us anſwer's God's end in puniſhing Sinners, as well, yea better than if we our ſelves had ſuffered the demerit of our Sins, who come to be pardoned thereby. We are not to think, I conceive, that when God makes Sinners bear their Iniquity themſelves, in ſuffering according to their demerits, that it is for their Suffering-ſake that he does it, as if he were pleaſed or gratified with their ſuffering, meerly as ſuch, as revengeful Men uſe to be in the ſuffering of them on whom they revenge themſelves; or as the Devil is, in the deſtruction of Men for deſtruction ſake: No certainly, God is only pleaſed with ſuch ſufferings of Sinners themſelves, as they ſerve to worthy ends and purpoſes. He hath plainly told us, that *he hath no pleaſure in the death of him that dies*, Ezek. xviii. 32. Nay, hath ſworn *as he lives*, that he hath *no pleaſure*, no not in the *death of the wicked*, but that he turn from his way and live, *Ezek.* xxxiii. 11. If he had taken pleaſure in the ſuffering, as ſuch, of the Sinners themſelves, we cannot imagine that ever he would have given a command to his dear Son, as he hath done, to ſuffer Death to redeem guilty Sinners themſelves from Eternal Death, when they were all juſtly obnoxious to the Judgment of God. God ſeeks *Reconciliation with us*, 2 Cor. v. 19. which is an argument, that Revenge dwells not in him; only as Governour of the Univerſe, he renders Vengeance where the ends of Government call for it: Otherwiſe God ſaith, *Fury is not in me*, Iſai. xxvii. God doubtleſs is only pleaſed with the ſuffering of wicked Men themſelves, as thoſe ſufferings tend to worthy ends, and a *publick good*. For God, as a wiſe and good Governour of his whole Creation of Rational Beings, deſigns the good of the whole by thoſe Puniſhments which he inflicts upon ſome that are contumacious. To puniſh ſuch, is as neceſſary, no doubt, for the good of the Creation in general, as the cutting off Delinquents by the hand of publick Juſtice, is neceſſary to good Order and Government in a Commonwealth.

Now the ends of Puniſhments, in reference to the publick good of God's Creation in general, are ſuch as theſe.

1. To *awaken* and beget a ſenſe in God's Creation, of the turpitude of Sin, how contrary it is to the holy Nature of God, how hateful and diſpleaſing to him, and of how malignant a Nature in reference to his Creatures; that, where-ever it faſtens, it cauſes great Diſorders and Diſturbances, ſetting Men againſt God their Maker, and one Man againſt another, yea, every Sinner againſt himſelf; and that it is it which hath brought in all the Miſery and Confuſion that is in the viſible and inviſible World.

2. To maintain and *keep up the Authority* of God, and the Honour of his Laws, by which he governs his Creatures. For Puniſhments are the Sanction of Divine, as well as they are of Humane Laws. If it were not for them, the Laws of God would loſe much of their ſtrength, and of that awe and reverence, which by means of them is kept up in the Minds of intelligent Beings, to whom they are made known.

3. Another end of puniſhing ſome Offenders for the good of the whole, is to *deter* others from falling into ſuch a hardned ſtate of Rebellion againſt God, as for which final Execution of Divine Juſtice paſſeth upon them. One great uſe of God's viſible Judgments here in this World upon notorious Offenders, is for caution to the reſt. Thus God's Judgments upon the *Iſraelites* thouſands of Years before, were for *Examples* unto us, and for our *Admonition*, upon whom the ends of the World are come, 1 *Cor.* x. 6, 11. *Sodom* and *Gomorrah*, in what befel them, are ſet forth for *Examples* to the reſt of the World, ſuffering the Vengeance of Eternal Fire, *Jude* 7. And we do not know of what uſe to the inviſible World of God's Creation, the execution of Divine Juſtice upon incorrigible Offenders, is now, or will be hereafter amongſt them. We ſee what is befallen the Apoſtate Angels in the inviſible World, is made uſe of for Admonition to thoſe of this viſible, 2 *Pet.* ii. 4. *Jude* 6. And it's evident, that the wiſe method of God's proceeding in the matter of our Redemption, was deſigned as of good uſe to the inviſible World; it was *to the intent that now unto Principalities and Powers in heavenly places, might be known by the Church the manifold Wiſdom of God*, Eph. iii. 10. And it is not incredible, but that on the other hand, the Puniſhment of obſtinate Tranſgreſſors in another World, for what they have done in this, may be of good uſe among them of the inviſible World.

4. This puniſhing of Sinners in another World, for Impenitency in Sin in this, is, when it is made known, as it is now, of great uſe *to bring Men to Repentance*, when hope is given them, as there is, that they ſhall eſcape the like Puniſhment upon their Repentance, and not otherwiſe.

Theſe and ſuch like being the Reaſon and Ends of God's inflicting Puniſhment upon Sinners themſelves that are impenitent, I am now to ſhew that theſe Ends are as well, yea in ſome reſpect much better provided for, and ſecured by the Sufferings of our Saviour for us, though we that are ſaved by his Sufferings do not ſuffer, than they would have been in caſe every Sinner without Redemption, had born his own Iniquity, and ſuffered for himſelf the deſert of his ſin.

For in that, firſt, God would not ſpare his own Son when he eſpouſed the Cauſe of ſinful Men, not to juſtifie or defend them in it, but to ſuffer for them, rather than they ſhould have no Terms granted them of eſcaping ſuffering themſelves what they had deſerved: I ſay, when in this caſe God would not ſpare his own dear Son, notwithſtanding the Dignity and tranſcendent Worthineſs of his Perſon, and the exceeding great Intereſt he had in his Father's Love; he did thereby ſufficiently declare and manifeſt, as well as by inflicting Puniſhment on Sinners themſelves, how odious a thing Sin is in his ſight, how contrary to his Nature, and how irreconcileable he is to it. Sin was condemned for as vile a thing as it is, as well by our Saviour's ſuffering in the Fleſh for it in our ſtead, as it would have been by our ſuffering for it our ſelves, *Rom.* viii. 3. he condemned Sin in the Fleſh, by being a Sacrifice for it.

2. By the Son of God's thus ſuffering in the Sinners ſtead for their tranſgreſſing the righteous Law of God, the Authority of this Law is as ſufficiently maintained, and the Goodneſs of it as ſufficiently vindicated; as it would have been by puniſhing thoſe Sinners themſelves, that are now ſaved by his Sufferings. For when God would not ſo much as give any hopes of Pardon to ſuch as have tranſgreſs'd that Law of his, no not upon condition of their Repentance, without the ſuffering of ſuch an one as his own dear Son; no Creature that knows this, can have any occaſion or place left to deſpiſe or ſlight that Law, or the Authority of the Law-giver, and not to be awed by it, nor to expect or hope for Impunity in contemning of it.

3. No Creature can take any Encouragement to commit ſin, or to continue in ſin, who conſiders how ſeverely the Son of God himſelf was dealt with by his merciful and moſt loving Father, in delivering him up to be crucified by wicked hands, beſides his other Sufferings; when he put himſelf in the Sinners place to undergo whatever his Father would pleaſe to inflict upon him, ſo that he might but thereby obtain a Pardon for them; and that too but upon condition of their Reformation, and Reconciliation to God.

4. As the end of inflicting Puniſhment is either for the Reformation of the Perſons themſelves that ſuffer, or of others by their Example of ſuffering; ſo this end of Sinners ſuffering, was much better attained by our Saviour's ſuffering for our ſins, than if we our ſelves, that are ſaved by his Death, had ſuffered for them what we had deſerved. And the reaſon hereof is, becauſe thoſe that are ſaved by our Saviour's Death, are by his Death firſt reconciled to God in their Nature and Life; they are reformed, and of Rebels made Loyal Subjects, which they never would have been, if they had ſuffered themſelves the Deſert of their ſin. And is it not much better, that diſloyal and diſobedient Subjects be made Dutiful, Loyal, Obedient, and Uſeful, than to be cut off for Obſtinacy in Rebellion? God had ſaid, concerning wicked Men, that he had much rather *that they ſhould return and live*, than that they ſhould die in and for their Iniquities: And our Lord his Son hath anſwered him in the Joy of his Heart, in that by his ſuffering for them in Conjunction with other his Performances on their behalf, he hath fulfilled his Father's Wiſh, and brought his deſire to paſs, in reference to many ſuch Sinners. And moſt certain it is, that this is infinitely more pleaſing and *ſatisfactory* to God, than if all Mankind had ſuffered the Pains of Eternal Death for their Iniquities. This hath occaſioned, and will ſtill cauſe infinitely more Joy in Heaven, and on Earth, and more triumphant Thankſgiving unto God, than there would have been if every Sinner had born his own Burthen. On this account, our Saviour's giving himſelf for us, was indeed emphatically *an Offering and a Sacrifice of a ſweet ſmelling Savour unto God*, as St. *Paul* calls it, *Eph.* v. i.

All theſe things conſidered and put together, it appears upon a very rational account, that there was a very great Aptitude in this Act of our Saviour's Mediatorial

Obedience, to reconcile God to Men, when he delivered up himſelf to ſuffer for them on the Terms he did, and ſo to operate to our Juſtification.

2. As there is an Aptitude in our Bleſſed Saviour's Mediatorial *Righteouſneſs*, to reconcile God to Men in order to their Juſtification; ſo there is in another reſpect an *Aptitude* in it likewiſe to *reconcile Men to God*, in order to the ſame end. And that Act of Obedience to the Law of Mediation which hath an Aptitude in it this way, conſiſts at leaſt very much in a faithful Diſcharge of his Prophetical Office as Mediator. For by a faithful Diſcharge of this Truſt, and in Obedience to this Law, he perſuades Men by the great Arguments and Motives of the Goſpel, to be reconciled to God.

To this end he publiſhed the Goſpel, which he brought down from Heaven, Prophetically called his *declaring the decree*, Pſal. ii. 7. And this was done in Obedience to the Law of Mediation, given by his Father; as I have ſhewed from *John* xii. 49. I have not ſpoken of my ſelf, ſaith he, *but the Father which ſent me, he gave me a Commandment what I ſhould ſay, and what I ſhould ſpeak.* As the Law was given in the hand of a Mediator, *Moſes*, ſo was the Goſpel by Chriſt, the Mediator of a better Teſtament. And he confirmed it to be from God, by many Signs and Wonders, and mighty Deeds which accompanied the Publication of it by him and his Apoſtles, having ſealed it with his own Blood. For after he had ſet it on foot himſelf, while he was on Earth, and then ſealed to it by his Death, he afterwards, when he left the World and aſcended up on high, left behind him by way of Gift to the World, Apoſtles, Prophets, Evangeliſts, Paſtors and Teachers, to miniſter the things of the Goſpel in his Name; which Miniſtry is called the *Miniſtry of Reconciliation*, and the Goſpel committed to their Truſt, the *Word of Reconciliation*; and that which they were to do by it as his Ambaſſadors, was to pray, beſeech, perſuade Men in Chriſt's ſtead, *to be reconciled* to God, 2 *Cor.* v. 18, 19, 20. This, firſt done by our Saviour in his Miniſtry, is continued by his Miniſters in his Name, by perſuading Men to Repentance and Amendment of Life, and to become ſincerely obedient unto God, in which their being reconciled to him doth conſiſt. And the way and means uſed by our Saviour, and his Embaſſadors, to perſuade Men to be thus reconciled to God; was by poſſeſſing them with a ſtrong and vigorous *Belief* of three things eſpecially, as great parts of the Goſpel our Saviour brought from Heaven with him.

1. That God would certainly be *reconciled* to all Sinners, *provided they would but be reconciled to him*, and not ſtill perſiſt in their Rebellion: That he will certainly pardon them, and treat them as Friends, if they would deſiſt from carrying it any longer as Enemies to him. He hath ſent them word by his Meſſengers, that he is *not willing that any ſhould periſh, but that all ſhould come to Repentance*, 2 Pet. iii. 9. that *he would have all Men to be ſaved and come to the Knowledge of the Truth*, 1 Tim. ii. 4. And becauſe Guilt makes Men full of Fears, and Jealouſies of the Avenger, and not apt to believe that ſuch as they have highly affronted, injured, and provoked, can be reconciled to them, until they have avenged themſelves on them, if they have power to do it: Therefore our Saviour, to aſſure Sinners of the Reality of God's Deſire and Intention of being reconciled to them, and to pardon them, if they will but be reconciled to him; hath not only given them his word for it, but a wonderful and great Proof of it in what he hath done towards ſuch a thing before ever any ſuch Favour was deſired or ſought for on their parts. God, he ſo loved the World, and was ſo unwilling to avenge himſelf on them, as that he hath given his only begotten Son, not only to tell them ſo, but alſo to ſuffer for them, to prepare the Way of Reconciliation between them.

All this hath been done on God and his holy Son's part towards this Reconciliation, before there was ever any Inclination on Man's part of being reconciled to God. *God hath commended his Love towards us, in that while we were yet ſinners, Chriſt died for us*, Rom. v. 8. *In this was manifeſted the Love of God towards us, becauſe that God ſent his only begotten Son into the World, that we might live through him. Herein is Love, not that we loved God, but that he loved us, and ſent his Son to be a Propitiation for our ſins*, 1 John iv. 9, 10. And doubtleſs, this way of proceeding with Enemies, if any, will make them willing to be reconciled to God: And it is indeed that which doth take with all but deſperate contumacious Wretches. *We love him*, ſaith St. *John*, *becauſe he firſt loved us*, 1 John iv. 19. Our Thoughts and Inclinations of returning to God, and of being reconciled to him, of any Love or Good-will towards him, take their firſt riſe from Intimations; yea, more than ſo, from Manifeſtations of God's Love to us firſt, and eſpecially of ſuch Love as the giving of his Son for us beſpeaks him to have to us. Hence the *preaching of the Croſs*, the Declaration not only that Chriſt hath ſuffered, but upon what account he hath ſuffered, is ſaid to be the *Power of God to them that are ſaved*; that is, it is God's powerful Motive by which he perſuades Men of his Willingneſs to be reconciled to them, and by that means prevails with them to be willing to be reconciled to him. *The preaching of the Croſs is to them that periſh, Fooliſhneſs; but unto us which are ſaved, it is the Power of God*, 1 Cor. i. 18. *All things*, ſaith St. *Paul*, *are of God, who hath reconciled us unto himſelf by Jeſus Chriſt, and hath given unto us the Miniſtry of Reconciliation* (what's that?) to wit, *that God was in Chriſt, reconciling the World unto himſelf, not imputing their Treſpaſſes unto them; and hath committed to us the Word of Reconciliation*, 2 Cor. v. 18, 19. This is, we ſee, God's Way and Method of reconciling the World unto himſelf, by making known to them, that upon account of his Son's undertaking and ſuffering for them, he is freely willing to pardon them, and not to impute their Treſpaſſes, but to be reconciled to them, provided they will be reconciled to him.

Hence it is that our Reconciliation to God (and not only God's Reconciliation to us) is ſo frequently as it is, attributed in Scripture to the Death of Chriſt. *If when we were Enemies, we were reconciled to God by the Death of his Son, much more being reconciled, we ſhall be ſaved by his Life*, Rom. v. 10. *And that he might reconcile both* (Jews and Gentiles) *unto God in one Body by the Croſs, having ſlain the Enmity thereby, and came and preached Peace*, &c. *Eph.* ii. 16, 17. And again, *having made Peace by the Blood of his Croſs, it pleaſed the Father by him to reconcile all things to himſelf. And you that were ſometime alienated and Enemies in your Mind by wicked Works, yet now hath he reconciled in the Body of his Fleſh through Death*, Col. i. 19, 20, 21, 22. By theſe, and other like Scriptures, we ſee that one of God's great Deſigns in giving his Son to die for us, was the reconciling us to himſelf, by aſſuring us, that upon condition of our being reconciled, we ſhould not have any the leaſt Cauſe to queſtion his Willingneſs to be reconciled to us; and that it is by this, that he procures a Willingneſs in us to be reconciled to him.

This great Tranſaction between the Father and the Son in behalf of the World, the Father's giving, and the Son's undertaking to die for the World, in order to this great Work of Reconciliation, is the great and certain Security unto Men; that what was ſaid in the Goſpel touching God's being reconcilable to Sinners, and his forgiving them, provided they will be reconciled to him, ſhall be really performed and made good to them. Hence it is, that in regard that Chriſt was made Prieſt by the Oath of God, to offer himſelf in Sacrifice to expiate ſin; and then in virtue of that Sacrifice to make Interceſſion for us, that he is ſaid to be made *Surety of the better Teſtament*: That is, he by that means becomes a Surety for God unto Men, of the Reality of his Proffers and Promiſes in the Goſpel to them, and of the Performance of them upon the condition of their being reconciled to him, *Heb.* vii. 20, 22. The Apoſtle's Inference is very natural and ſtrongly concluſive when he ſays, *He that ſpared not his own Son, but delivered him up for us all, how ſhall he not with him freely give us all things*, Rom. viii. 32. God's giving his Son to die for us, is more than the beſtowing a Pardon and Eternal Life upon us. And therefore he having done the greater already to procure our Reconciliation to him, it is an Earneſt, and a Pledge that he will not ſtick to pardon and to ſave us, which is a leſs Matter for him to give, if we become reconciled to him indeed. If when we were Enemies we were reconciled to God by the Death of his Son, *much more* being reconciled, *we ſhall be ſaved by his Life*, Rom. v. 10.

This Aſſurance which God hath given to the World, of his Willingneſs to pardon and ſave Sinners by the Death of his Son, as an Earneſt and a Pledge of it, if they wilfully refuſe not to become reconciled to him, is that which in the firſt times in which this was divulged to the World, brought in a conſiderable part of it to Chriſt, who by him yielded up themſelves to God. In Proſpect of which Succeſs of this gracious Deſign of God upon the World by the Death of his Son, it was that our Saviour ſaid, *John* xii. 32. *And I, if I be lifted up from the Earth, will draw all Men unto me.* So powerful a Motive to reconcile Sinners to God, is God's Declaration by giving his Son to die for them, of his Willingneſs to be reconciled to them, if they will but anſwer him in their Willingneſs to be reconciled to him. This is the firſt of the three things I mentioned, which have a great aptneſs in them to perſuade Men to be reconciled to God; for which end our Saviour does by the Goſpel, as he is Mediator of the New Teſtament, not only reveal this, but labours to poſſeſs Men with a ſtrong *belief of it*, without which *it will not operate* on them at all towards ſuch an end, as the reconciling them to God is.

2. Another of thoſe Motives, by which our Saviour, by ſetting the Goſpel on foot, ſeeks to reconcile Men to God, is by giving them great *aſſurance* that God is ſo far from deſiring to revenge himſelf on them, notwithſtanding all their Provocations, if they were but as willing as he is to be reconciled, as that in caſe they will be but perſuaded to be reconciled to God by Repentance for their former Rebellion, and by becoming really obedient to their Power for the future, as that then he will *beſtow* upon them *Everlaſting Life*, advance them to ſuch a ſtate of Happineſs, as that greater than which the Heart of Man cannot wiſh for or deſire. And ſurely this, if it be throughly believed, will, if any thing will, perſuade Men to be reconciled to God. To this end our Saviour hath brought *Life and Immortality to light by the Goſpel*, 2 *Tim.* i. 10. And by this motive he doth almoſt every where in the Goſpel perſuade to Faith, Love, Repentance, Obedience, and Holineſs; which is the ſame, with perſuading Men to be reconciled to God; for in ſuch things as theſe doth our Reconciliation to God conſiſt. St. *John* ſpeaks of this in a magnifying way, as the great Motive to Man to entertain and obey the Goſpel: *This*, ſaith he, *is the Promiſe which he hath promiſed us, even Eternal Life*, 1 John ii. 25. And indeed it was this that did invite Men to receive the Goſpel, to profeſs the Chriſtian Religion at firſt, and which did animate them to ſuffer any thing rather than to renounce and forſake it, and the hope of Eternal Life, which they had received by it. *They took joyfully the ſpoiling of their goods, knowing in themſelves that they had in Heaven a better, and an enduring ſubſtance*, Heb. x. 34.

3. There is a great *aptitude* in our Saviour's ſetting the Goſpel on foot to reconcile Men to God, becauſe he thereby convinceth them, that if, after God's gracious offer of being reconciled to them, in caſe they will be reconciled to him; and if, after all that hath been done by God, and ſuffered by his Son, to prepare the way for a mutual Reconciliation between them, they ſhall yet *obſtinately refuſe* to be reconciled to God, and perſiſt ſtill in their Rebellion and Diſobedience, *That then God will be ſo far from* being reconciled to them, and from pardoning them, notwithſtanding all the willingneſs he hath declared to be reconciled to them, upon condition of their Reconciliation to him; and notwithſtanding all that Chriſt hath done and ſuffered to bring this about, as that this Offer of God, and Undertaking of Chriſt, *ſhall turn but to their heavier Doom*, and greater Condemnation in the next World. *This is the Condemnation, that Light is come into the World, and Men loved Darkneſs more than Light*, John iii. 19. *How ſhall we eſcape if we neglect ſo great Salvation, which at the firſt began to be ſpoken by the Lord himſelf, and was confirmed to us by them that heard him*, Heb. ii. 3. It ſhall be more tolerable for *Sodom* and *Gomorrah*, and for *Tyre* and *Sydon*, in the *Day of Judgment*, than for them that have refuſed to be reconciled to God, when by the Goſpel ſent to them, he hath offered to be reconciled to them, on condition that they would be reconciled unto him.

And leſt any ſhould flatter themſelves with vain hopes of being ſaved from the goodneſs of the Nature of God, and the Death of Jeſus Chriſt for Sinners, who yet take a liberty to live in known Sin, without reconciling themſelves to God, by leaving it off, and returning to their Duty, as too many, alas, do: There are two or three things revealed by Chriſt, to take from them ſuch vain Hopes, and to put them upon a neceſſity of chuſing either to reconcile themſelves to God, or to be eternally miſerable.

1. The firſt is taken from the *Nature* of God. The Nature of God is ſo pure and holy, and ſo contrary to Sin, that it is as impoſſible for him to be reconciled to Sin, or to Sinners, while by it they are in open Rebellion againſt him, as it is for him to change his Nature, and ceaſe to be God. *This is the meſſage* (ſaith St. *John*) *which we have heard of him* (that is, of Chriſt) *and declare unto you, that God is Light, and in him is no Darkneſs at all, If we ſay, that we have fellowſhip with him, and walk in Darkneſs, we lie, and do not the truth*, 1 John i. 5. So that, according to this Meſſage, which Chriſt hath ſent to Sinners by his Meſſengers, it is as poſſible to reconcile Light and Darkneſs, as God and ſuch as walk in Darkneſs, that is, in wilful Sin. And St. *Paul* would make Men themſelves Judges in the caſe, and appeals

to their own Reaſon, ſaying, *What communion hath Light with Darkneſs, and what concord hath Chriſt with Belial?* 2 Cor. vi. 14, 15. and plainly intimates, that if Light and Darkneſs are irreconcilable, and can have no Communion, ſo is Chriſt and Belial, or a lawleſs Man.

2. He hath taken away ſuch vain hopes from Sinners, by declaring by his Goſpel, *That God without reſpect of Perſons, judgeth according to every Man's Work:* That is, he will judge every Man according to the right of his Cauſe, without favouring or diſ-favouring the Perſons of Men againſt the Nature and Right of their Cauſe: *He that hath done good ſhall come forth to the Reſurrection of Life, and he that hath done evil unto the Reſurrection of Damnation.* Even there where the Lord hath declared from Heaven, that he is *merciful and gracious, forgiving Iniquity, Tranſgreſſion and Sin*; even there he hath declared alſo, to the end Men might not miſtake, *that he will by no means clear the guilty*; no, by no means, not upon any account whatſoever will he clear ſuch as are finally guilty, by perſiſting in Rebellion, *Exod.* xxxiv. 6, 7. All ſuch Perſons therefore as will not be perſuaded to be reconciled to God, by becoming obedient to his Government by his Laws, have no more reaſon to hope that they ſhall be ſaved upon the account of God's merciful Nature, or the Merits of Chriſt's Death, than they have to hope that God for their ſakes will go contrary to all his Declarations in his Word, and contrary to the whole fixed Frame of his Government, by which he rules, and will judge the World. And what Sinner is there, that can but give himſelf the liberty to conſider things, that is or can be ſo vain in his Expectation, as to promiſe himſelf any ſuch thing, ſince our Saviour hath ſaid, *Heaven and Earth ſhall paſs away, but my Word ſhall not paſs away?* Matth. xxiv. 35. Thoſe are the *Unbelievers*, which ſhall certainly periſh, *who will not believe God, who will not believe the Son of God*, when they have ſpoken their mind fully and plainly, but will needs flatter themſelves with hopes that they will be better than their words.

3. Our Saviour, to take away from Men ſuch vain hopes, and to convince them of the neceſſity of their being reconciled to God, hath told them, That if they will not be reconciled to him, they cannot be *reconciled to Happineſs*; that their Nature cannot be capable of the Happineſs of the next World, unleſs they are reconciled to God in this. *Except a Man be born again*, ſaith he, *he cannot ſee the Kingdom of God*, John iii. 3. Except ſuch as have contracted ill habits by bad living, be born again, they are not capable of the happineſs of that ſtate: That is, in other words, Except they *put off the old Man, and put on the new*, Col. iii. 10. or which is yet more plainly expreſs'd, *Epheſ.* iv. 22, 23, 24. except *they put off concerning their former Converſation, the old Man, which is corrupt, according to the deceitful luſts, and be renewed in the ſpirit of their minds, and do put on the new Man, which after God is created in Righteouſneſs and true Holineſs:* Except this be done, they cannot ſee the Kingdom of God, *i. e.* they cannot enjoy it. He doth not ſay, they *ſhall not*, but that they *cannot* ſee it. And the reaſon is, becauſe the Happineſs of the Heavenly State is of ſuch a Nature, as between which and the Nature of Man, as viciated and corrupt, there is no congruity. And that which hath a contrariety in it to the Nature of a Creature, is not matter of Pleaſure, but of Torment to it. The holy God, the holy Jeſus, the holy Angels, and holy Men are the Inhabitants of Heaven: And what Felicity can unholy Men take in ſuch company? *Solomon* ſaith, *The upright are an abomination to the wicked*, Prov. xxix. 27. And if they be ſo here, where they are but in part holy; how much more will they be ſo in the other World, when they are altogether ſo? *What Communion*, ſaith St. *Paul*, *hath Righteouſneſs with Unrighteouſneſs?* No more than *Light with Darkneſs*, 2 *Cor.* vi. 14. They do not love God here as he is holy; nor is it pleaſure to them to think of him as ſuch; and therefore, unleſs they be ſanctified and made ſo here, they are not capable of enjoying God in the next World; in the enjoyment of whom, the happineſs of Heaven doth conſiſt. *Without holineſs no Man ſhall ſee the Lord*, Heb. xii. 14. And they are ſuch as are *pure in heart*, which *ſhall ſee God*, Matth. v. 8. Beſides, thoſe ſinful Luſts which wicked Men carry along with them into the next World, will keep them from being happy in what place ſoever they are, when they ſhall be deprived of thoſe carnal Objects to ſatisfie them, which they found in this World.

And leſt any ſhould think that God will be ſo merciful to them, as ſo to alter and change their Nature, when they come into the other World, as that they ſhall be capable of the happineſs of Heaven, though they are not changed in this; our Lord hath told them aforehand, to prevent ſuch a conceit, that though *many ſhall ſay unto him* *in that Day, Lord, Lord, open unto us; for we have heard thee preach in our Streets, have eat and drunk in thy Preſence, have propheſied and caſt out Devils in thy Name, and done many wonderful Works*; yet they having lived and died unreformed, he will then ſay unto them, *Depart from me, ye Workers of Iniquity, I know you not*, Matth. vii. 22. Luke xiii. 25, 26. And St. *Paul* his Apoſtle hath told us alſo, That *we muſt all appear before the Judgment-ſeat of Chriſt, that every one may receive according to that he hath done in the Body, whether it be good or bad. We muſt* receive, we ſee, according to what is done in the Body here in this Life, before the Separation of Soul and Body by Death, 2 *Cor.* v. 10. *Now is the accepted time, now the day of Salvation*, and thoſe that out-ſtand this, it will be ſaid unto them, as our Saviour doth in *Rev.* xxii. 11. *He that is unjuſt let him be unjuſt ſtill, and he that is filthy let him be filthy ſtill.*

By all theſe Revelations made by our Saviour, he hath (as any that will conſider them may eaſily ſee) put Men upon a Neceſſity of being reconciled to God, unleſs they had rather chuſe to be everlaſtingly miſerable. And in this with the forementioned Motives, there is a very great *Aptitude* to reconcile Men to God, as the reaſon of the thing ſhews, and the Event hath declared.

And thus we have now ſeen how the Mediatory Righteouſneſs of our Saviour, his Obedience in executing the Law of Mediation, doth operate to our Juſtification, in reference both to God and Men. By his Sufferings he reconciled God to penitent Sinners, by making Satisfaction to his governing Juſtice; and by ſecuring the Ends of his inflicting Puniſhment upon impenitent Offenders, while he ſpares the penitent. And by the Goſpel which he hath ſet on foot, the Holy Spirit concurring, he reconciles Men to God; that is, he reconciles their Minds and Wills, their Lives and Actions to God's Holy Nature, Government and Laws, which is their Evangelical Righteouſneſs; in which Capacity, he delivers them up to God to be juſtified and pardoned, according to the Tenour of the Covenant of Grace, which he likewiſe obtained for us, it being founded on his Mediatory Obedience; of which Covenant I am now in the next place to ſpeak.

CHAP. III.

How and in what reſpect the Covenant of Grace operates to our Juſtification.

THE *Covenant* of Grace *operates* to our Juſtification in ſeveral reſpects. But however it doth this, or in what reſpect ſoever; yet all that Operation is owing to the Mediatorial Righteouſneſs or Obedience of our Saviour. For I have ſhewed in what goes before, that the Covenant it ſelf was obtained by, and founded in the Mediatorial Righteouſneſs of our Saviour; the obtaining of which, was one of the Ends of the Office and Work of Chriſt as Mediator. And as it is one of the Effects of our Saviour's Death, it is called a Teſtament, though in other reſpects it is called a Covenant, yea a Law. As its Promiſes are made by God on *condition* of Duty to be performed by us, ſo it is a *Pact* or *Covenant*; As it *abſolutely enjoyns* that as Duty, which is alſo the Condition of our Happineſs, ſo it is a *Law*. But as it comes out of the hands of Jeſus Chriſt, and is the *Fruit of his Death*, ſo it is a *Teſtament*, becauſe by that it receives its Vigour and Strength. *A Teſtament*, ſaith the Apoſtle, *is of force when Men are dead; otherwiſe it is of no Strength at all while the Teſtator liveth*, Heb. ix. 17. This being premiſed, I come now to ſhew in what reſpects this Covenant operates to our Juſtification. And this it doth,

1. By *reconciling* the *Natural Law* to the Terms of the Law of Grace in the behalf of Repentant Sinners, in vertue of the Death of Chriſt for them; whoſe Juſtification and Pardon the Natural Law was againſt, while they remained impenitent. By the Natural Law I mean, that Eternal Reaſon or Wiſdom by which Almighty God does always that which is fit and becoming him towards his Creatures; and that by which his Creatures do, or ought to do, what is fit and becoming them towards God, towards

themſelves, and one another. And this is ſaid to be the *Natural* Law, becauſe its Determinations and Awards are ſuited to the *Nature of things*. As when innocent Creatures are uſed as ſuch, and obſtinate Sinners dealt with as ſuch, and repentant Sinners treated as ſuch; and when Creatures are more or leſs puniſhed or rewarded, according as they have been and done more or leſs wickedly or worthily: Or as when God does render to every one according to his Works without reſpect of Perſons, as the Scripture ſpeaks. Now to do according to the Nature of things is to do according to right Reaſon; and to do ſo, is always well becoming the Agent, whether it be God or Man, and cannot be otherwiſe. To this Law that of St. *Paul* refers when he ſaith, *Whatſoever things are true, honeſt, juſt, pure, lovely, of good report, if there be any Virtue and Praiſe, think on theſe things*, Phil. iv. 8.

This then being the Natural Law, it muſt needs be always *againſt* the Juſtification and Pardon of *impenitent* obſtinate Sinners and irreconcileable Enemies; for it would not be according to the Nature of things, not according to right Reaſon, and ſo not becoming the Agent, if the bad ſhould be treated as well as the good.

But then on the other hand, the Natural Law cannot be againſt the juſtifying and pardoning of ſuch repentant Sinners for whom Chriſt died: Becauſe the caſe of ſuch is quite different from theirs who continue in their Rebellion, and who have no ſhare in the Satisfaction which Chriſt hath made in the behalf of repentant Sinners. Now the caſe of ſuch being thus different, it would not be according to the Nature and Reaſon of things, and ſo not according to the Natural Law, if they ſhould be no more pardoned than the impenitent. Conſidering what our bleſſed Saviour hath done and ſuffered to atone God, and to obtain Pardon and Happineſs for repentant Sinners; ſuch as are greatly diſpleaſed with themſelves for having diſpleaſed God; and that judge and condemn themſelves as guilty of Folly and worthy of Death; that deprecate God's Diſpleaſure, beg Forgiveneſs, and return to their Duty; it cannot but be agreeable to the Nature and Reaſon of the thing, and very well becoming ſo good a Being as God is, for him for Chriſt's ſake, to pardon ſuch, and to reward their future Faithfulneſs, and ſincere Obedience, with everlaſting Happineſs.

And ſo much the rather it is ſo, becauſe by the Death of Chriſt for ſuch as return to God after their Apoſtacy from him, the great and wiſe *Ends* of God's Government over all intelligent Beings, which center in the *publick Good*, are *ſecured* as well, yea better, as I have ſhewed before, than they would have been by puniſhing repentant Sinners themſelves for their Offences. By the ſecuring of which Ends of God's Government, the reaſon of the Natural Law is fully anſwered and ſatisfied. The *publick Good* in God's Dominions, is a great End of his Government: And this publick Good is promoted by God's juſtifying and pardoning repentant Sinners, for Chriſt's ſake; becauſe by his doing ſo, Sinners are prevailed with and perſuaded to repent, amend, and reform, and of bad to become good, and of unprofitable and diſſerviceable, to become uſeful and profitable Members in God's Kingdom; to the increaſing and multiplying of ſuch in it, to the great Joy and Satisfaction of the whole. For which Cauſe it's ſaid, *There is Joy in Heaven over every one Sinner that repenteth*, Luke xv.

Again, it muſt needs be agreeable to the Natural Law, for God, for Chriſt's ſake, to juſtifie and pardon repentant and reformed Sinners, becauſe it is agreeable to his own Nature. For that which is agreeable to the Nature of God, muſt needs agree to the Natural Law, becauſe the Natural Law is founded in the Nature of God. Now for God to ſhew *Mercy* to his Creatures in all *compaſſionable Caſes*, is as natural to him as to do juſtly; Mercy being as eſſential to God, as Juſtice or any other Attribute of his is. And there is no Opportunity for Mercy to ſhew it ſelf, but in compaſſionable Caſes. And if the caſe of repenting and reformed Sinners, for whom Chriſt died, being at firſt made but fallible, be not a compaſſionable caſe; I know not what is, or where any will be found for God to exerciſe his Mercy in.

Farthermore, the Law of Grace does not, nor indeed can, *Cancel or Relax* the Natural Law in any part (though, I confeſs, I with others have ſometime thought otherwiſe) and the reaſon is, becauſe the Natural Law is naturally what it is, and cannot be otherwiſe. That which is in it ſelf fitteſt to be done, can never be otherwiſe under the ſame Circumſtances in which it is ſo. The Change or Alteration is not in the Law, when it favours the ſame Perſons at one time whom it disfavoured, yea condemned before: But the Change is made in the Perſons themſelves, and in the Change of the Circumſtances of their Caſe, by reaſon of their Intereſt in Chriſt's Performance for them; and of their Intereſt in the Promiſe of the Law of Grace, they having performed the Condition on which their Intereſt in the Benefit of Chriſt's Death, and in the Promiſes of the Goſpel, were ſuſpended.

The Law *curſeth all* Tranſgreſſors of it as ſuch; and they remain under it, until they are *redeemed from it*, and removed from under it, by Chriſt's having *born it for them*. So that the *Sanction* of the Law is *not cancelled*, but undergone by our Redeemer for us. He hath redeemed us from the Curſe of the Law, by being made a Curſe for us, not by altering the Law for us, *Gal.* iii. 13. Our Saviour hath told us, *That he which believeth not is condemned already, becauſe he hath not believed in the Name of the only begotten Son of God:* Becauſe he hath not received the Remedy by which he might have been delivered from that Condemnation into which he was fallen, *John* iii. 18. He was under the Condemnation of the Law Natural before, as a Tranſgreſſor of that, and is now under the Condemnation of the Goſpel, as a rejecter of the Grace offered by that. But when ſuch an one comes to believe, he is no longer under the Condemnation of either Law or Goſpel, but both are reconciled to him through Chriſt; becauſe by his believing he is reconciled to them; not becauſe they are in the leaſt altered, but becauſe the Man himſelf is altered, and the Circumſtances of his Caſe are altered upon the account of Chriſt's performance for him.

We cannot ſay that the Natural Law was ever againſt the Juſtification and Pardoning of ſuch repentant Sinners for whom Chriſt undertook to ſuffer; for if it had, it would be ſo ſtill now he hath ſuffered; for that Law is intirely unalterable and inflexible. *Till Heaven and Earth paſs, one jot or one tittle ſhall in no wiſe paſs from the Law,* ſaith our Saviour, *until all be fulfilled,* Matth. v. 18. Now if the Law were never againſt the Juſtification and Pardon of ſuch Penitents, as aforeſaid, then there needed no alteration to be made in it to make way for their Juſtification and Pardon.

And as all this appears, as we ſee, from Reaſons taken from the Nature of God, and from the Nature of the Law it ſelf, as reconciled by the Death of Chriſt to penitent Sinners; ſo it appears alſo by expreſs Teſtimony of Scripture. St. *Paul* ſpeaking of ſuch repentant Sinners, as in whom were found the fruits of the Spirit, ſaith, *That againſt ſuch there is no* Law, Gal. v. 23. And if no Law, then not the Natural Law. And when in another place the queſtion is put, whether it may be ſaid that *the Law is againſt the Promiſe of God?* He rejects it with a kind of Indignation, ſaying, *God forbid,* Gal. iii. 21.

To conclude then, for God to juſtifie, pardon, and make Men happy, when in vouchſafing this Favour to repentant Perſons, upon the account of the Death of his Son, his Authority, Law and Government, is not left unvindicated, nor the ends of his Government unſecured, nor any Creature hurt by it; it is doubtleſs agreeable to the higheſt Reaſon, and therefore congruous to the Law Natural, and infinitely becoming ſo good a Being as God is. And it may very well be, that upon this account God is ſaid to *be juſt, in juſtifying him that believeth in Jeſus,* Rom. iii. 26. And *faithful and juſt to forgive us our ſins,* 1 John i. 9.

And this, doubtleſs, is the *Satisfaction* which God the Father receives by the ſuffering of his Son for our Sins, about which there have been ſo many diſputes in the World. It is doubtleſs infinitely *ſatisfactory* and well-pleaſing to Almighty God, that by means of his Son's ſuffering, he can now ſhew Mercy to repentant Sinners, in juſtifying, pardoning, and ſaving them, without ſuffering the leaſt Diſhonour, or ſuſpicion of Diſhonour, in reference either to his Nature, Law, or Government, and in full compliance with the immutable Law of Righteouſneſs and Reaſon.

Nor will it follow from what hath been diſcourſed (as ſome perhaps may object) that the Natural Law, and the Law of Grace, are all one. For although the Natural Law is not againſt the favour exhibited by the Law of Grace, upon the *Reaſon* and the *Terms* on which it is done: Yet the Revelation of that *Reaſon*, which is the Mediatorial Performance of Chriſt, is not made by the Natural Law, but by the Goſpel, or Law of Grace. For no Man can merely by any Natural Light know it, but it is knowable only by the Goſpel Revelation, or law of Grace. *The natural Man cannot know the things of the Spirit of God, becauſe they are ſpiritually diſcerned;* that is, by means purely Spiritual or Supernatural, 1 *Cor.* ii. 14. For this reaſon, and by reaſon of all the Honour which redounds to the Eternal Father, and to our Lord Jeſus Chriſt, and all the Benefit which accrues to Men by this *Revelation*, which is exceeding great, it was neceſſary that this Law of Grace ſhould be conſtituted and publiſhed, as a Law diſtinct from the Natural Law.

But whereas the Scripture in ſome places ſeems to repreſent the Law and the Promiſe as *inconſiſtent*, ſo that if one take place upon a Perſon, the other muſt in ſome ſort give way, according as I my ſelf have ſometimes thought; I ſhall now look a little more narrowly into thoſe Texts. In *Rom.* iv. 14. it's ſaid, *If they which are of the Law be heirs, Faith is made void, and the Promiſe made of none effect.* And again, *Gal.* iii. 18. *If the Inheritance be of the Law, it is no more of Promiſe: But God gave it unto Abraham by promiſe.* For a right underſtanding of theſe, and ſuch like Scriptures, we muſt conſider that the Apoſtle doth not in them repreſent the inconſiſtency of the Law and the Promiſe, as they are in themſelves, and in their proper uſe, and rightly underſtood; but he therein repreſents the Erroneouſneſs of their Opinion againſt whom he diſputes, upon the account of the *abſurd Conſequences of it, as rendring the Law and the Promiſe inconſiſtent.* For otherwiſe, when St. *Paul* ſpeaks his own ſenſe of the Law and Promiſe, he with great vehemency denies the Law to be againſt the Promiſes, when he ſays, *Is the Law then againſt the Promiſes?* God forbid, *Gal.* iii. 21.

The caſe was this; The Phariſaical Jews held Righteouſneſs or Juſtification to be by the Law, in oppoſition to its being by Grace. *I do not fruſtrate the Grace of God*, ſaith St. *Paul*, (meaning, that he did not do it by his Doctrine, as they did by theirs) *for if Righteouſneſs come by the Law*, ſaith he, *then Chriſt is dead in vain*, Gal. ii. 21. They held their legal Performances were *of themſelves* a Righteouſneſs that would *of themſelves* juſtifie them before God. But St. *Paul* taught, that it was meerly *by Grace, and by vertue of Chriſt's Death*, that the Faith and ſincere though otherwiſe imperfect Obedience of ſuch as have been once Sinners, is *imputed* or *counted* to them for Righteouſneſs. So that their Opinion of Righteouſneſs coming by the Law, if admitted, would have rendred the Death of Chriſt to be in vain, and the Promiſe of none effect, or uſeleſs; which yet proceeded from Grace, and was in it ſelf an act of God's Grace. And *if Righteouſneſs had been by Works*, in their ſenſe, *then it would not have been of Grace, otherwiſe Grace would have been no more Grace*, as St. *Paul* reaſons. But if it was *of Grace*, as the Apoſtle affirmed that it was, *then it could not be of Works*, in their ſenſe, *otherwiſe Work would be no more Work*, Rom. xi. 6.

So that the drift of St. *Paul* in his Writings was to ſhew, that their Opinion of Juſtification by the Law was pernicious, for that it oppoſed the Law to the Promiſe, as rendring the Promiſe uſeleſs: But that his Doctrine of Juſtification *by Grace through Faith*, did not evacuate the Law, nor make it uſeleſs in the matter of our Juſtification, but rendred both very well conſiſtent. *Do we then make void the Law through Faith?* ſaith he, *God forbid: Yea, we eſtabliſh the Law*, Rom. iii. 31. The good Men among the Jews under the Law were juſtified by Grace, even then when they were approved of for Righteous upon the account of their ſincere Obedience to the Law of *Moſes*, and accordingly they depended upon the Grace and Mercy of God for Acceptation and Approbation in their ſincere Obſervation of all his Laws. And therefore they from time to time ſtiled him *a God, keeping Covenant and Mercy with them that love him and keep his Commandments*, or that walk before with all their hearts. And though *the hearers of the Law were not juſt before God*, yet *the Doers of the Law were juſtified*, when they depended upon the Grace and Mercy of God for Acceptation in doing their Duty, *Rom.* ii. 13.

Conclude we then, that there is nothing in theſe Scriptures to prove the Natural Law and the Law of Grace, not to conſiſt without the one being altered by the other.

And thus we ſee how the Law of Grace operates to our Juſtification, by reconciling the Original Law to us upon our Repentance, that was againſt us; it is reconciled to us, becauſe we are reconciled to it by the Law of Grace.

By the way then it is remarkable, how greatly it conduceth to the Conſolation of all truly repentant Sinners, and of how great a ground of their Confidence towards God it is, that the Natural Law, as well as the Law of Grace, is now on their ſide: It is not only *not againſt them*, but is made to be *for them* by the bleſſed Undertaking and Performance of our Saviour for them, when once they are perſuaded to be ſincerely for it.

2. The Covenant of Grace operates to our Juſtification, as it is an *act of Grace*, by which *God doth inſtitute and ordain*, that Faith, as it is an operative Principle of ſincerity of Repentance, of love to God and Man, and of all holy Obedience, ſhall be

accepted and *accounted for Righteouſneſs*, upon the account of our Saviour's Mediatory Righteouſneſs. And for our better Underſtanding and Satisfaction in this Matter, I ſhall endeavour theſe three things.

1. To ſhew that there is a Righteouſneſs found among Men, which the Scripture calls ſo, and calls thoſe righteous that have it, their having ſinned notwithſtanding.

2. To ſhew what it is, and in what it conſiſteth.

3. How it comes to be ſuch.

1. That there is *a Righteouſneſs* found among Men which the Scripture calls ſo, and calls thoſe Righteous which have it, notwithſtanding all the World ſtand guilty before God of Unrighteouſneſs, and are concluded under ſin, according to the firſt Law we were under. This is a thing ſo well known to thoſe that read the Scriptures, or hear them read, that it's needleſs to cite particular Texts to prove it. We ſhall find that good Men, ſuch as are juſtified, are called the *Righteous* or the Juſt, no leſs, I think, than fourſcore times in the Books of *Pſalms* and *Proverbs*, beſides ſo many other places, as are not eaſily to be numbered.

2. That which is more neceſſary is, to ſhew *what this Righteouſneſs is*, and wherein it doth conſiſt. In general it conſiſteth in *our Conformity to the Terms of the Goſpel*, the new Covenant or Law of Grace. As Man's Natural and Original Righteouſneſs ſtood in a *Conformity* in his Nature and Actions to the *Original Law* of Righteouſneſs, from which we are fallen: And as the Mediatorial Righteouſneſs of Chriſt conſiſteth in his *Conformity to the Law of Mediation*; ſo doth the *Evangelical* Righteouſneſs of a Chriſtian ſtand in his *Conformity to the Terms of the new Law of Grace.* And therefore as the Goſpel it ſelf is frequently called *the Faith*, and ſometimes the *Law of Faith*, as being both the Object and the Rule of the Chriſtian Faith; ſo is a Chriſtian's Conformity to it, frequently ſtiled likewiſe, *the Righteouſneſs of Faith* and *the Righteouſneſs by Faith*, and the *Obedience of* Faith, Rom. iii. 22. and iv. 11, 13. and ix. 30. and x. 6. *Gal.* v. 5. *Phil.* iii. 9. *Rom.* xvi. 26.

Now this Conformity to the Goſpel, which God counts to us for Righteouſneſs, doth conſiſt in a hearty Belief or *firm Perſuaſion* that God upon the account of what Chriſt our Mediator hath ſuffered and done for Sinners, will receive ſuch into his Favour, pardon and ſave them, as upon ſuch a Belief do truly repent them of their ſins, and ſeriouſly *reſolve* and ſincerely *endeavour* to pleaſe God for the future, in the whole courſe of their Lives; and in *actual* Reſolutions and Endeavours *ſuitable to this Belief.* This Belief or Perſuaſion when it becomes thus *practical* in Operations proper to the Nature of ſuch a Perſuaſion; as it is then the true Chriſtian Faith, ſo it is then alſo the Chriſtians *Righteouſneſs*; for it is imputed, reckoned, and counted to them for Righteouſneſs, as the Scripture ſhews.

It's true, *Abraham* is ſaid to have had this Righteouſneſs (*Rom.* iv. 11.) and *Noah* to be an *Heir of it*, Heb. xi. 7. And yet we cannot ſay that they had any ſuch explicite Faith in reference to Chriſt the Mediator, as the meaneſt Chriſtian has under the Goſpel Revelation. And yet their Faith in the general Nature of it, was the ſame then with the Chriſtians now. For they had ſuch Revelations made by God one way or other, by which they did believe him to be reconcileable and propitious to all ſuch as fear and love him, and ſincerely endeavour to pleaſe him. And upon this Principle doubtleſs it was, that they and other good Men in thoſe elder times, lived ſuch holy and virtuous Lives, as hath procured them upon publick Record, Honour and Renown for righteous Men, unto all Generations. For ſo ſaith that ſacred Author, ſpeaking of them, *Heb.* xi. 39. *Theſe all received a good report through Faith.* Thus *Abel obtained Witneſs even from God* himſelf *that he was righteous*, by reaſon of his Faith in God, in Conjunction with what he did by virtue of his Faith, *Heb.* xi. 4. And when the Scripture ſaith (*Jam.* ii.) of ſome of theſe that they were juſtified not *only* by their *Faith*, but alſo by their *Works:* The meaning, I doubt not, is, that they were *approved* of by God as righteous Men, upon the account of *both*.

It's true, indeed, righteous and holy Men are frequently deſcribed by their Fear of God, and by their Love and Obedience to him, without mentioning their Faith; as at other times they are deſcribed by their Faith, without mentioning their Fear, Love or Obedience. And the reaſon ſeems to be this, becauſe where any one of theſe is in Truth, there are the other alſo. No Man truly fears God, or loves and obeys him, but he that hath firſt Faith towards God that he is gracious, merciful, and ready to forgive the repenting and reforming Sinner: Without which Faith, it is impoſſible to love him or reverence him with an awful Love. *There is Forgiveneſs* *with him that he may be feared:* Feared with a Fear mixed with Love, as the right Fear of God always is, *Pſalm* cxxx. 4.

Now this their Fear of God, Love to him, and Care to pleaſe him, which grows out of their Faith, is as I ſay their Righteouſneſs as well as their Faith it ſelf more ſtrictly conſidered; becauſe their Conformity to the Law of Grace, which is their Righteouſneſs, conſiſts in theſe as well as in that, and the ſame Promiſes are made to theſe as to that. *He that doth Righteouſneſs is righteous,* 1 John iii. 7. *All his Tranſgreſſions which he hath committed, they ſhall not be mentioned unto him: In his Righteouſneſs which he hath done, he ſhall live,* Ezek. xviii. 22.

And when I ſay that our Conformity to the Terms of the Law of Grace is our Righteouſneſs, it is to be underſtood of ſuch a Conformity as is *hearty and ſincere,* and in the *inward* Man as well as the outward, though otherwiſe it be not indefective in reſpect of Extent and Degree. For therein lies the difference between the perfect Legal Righteouſneſs, and the Evangelical. The Legal Righteouſneſs ſtood in a perfect and indefective Conformity to whatever God commanded, or the Law of Nature required of Man. But the Evangelical Righteouſneſs ſtands in a hearty and ſincere Deſire, Reſolution, and Endeavour in a Man to conform to all that God requires, in Conjunction with Repentance for Defects, and in Affiance in God's Mercy through Chriſt for Forgiveneſs. Although the beſt Man living does not perhaps keep any one of God's Commandments in a *Legal Senſe,* yet the meaneſt ſincere Chriſtian keeps them all in an *Evangelical Senſe;* that is, in Sincerity of Reſolution and Endeavour. *He prepares himſelf to do his Maſter's Will,* as our Saviour ſpeaks, *Luke* xii. 47. by reſolving and endeavouring to do it as well as he can, and by making uſe of all due Means and Helps to that End. And in this Senſe good Men are in Scripture ſaid *to keep God's Charge, his Commandments, his Statutes and his Laws, Gen.* xxvi. 5. 2 *Sam.* xxii. 22. 1 *Kings* xiv. 8. 2 *Kings* xviii. 6. *Job* xxiii. 11. *Pſalm* cxix. 22, 55, 56, 67, 68. *Luke* i. 6. Not that they did ſo in the Legal Senſe: For ſo, *there is not a juſt Man upon Earth that doth good and ſinneth not,* Eccleſ. vii. 10. But they are ſaid to keep the Commandments, in reſpect of the Sincerity of their Endeavour, doing as well as they can. They *follow after Righteouſneſs,* and by this good Men are deſcribed in Scripture, and God is ſaid to love ſuch as do ſo, *Prov.* xv. 9. and xxi. 21. *Iſa.* li. 1. They ſtill labour to do and to grow better and better: And this Sincerity of Endeavour proceeding from a Principle of Faith, is it by which Men in Scripture are denominated righteous: For more than this I cannot ſay is found in any Man, and leſs than this I cannot ſay will denominate any Man to be a good and righteous Man.

Our Endeavours do not indeed *of themſelves,* and *without the aſſiſtance* of God's Holy Spirit, make us of unrighteous to become righteous. But whenever Men are perſuaded in their own Minds to begin with honeſt Endeavours to do their Duty as well as they can, and to make uſe of God's appointed Means to help them therein, they will be ſure of the Aſſiſtance of God's Holy Spirit to carry the work through. For God *will give the Holy Spirit to thoſe that ask him,* Luke xi. 13. and *will work in them to will and to do well, while they are working out their own Salvation* by their Endeavours, *Phil.* ii. 12, 13. To him that hath a Heart thus to begin well in uſing his firſt Talents which he hath from God, *to him more ſhall be given by the Spirit of God, and he ſhall have abundance,* Matth. xxv. 29.

This kind of Righteouſneſs which we call Evangelical, is mentioned in Scripture under ſeveral Forms of Speech; yet all ſignifying the ſame thing in the main, to wit, the Truth and Reality of Grace in the ſight of God. *It is called unfeigned Faith, godly Sincerity, Holineſs of Truth, a labouring to have always a Conſcience void of Offence toward God and toward Men, Uprightneſs of Heart, Truth in the inward Parts, Integrity, Perfectneſs of Heart,* and the like. And when we find in Scripture the Promiſes of Pardon and Salvation made to Faith, Repentance and Obedience *indefinitely,* I think we may ſafely conclude, they are made to ſuch in whom theſe are really and indeed, though but in the loweſt Degree of Sincerity; and conſequently that ſuch are in the number of righteous Perſons.

But then though the Truth and Sincerity of Grace in the loweſt Degree, will denominate thoſe that have it, righteous Men; yet that which is truly ſuch, how weak ſoever it be in the beginning, is of *a growing* Nature, and the reaſon hereof is evident, becauſe where Men do their beſt Endeavours from time to time; Uſe and Exerciſe will make them more and more perfect in their way, the Repetition of Acts firſt begetting and then increaſing Habits, and both together tending to more and more

Perfection in the Chriſtian Courſe. Juſt as it is with Perſons in their learning any Art or Trade: *Though the beginning be but ſmall, yet the latter end will greatly increaſe*; to allude to that in *Job*. The Divine Principle of Grace, which is the *Seed of God* in the Soul, which brings forth the Harveſt of a good Life, being in the nature of it contrary to fleſhly Luſts, will be ſtill heaving at them, to extirpate and drive them out, and aſpiring after a perfect ſtate in Holineſs, hungering and thirſting after Righteouſneſs, upon which account *the way of the juſt is as the ſhining Light, which ſhineth more and more unto the perfect Day*, Prov. iv. 18.

By the way then let it be obſerved, how eaſie the Yoke of Chriſt our Saviour is, and how light his Burthen, when he hath made the Condition of obtaining the Pardon of Sin and Eternal Life no harder than to repent, that we have been in Rebellion againſt our Maker to our own undoing, and ſeriouſly to reſolve and ſincerely to endeavour to deſiſt from all acts of Diſobedience for the future, and to do the beſt we can to pleaſe him, in obſerving thoſe reaſonable Laws of his Kingdom and Government, that are ordained for our own good, for the Peace and Satisfaction of our own Minds, for the preſervation of the Health of our Bodies, and for the innocent Enjoyments of other the Comforts of this Life; for the Peace likewiſe, Order and Concord of publick Communities of Men both in Church and State, while every one is thereby ordered to keep his own Rank, and to act in his own Sphere; and to prepare us, by obſerving them, for the enjoyment of a bleſſed Immortality after all this: And likewiſe obſerve how unreaſonable, and void of all Judgment and Diſcretion, it is for Men to deprive themſelves of all theſe Advantages, and wilfully and deſperately to run upon their own ruin, when all might ſo eaſily be prevented, as by ſubjecting to the eaſie Yoke and gentle Government of Chriſt, who reckons our hearty and ſincere Endeavours in obeying him for Obedience.

3. How this Righteouſneſs comes to be ſuch; to be accounted and accepted for Righteouſneſs: And it is ſo upon a double account at leaſt.

1. It is of the *Grace* of God and of our Lord Jeſus Chriſt that it is ſo; it is by way of Donation or free Gift, without Conſideration had of any thing in us that ſhould render us worthy of ſuch a Favour but the contrary. It doth not make the benefit the leſs of Grace to us, in that it is beſtowed on us through Chriſt, or for his ſake; nor the leſs of Grace in God, becauſe the Righteouſneſs of Chriſt, his obedient Suffering, upon account whereof this gift or grant is made us, was the effect of God's gracious deſign of Benefit unto us: *It was by the Grace of God that he taſted Death for every Man*, as we are told, *Heb.* ii. 9. and conſequently all the good that does accrue to us by it, muſt be of *Grace*.

That the Introduction of this Evangelical Righteouſneſs we ſpeak of, was of *meer Grace* and *free Gift*, appears, *Rom.* v. 17. where this Effect of *God's Grace* is called *the Gift of Righteouſneſs*. And in that Verſe, and in the Verſe before and after, it is called the *Gift*, or *free Gift*, no leſs than four times. *Not as it was by one that ſinned, ſo is the Gift: For the Judgment was by one unto Condemnation; but the free Gift was of many Offences unto Juſtification. For if by one Man's offence Death reigned by one; much more they that receive abundance of Grace, and of the Gift of Righteouſneſs, ſhall reign in Life by one, Jeſus Chriſt. Therefore as by the Offence of one, Judgement came upon all Men to Condemnation; even ſo by the Righteouſneſs of one, the free Gift came upon all Men unto the Juſtification of Life.* And in ver. 21. *Grace* is ſaid to *reign through Righteouſneſs to Life, as Sin had reigned unto Death.* In theſe Verſes St. *Paul* ſhews, that if the Offence of *Adam* were of force to involve his whole Race in Condemnation, that then the *Grace of God*, and the *Gift by Grace* through Chriſt the ſecond *Adam*, and upon account of his Righteouſneſs, will be much more available to the Juſtification and Pardon of all Men, upon ſuppoſition they receive this Gift of being Righteous with that Righteouſneſs. And let it be noted, that the *free Gift* here mentioned, and the *Righteouſneſs of one Jeſus Chriſt*, are not the ſame, but the one the effect of the other: It is by the Righteouſneſs of one Chriſt Jeſus, that the free Gift of Righteouſneſs came upon all Men unto Juſtification of Life. That is, as I conceive, this free Gift of accounting Men Righteous, if they receive it upon the terms of the Giver, is granted unto all Men, otherwiſe Sinners, upon the account of the Righteouſneſs of Chriſt, *Rom.* iii. 24. *Being juſtified freely by his Grace, through the Redemption that is in Chriſt Jeſus.* Here alſo we ſee, that it is of free Grace that God approves of Men as Juſt, and does adjudge them Righteous, which is his Juſtifying of them: It is freely of Grace, though it be through the Redemption that is in

Chriſt Jeſus, or for the ſake of his Mediatory Obedience, *Tit.* iii. 6. *Being juſtified by his Grace*, &c.

And when this Righteouſneſs of Faith is ſaid, as it is, to be a Righteouſneſs *imputed*, or a Righteouſneſs that is *accounted* for ſuch, it implies, nay argues, that it is ſo in a way of Grace and Favour, and not in ſtrictneſs of Juſtice. As on the contrary, not to impute Sin, when Sin hath been committed, ſignifies to deal with ſuch Perſons in a way of Grace and Favour, and not according to the rigour of ſtrict Juſtice, 2 *Sam.* xix. 19. 2 *Cor.* v. 19. As not to impute our Treſpaſſes to us, when we repent of them and ſtrive againſt them, though otherwiſe we are not without all Sin, is purely an act of Grace and of high Favour in God; even ſo for him to impute Righteouſneſs to us when we ſincerely endeavour to be Righteous, when otherwiſe we be not without all Sin, is an act of the ſame Grace likewiſe. This Righteouſneſs of Faith, is not a Natural Righteouſneſs, as *Adam*'s was while he kept his Integrity, but it is ſo meerly in the account of Grace and Favour. It is a Righteouſneſs by *Divine Inſtitution*, not otherwiſe of it ſelf ſo: Its being ſo depends upon the Grace and Good-will of God that hath appointed it ſo to be, and to be accepted and to paſs in account for ſuch. For which reaſon, I conceive, it is frequently called the *Righteouſneſs of God*, Rom. i. 17. and iii. 21. 2 *Cor.* v. 21. *The Righteouſneſs of God which is by Faith*, Rom. iii. 22. Phil. iii. 9. as noting it to be a Righteouſneſs of his ordaining, proceeding from his *Grace*, in oppoſition to Men's own Righteouſneſs, which is, or is conceited to be a Righteouſneſs naturally, and of it ſelf, as the Phariſaical Jews fancied their Righteouſneſs of the Law to be. *By Grace are ye ſaved through Faith; and that not of your ſelves, it is the Gift of God*, Eph. ii. 8. That is, it is by Grace, and by Vertue of the Donation of God, that we are ſaved by Faith, or the Righteouſneſs of Faith, and that we have ſuch a Faith, or Righteouſneſs of Faith to be ſaved by.

2. It is by the Goſpel or Covenant of Grace, that this Righteouſneſs of Faith is *revealed* and *conveyed* to us for ſuch, and *ſtated* and *ſettled* for ſuch as by a Law. This way of accounting Men, that have been and are Sinners, to be Righteous upon their believing, is not known by any Natural Light, becauſe it is not a Natural Righteouſneſs, but is purely matter of *Supernatural Revelation*, as it is in it ſelf *Supernatural Grace*. *I am not aſhamed of the Goſpel*, ſaith St. *Paul*, *for therein is the Righteouſneſs of God revealed from Faith to Faith; as it is written, The Juſt ſhall live by Faith*, Rom. i. 17. And again, *Now is the Righteouſneſs of God manifeſted without the Law*, to wit, by the Goſpel, *Rom.* iii. 21. It is by this Goſpel or Covenant, that Faith is ordained to be our Righteouſneſs, and ſettled for ſuch as by a Law, which therefore is called the *Law of Faith*, Rom. iii. 27. And the Goſpel, which conveys this Grace to us, is frequently called the *Grace of God*, the *Word of his Grace*, and *the Goſpel of the Grace of God*, Tit. ii. 11. Acts xiv. 3. and xx. 24.

The Meſſias, according to what was propheſied, hath *brought in everlaſting Righteouſneſs*, by the everlaſting Covenant, the everlaſting Goſpel; which was not in the World after the Fall, but by his bringing in, *Dan.* ix. 24.

By all this it appears, that the Covenant operates to our Juſtification, as it gives Being from God and our Lord Jeſus Chriſt, unto that Covenant-Righteouſneſs, which is the matter of our Juſtification; it is that by which God doth *inſtitute* this Righteouſneſs: For it is a Righteouſneſs by *Inſtitution*, and not naturally ſuch, as I have ſhewed. What it does in this kind, it does by Vertue of God's Deſignation of it to that Office, and not by its own innate Vertue and intrinſick Worth or Merit.

When I ſay this Righteouſneſs of Faith is not *naturally* and of it ſelf ſuch; I do not mean that thoſe fruits of the Spirit, of which it doth conſiſt, have not in them the true nature of Goodneſs and Holineſs, for that they have; but that theſe are not in Righteous Men themſelves (that yet are Evangelically Righteous) without all *mixture* of that which deſerves not the name of Holineſs and Goodneſs, nor they without Unrighteouſneſs, antecedent to this, and before they had repented; and therefore is not ſuch a compleat Righteouſneſs as would hold meaſure according to the Standard of the Law of Innocency, if we were to be try'd by that, to be juſtified, or condemned by that. In this regard the beſt of us have cauſe with the Pſalmiſt to cry out and ſay, *If thou, Lord, ſhouldſt mark Iniquity, O Lord, who ſhall ſtand?* Pſal. cxxx. 3. It is indeed a growing Righteouſneſs, that is by degrees growing up towards a perfect ſtate; ſuch in whom it is, are *perfecting holineſs in the fear of God*. But before it is grown to this perfect ſtate, it is in the account of Grace, and by way of Favour, and for Chriſt's ſake, accepted and approved by God for ſuch Righteouſneſs, as unto which he hath promiſed the Pardon of all paſt Offences, and of all ſuch After-Infirmities as are conſiſtent with this Covenant-Righteouſneſs in its lower Degree, and alſo Eternal Life it ſelf. So that in a word this thing we call everlaſting Righteouſneſs by which we are juſtified, owes it ſelf its very being ſuch a Righteouſneſs as it is, unto the Covenant of Grace, or that Grace of God and of our Lord Jeſus Chriſt, which is put into a Covenant for us.

3. The Covenant operates to our Juſtification, as being the *Rule* by which thoſe are juſtified in Judgment to be righteous Perſons, ſuch as to whom the Promiſe of Pardon and Eternal Life is made, that are juſtified at all. Righteouſneſs, as I have formerly ſhewed, receives its Denomination as it doth its Nature, from its Conformity to ſome Law. And this Covenant-Righteouſneſs, the Righteouſneſs of Faith, receives its Denomination from its Conformity to the Covenant of Grace, as being that Qualification in the Perſon, on condition of which the Promiſes of the Covenant are made; and therefore every Man that is juſtified, is juſtified by this Law to be ſuch a Perſon as to whom the Promiſes are made. It is by this Law that ſuch a Perſon is juſtified in his Cauſe: If a Man be not a juſt and righteous Perſon in the Senſe of this Law, he will not be juſtified by God; for he judgeth of Men and their Cauſe by this Law, *Jam.* ii. 12. *So ſpeak ye and ſo do as they that ſhall be judged by the Law of Liberty:* That is, the Goſpel or Covenant of Grace. And our Saviour ſaith, *The word that I have ſpoken, the ſame ſhall judge you in the laſt day*, John xii. 48.

4. The Covenant operates to our Juſtification, as an *Inſtrument* of making us to become righteous, and ſo capable Subjects of Juſtification: And this it doth by way of Motive or Perſuaſion. The great and precious Promiſes made to Men in this Covenant, of Pardon of Sin and Eternal Life, on condition of the Righteouſneſs of Faith, Sobriety, Righteouſneſs and Godlineſs, and not otherwiſe; they out of a Deſire and Love to the Benefits promiſed, are perſuaded to imbrace the Condition, without which they cannot enjoy them; that is, to become righteous. The Goſpel Miniſtration is called the *Miniſtration of Righteouſneſs*, 2 *Cor.* iii. 9. And it is ſo both as it miniſters to us the Knowledge, that there is another Righteouſneſs than that which is of the Law; and alſo as it miniſters to us powerful Motives and Aſſiſtances to follow after Righteouſneſs, by which they become righteous, and ſo to be juſtified. St. *Paul* ſaith, *The Goſpel is the Power of God to Salvation*, inaſmuch as therein *the Righteouſneſs of God is revealed from Faith to Faith*, Rom. i. 16, 17. the Terms on which God will account them righteous, and the Motives to make them ſo; theſe are revealed by the Goſpel, by which it becomes the Power of God to Salvation to thoſe that believe it. The Goſpel is a Miniſtration of Righteouſneſs and of Juſtification, as it is the Miniſtration of Reconciliation, of reconciling us to God, of reconciling our Nature to the Holy Nature of God, and to his Holy Laws, by making us Partakers of a Divine Nature, a God-like Nature, in Holineſs and Goodneſs; which is done by the great and precious Promiſes of the Goſpel, of Pardon and Eternal Life, as powerful Motives; perſuading Men to become new Creatures in order to the obtaining theſe great Benefits promiſed and attainable only upon condition of ſuch our Reconciliation to God, which puts us into a perfect Capacity of Juſtification; that is, of being approved of as thoſe who have performed the Condition of the foreſaid promiſed Benefits. Thus the Goſpel is called the *Word of Reconciliation*, which was committed to the Apoſtles and others, and their Miniſtry *the Miniſtry of Reconciliation*, 2 Cor. v. 18, 19. And by a practical Knowledge and Belief of theſe things revealed by the Goſpel, Men come to be juſtified; that is, approved of as thoſe that have known, believed and obeyed the Goſpel. *By his Knowledge*, ſaith God concerning Chriſt, *ſhall my righteous Servant juſtifie many*, Iſa. liii. 11. That is, by the Knowledge of him in what he is, hath done and ſuffered, revealed and taught.

What the Law could not do, in that it was weak through the Fleſh, as to *free us from the Law of Sin*; and to bring us to that Righteouſneſs, which it did deſign but could not effect, that is now done by *the Law of the Spirit of Life which is in Chriſt Jeſus*; to wit, the Goſpel. The Law without the Goſpel could not give us that Aſſurance of God's Willingneſs to be reconciled to us, and of Pardon upon Repentance, which the Goſpel does; much leſs of a glorious Reward of new Obedience. For the Promiſe of Pardon for Chriſt's ſake upon our Repentance, the Promiſe of the Reſurrection of the Body, and of the Celeſtial Glory, are brought to light by the Goſpel, being Matters of ſupernatural Revelation. Now it is the great Aſſurance which the Goſpel gives us of theſe things, upon the account of Chriſt's Death, that is the powerful Motive of prevailing with Men to be reconciled to God, and to become Evangelically righteous, that they may be juſtified. And therefore *the preaching of the Croſs*, is ſaid to be to *them that are ſaved, the Power of God and the Wiſdom of God*, 1 Cor. i. 18, 24. That is, it contains and lays open God's moſt wiſe Contrivance of reconciling Sinners to himſelf, and by that means becomes his powerful Motive of drawing Men to it, that ſo they may be juſtified, pardoned and glorified: *The Law made nothing perfect*, it is the *bringing in of this better Hope* by the Goſpel that doth it, *Heb.* vii. 19. The Law which laid a Burthen of ſtrict Obedience upon Men, back'd with ſevere Threatnings in caſe of Tranſgreſſion, prevailed little upon Men; but to keep them under a Spirit of Bondage to fear, while they were unacquainted with the rich Grace and Indulgence of the Goſpel, by which the Yoke of Chriſt is rendered eaſie and his Burthen light. The Goſpel prevails much more upon Men when they heartily believe it, by proclaiming Pardon to all repentant Sinners, and immenſe Rewards to ſuch as ſhall with honeſt Minds give up themſelves to Chriſt to be his Diſciples, to learn of him by his Doctrine and Example, how to live a ſober, righteous, and a godly Life: And by promiſing Divine Aſſiſtance, as well as vaſt Rewards, and Acceptance of honeſt and ſincere Endeavours; and by making Allowances for ſuch Frailties and Defects both in Knowledge and Practice, as will conſiſt with Uprightneſs of Heart towards God. And thus I have ſhewn how the Goſpel operates to our Juſtification, as a great and effectual means of bringing us to become Evangelically righteous; without which we cannot be juſtified by having that Righteouſneſs imputed to us, and by being approved of as righteous upon the account of it.

CHAP. IV.

Of Faith, and how that operates to our Juſtification.

THat *Faith* doth *operate* to our *Juſtification*, we are perfectly aſſured by the frequent and expreſs notice thereof we have from the Scriptures, ſuch as *Rom.* iii. 30. and v. 1. *Gal.* ii. 16. and others. And Faith operates to our Juſtification, as it is the Performance of that Condition upon which the great and precious Promiſes of the Goſpel-Covenant are made. For the Covenant conſiſts chiefly of two parts; to wit, the *Promiſes* which God makes of beſtowing Benefits on us through Chriſt, and of the *Condition* upon which theſe Promiſes are made; which Condition is ſummarily compriſed in Faith, or Believing.

But before I proceed farther to ſpeak of Faith, I think it not inconvenient here to premiſe to what is to be ſaid about Faith, as the Condition of the Goſpel-Covenant, ſomewhat to ſhew that the Promiſes of Pardon and Eternal Life, are *conditional.* The Goſpel-Covenant is directly ſuited to that Mediatory Undertaking of Chriſt, by which the Covenant it ſelf was obtained, and on which it was founded. Now I have ſhewed formerly, that Chriſt died for all Men indeed, but yet it was but to obtain a conditional Pardon for all Men, and other Benefits conſequent upon it. He did not die to procure that God ſhould be reconciled to them that ſhould always refuſe to be reconciled to him, but to obtain their Pardon and Reſtauration to the Favour of God, upon condition of their being perſuaded to be reconciled to him. And truly the Covenant of Grace holds an exact Proportion to the Covenant of Redemption or Law of Mediation; by the fulfilling of which by Chriſt, the Goſpel-Covenant, as I ſaid, was obtained. As our Saviour died for all, to put all into a Capacity of being pardoned and ſaved, in caſe they ſhould not perſiſt finally in Rebellion againſt God; ſo the Covenant of Grace promiſeth Pardon and Salvation, juſt upon the ſame Terms, and not otherwiſe. For the Goſpel denounceth a being *puniſhed with everlaſting Deſtruction from the Preſence of the Lord, and the Glory of his Power*, againſt all thoſe that *know not God, and which obey not the Goſpel of our Lord Jeſus Chriſt.* So that when we compare the general Promiſe, and Threatnings in the Goſpel together, we are put upon a neceſſity of underſtanding the Promiſe in a conditional ſenſe, otherwiſe the Promiſe and Threatning would be inconſiſtent.

And indeed the Promiſe of thoſe great Benefits ſeldom if ever are found without the Condition annexed, either expreſly or by plain intimation. The gracious Declaration of the Goſpel runs thus: *And you that were ſometime alienated and enemies in your minds by wicked works, yet now hath he reconciled in the body of his fleſh through death, to preſent you holy and unblameable and unreproveable in his ſight,* [if] *ye continue in the Faith grounded and ſettled, and be not moved away from the hope of the Goſpel,* Col. i. 21, 22, 23. If *ye live after the fleſh, ye ſhall die; but* if *ye through the ſpirit do mortifie the deeds of the body, ye ſhall live,* Rom. viii. 13. If *ye forgive Men their treſpaſſes, your heavenly* Father *will forgive you: But* if *ye forgive not Men their treſpaſſes, neither will your heavenly* Father *forgive your treſpaſſes,* Matth. vi. 14, 15. If *we walk in the Light as he is in the Light, then have we fellowſhip one with another, and the Blood of Jeſus Chriſt cleanſeth us from all ſin,* 1 John i. 7. Theſe Conditional Particles [*if*] plainly expreſs the Conditional Nature of the Promiſes, yea, and of the Threatnings too. The Promiſes are not made to ſuch or ſuch Men by Name, but to all Men under ſuch or ſuch a Qualification; as, to thoſe that believe, to thoſe that repent, to thoſe that obey the Truth. Which Qualification ſpecifies the Condition on which, and ſo the Perſons to which ſuch Promiſes belong. This is a thing ſo plain throughout the Scripture, from end to end, that more need not be ſaid of it.

Having premiſed thus much, I ſhall now proceed to ſhew how Faith operates to our Juſtification: And in order to our better underſtanding what influence Faith hath in our Juſtification, we will enquire into theſe Particulars.

1. How it appears that Faith is the Condition of the Promiſe of Pardon and Eternal Life.
2. What that Faith is.
3. Why it is made the Condition of the Promiſes.
4. In what capacity Men are to perform that Condition.
5. How more particularly it operates to our Juſtification.

1. That Faith is the *Condition* on which Pardon of Sin and Eternal Life are promiſed in the Goſpel, is ſo plain, that nothing more need to be ſaid to make it evident, than only to point to the expreſs Letter of the Scripture in this caſe. For Pardon of Sin, this is promiſed on condition of believing, *Acts* x. 43. *To him give all the Prophets witneſs, that through his Name whoſoever believes in him ſhall receive remiſſion of ſins.* And ſo is Eternal Life promiſed on the ſame terms, *John* iii. 16. *God ſo loved the World, that he gave his only begotten Son, that whoſoever believeth in him, ſhould not periſh but have everlaſting Life.* If theſe Promiſes are made to Believers as ſuch, as we ſee they are, then Believing muſt needs be the Condition on which they are made. This is paſt Contradiction, *John* iii. 36. *Acts* xvi. 31.

2. Conſider we next then, what that Faith or Believing is, which is the Condition on which the promiſed Benefits, Remiſſion of Sin and Eternal Life are ſuſpended. And without all doubt, it is not only a ſpeculative, but a practical Belief: it is a hearty Aſſent of the Mind to the Truth of the Goſpel, and a ſincere Conſent in the Will to live according to the Laws and Precepts of it. The ſame thing, the ſame Faith for ſubſtance, is in Scripture deſcribed by different Phraſes: Sometimes it is deſcribed by *a believing the Record of God concerning his Son Chriſt Jeſus,* 1 John v. 10, 11. Sometimes by *a believing Jeſus to be the Chriſt the Son of God,* John xx. 31. 1 John v. 1, 5. And ſometimes by *a believing of the Goſpel, a believing of the Truth, a believing of the Teſtimony of the Apoſtles* of our Saviour, *Mark* xvi. 15, 16. 2 *Theſſ.* i. 10. and ii. 13.

And it is no marvel the ſame Faith ſhould be thus diverſly expreſs'd, ſince a believing of any one of theſe, includes in it a belief of them all; and ſo does a belief of the Reſurrection of Chriſt, by which this Faith is alſo ſometimes deſcribed, *Rom.* x. 9. For he that believes the Record of God concerning Chriſt, cannot but believe him to be the Son of God, becauſe that is the thing which the Father Almighty hath more than once teſtified by a Voice from Heaven, *Mat.* iii. 17. and xvii. 5. And he who believes Chriſt to be the Son of God, muſt needs believe his Doctrine, which is the Goſpel, to be true: As on the other hand, whoever believes the Goſpel, muſt needs believe Chriſt to be the Son of God, becauſe it teſtifies ſo much of him; and likewiſe becauſe it ſets forth thoſe many ſtupendious Miracles which he wrought, and how the ancient Predictions of the Prophets concerning the Meſſias were fulfilled in him, and alſo his Miraculous Reſurrection from the Dead: By all which he is demonſtrated to be the Son of God.

Now then whoſoever rightly believes the Doctrine of our Saviour contained in the Goſpel, and of his Apoſtles concerning him, do believe that he died for our Sins, and roſe again; and that Repentance or Amendment of Life, and Obedience to the Precepts of our Saviour, are indiſpenſibly neceſſary to the obtaining of Remiſſion of Sin and Eternal Life, by his Death, Reſurrection and Interceſſion. And the reaſon hereof is, becauſe theſe things are declared to be ſo in that Goſpel which is ſo believed. And therefore whoſoever does believe, he ſhall be ſaved by Chriſt's Death from the Wrath to come, though he does not truly and ſincerely make it his buſineſs to amend his Life according to the Precepts of our Saviour; believes not the Goſpel, but believes that which is a flat Contradiction to it, and is like thoſe of whom the Apoſtle ſays, *they profeſs that they know God, but in works they deny him*, Tit. i. 16.

Or if any Man ſhould believe this Amendment of Life to be neceſſary to the obtaining Remiſſion of Sin and Salvation by the Death of Chriſt: Yet what would this Belief avail him, if he himſelf ſhould not by this Belief become a new Man in Holineſs, Righteouſneſs, and Sobriety of Living? It is not any Man's believing the moſt important and concerning Truth, that will avail him before God, farther than it tends to make him better, to make him a good Man. The Devils we find confeſſed Chriſt, ſaying, *Thou art Chriſt the Son of God*, Luke iv. 41. the ſame form of Words almoſt *verbatim*, in which the Apoſtles of our Saviour made Confeſſion of their Faith, *John* vi. 69. And St. *James* ſaith, *The Devils believe and tremble*, Chap. ii. 19. But what are they the better for it, ſo long as they retain the ſame Deviliſh Nature which they had before? Nor can we ſay that Mens Faith will any more ſave them, than the Devil's Faith ſaves Devils, whatever it is which is believed, unleſs that Belief makes them better Men in Heart and Life. If a Man believes aright, and underſtands what it is he believes, he can hardly be any more careleſs of acting according to his belief, than he is careleſs of obtaining the Pardon of his Sin, and the Salvation of his Soul.

A right ſaving Belief of the Goſpel then, hath in it the Spirit and Seed of a good Life: It hath in it virtually and *potentially* all pious and vertuous Actions. And all pious and vertuous Actions that proceed from Faith are, as I may ſo ſay, but Faith diverſified in ſeveral Acts, and are a part of Faith, as the Fruit that grows upon the Tree, is a part of the Tree. And to make this appear in ſome Inſtances: All thoſe noble and generous Acts of the Patriarchs and other Worthies, mentioned in *Hebrews* the 11th Chapter, did all grow out of their Faith, for by Faith they did them all. All the good Report which they obtained upon account of their Heroick Actions is attributed to their Faith, by which they did atchieve them: *Theſe all having obtained a good Report through Faith*, &c. Ver. 39.

More particularly, the Author of this Epiſtle to the *Hebrews*, in Ver. 5. of this 11th Chapter, proves that it was by Faith that *Enoch* was tranſlated, becauſe he had this teſtimony, that before he was tranſlated he *pleaſed God* (or *walked with God*, as his Hiſtory relates it, *Gen.* v.) which, as he ſhews, was impoſſible for him to have done, if he had not had Faith; for, ſaith he, *without Faith it is impoſſible to pleaſe God.* So that we ſee the ſame thing is attributed to the Righteouſneſs of his Life in walking with God, as is to his Faith which produceth that effect, *viz.* that thereby he pleaſed God. And ſo it is ſaid of *Noah*, ver. 7. that *by Faith he being warned of God of things not ſeen as yet, moved with fear, prepared an Ark to the ſaving of his houſe*; by which Action of his, in Conjunction with his Faith, *he became heir of the Righteouſneſs which is by Faith.* It is ſaid of *Abraham* alſo, ver. 17. *That by Faith he offered up Iſaac.* And it is ſaid by St. *James*, that by this good Work of his, the fruit of his Faith among others, he *was juſtified*, Jam. ii. 21. And not only ſo, but that *therein the Scripture was fulfilled which ſaith, Abraham believed God and it was counted to him for Righteouſneſs*, ver. 23. Which ſhews that when the Scripture ſaith, *Gen.* xv. 6. that *Abraham*'s believing God *was counted to him for Righteouſneſs*, it was meant of his Faith as it was a vital Principle of ſincere Obedience to God in whatever he commanded him, elſe that Scripture would not have been fulfilled in *Abraham*'s offering up *Iſaac*, and in his being juſtified thereby, as well as by his Faith. The like is ſaid of *Rahab*, *that by Faith ſhe periſhed not with them that believed not, when ſhe had received the Spies in peace*, Heb. xi. 31. And St. *James* ſaith, that ſhe was juſtified by this Work which was the Fruit of her Faith, *James* ii. 25. So that we ſee in the Scripture-Notion of Faith, to have Faith counted to us for Righteouſneſs, and to have Acts of Obedience proceeding from Faith to be counted for Righteouſneſs in Conjunction with the Faith it ſelf, is the ſame thing. And to be juſtified by Faith, and to be juſtified by thoſe Acts of Obedience, which are the Iſſue of Faith in Conjunction with the Faith it ſelf, is ſtill the ſame thing in the Senſe of holy Scripture. All this is to ſhew what and what manner of Faith it is that is the Condition on the which Pardon of Sin and Eternal Life are promiſed in the Goſpel-Covenant, and by which we are juſtified, and which is counted for Righteouſneſs.

And for our greater Confirmation in this, and to ſhew farther, that no Faith can entitle us to the Promiſes of the Covenant, the Promiſe of Pardon, and the Promiſe of Eternal Life, but ſuch a practical Faith as I have deſcribed. Conſider theſe following Particulars:

1. If none can be pardoned but ſuch as repent, nor ſee the Kingdom of God, except they be born again, as the Scripture aſſures us they cannot: Then no Faith can entitle us to Pardon and Salvation, as it is a fulfilling the Condition of the Promiſes of the Covenant, but ſuch as is a penitential regenerating Faith, ſuch as works Repentance and Regeneration in Men; nor till it hath wrought theſe Effects, at leaſt, as begun. I cannot imagine what can be ſaid with any ſhew of Reaſon againſt this Argument.

2. St. *James* argues, That Faith which hath not Works cannot ſave, *ver.* 12. and concludes his reaſoning, *ver.* 24. with ſaying, *Ye ſee then how that by Works a Man is juſtified, and not by Faith only.*

3. Faith and Obedience are ſo much the ſame, or at leaſt ſo inſeparable when ſaving, as that the ſame Greek Word is indifferently tranſlated to *believe* or to *obey:* And ſo on the contrary, the ſame Word is tranſlated *Unbelief* or *Diſobedience.* Inſtances of this nature you have in *Acts* v. 36. *Rom.* xi. 30, 31. *Eph.* v. 6. *Heb.* iv. 11. and xi. 31. in all which you have the ſame Word tranſlated one way in the Line reading, and another in the Margin. And *Belief* and *Diſobedience* are likewiſe oppoſed to each other as Contraries, as well as *Faith* and *Unbelief* are, and as well as *Obedience* and *Diſobedience* are; as you may ſee, for inſtance, in *Rom.* x. 16. 1 *Pet.* ii. 7. 2 *Theſ.* ii. 12. By all which we may reaſonably judge, that when Faith only is mentioned as the Condition on which Pardon and Eternal Life are promiſed, yet then it is to be underſtood of a practical obediential Faith.

4. The ſame Benefits, Pardon of Sin and Eternal Life, are promiſed upon the Condition of Obedience in ſome Scriptures, which are promiſed on condition of believing in others. As for inſtance, *If we walk in the Light, as he is in the Light,* we have Fellowſhip one with another, *and the Blood of Jeſus Chriſt his Son cleanſeth us from all Sin,* 1 *John* i. 7. Here Aſſurance is given us of being purged from the guilt of Sin by the Blood of Chriſt, in caſe we walk in the Light as God is in the Light, labouring to be holy as God is holy, in all manner of Converſation. And *Chriſt is the Author of Eternal Salvation to all them that obey him,* Heb. v. 9. And *bleſſed are they that do his Commandments, that they may have right to the Tree of Life, and may enter through the Gates into the City,* Rev. xxii. 14. *Not every one that ſaith Lord, Lord, ſhall enter into the Kingdom of Heaven, but he that doth the Will of my Father which is in Heaven,* Matth. vii. 21. Now if holy Obedience be made the condition of the Promiſe of Pardon and Life, as well as Faith, as we ſee it is, then none but an Obediential Faith can be a Performance of the condition of that Promiſe. By an Obediential Faith, I mean ſuch a Faith as by which a Man is moved and inclined, and in ſome ſort enabled to do what is his preſent Duty, ſo far as he underſtands it to be ſo. And in this Senſe a Man's Faith and his Obedience are of the ſame Date, and commence together. And therefore it is no marvel that the ſame Promiſe of the ſame Benefits is made to the one which is made to the other, and that both are joined in the Condition.

5. In *Heb.* viii. 10, 11, 12. where we have the Tenour of the new Covenant declared; God promiſeth to be a God only to ſuch, and to forgive the Iniquities only of ſuch as have his Law put into their Minds and written in their Hearts. Where *Faith* is not at all mentioned as the condition of receiving thoſe Benefits, but the having the *Law written in the Heart.* Though the having the Law written in the Heart ſuppoſeth Faith, I grant, as a productive Cauſe of it, yet we ſee it is not the condition of the promiſed Benefits, otherwiſe than as it produceth

ſuch an Effect; which Effect is only here mentioned, and not Faith which is the Cauſe.

6. When ſaving Faith is deſcribed by the Nature of its Operation upon a Man himſelf, and not only as it acteth upon its Object without him; then we are told *it purifieth the Heart*, Acts xv. 9. *worketh by Love*, Gal. v. 6. *overcometh the World*, 1 John v. 4. and *ſanctifieth the whole Man*, Acts xxvi. 18. And therefore we have no good reaſon to think Faith is a fulfilling the Condition of the Promiſe only as it acteth upon its object by way of Credence, or Aſſent, or Affiance either, without its transforming Operation upon the Soul.

3. The next thing to be enquired into, is the Reaſon why Faith is made the Condition of the Promiſes of the Goſpel-Covenant. And the Reaſons hereof ſeem to be ſuch as theſe.

1. Faith is made the *Condition* of the Promiſe, that it might appear to be of *Grace* that ſuch Promiſe is made, and made upon ſuch a Condition as *Faith* is. St. *Paul* having ſpoken of the Promiſe being made through the Righteouſneſs of Faith, and not through the Righteouſneſs of the Law, *Rom.* iv. 13. He gives the reaſon of it, *ver.* 16. when he ſays, *It is therefore of Faith that it might be by Grace, to the end the Promiſe might be ſure to all the Seed; not to that only which is of the Law, but to that alſo which is of the Faith of* Abraham. In which words we have a general reaſon why Faith is made the Condition of the Promiſe, and that is, that it might be by Grace. And another is given in a particular Inſtance, *viz.* that the Promiſe might be ſure to all the Seed.

There is a double Reaſon, why it muſt needs be of Grace that the great Promiſes of the Goſpel are made to Mens believing the Goſpel. The one is taken from the nature of the thing; that is, of Faith it ſelf in reference and relation to its Object. For he that believes the Goſpel, believes that the great Bleſſings and Benefits promiſed therein, are promiſed not for any Merit of his to whom they are promiſed, but for the ſake of another; to wit, Chriſt Jeſus, *whom God hath ſet forth for a Propitiation through Faith in his Blood*, Rom. iii. 25. And he that believes the Goſpel according to what it reveals, believes alſo that it was of Grace that he was thus made a Propitiation: For it *was by the Grace of God that he taſted Death for every Man*, Heb. ii. 9. *Not by Works of Righteouſneſs which we have done, but according to his Mercy he ſaved us*, Tit. iii. 5. And whoever believes all this, exalts the Grace of God in ſo believing. St. *Paul*, who believed and taught this in Oppoſition to the misbelieving Jews, who thought to be juſtified by the Works of the Law, without the Death of the Meſſias to obtain that and all other Benefits, ſaid, *I do not fruſtrate the Grace of God; for if Righteouſneſs come by the Law, then Chriſt is dead in vain*, Gal. ii. 21. Thus he by his Faith and Doctrine, according to it, in believing and teaching Juſtification by the Death of Jeſus Chriſt, did not fruſtrate but *exalt* the Grace of God. Faith then in the very nature of it, does own the Promiſe of all Benefits to be of Grace, when made to ſuch as by ſin had forfeited all.

The other reaſon why it muſt needs be of Grace that the Promiſe is made upon condition of Faith, is this; becauſe our believing that another, to wit, Chriſt, hath by his own ſuffering, and Interceſſion for us, obtained Pardon and Life upon condition of our being reconciled to God, cannot without believing a Contradiction be thought to merit theſe Benefits; but that the Promiſe and the Benefits promiſed, and their being promiſed on ſuch a condition as an Obediential Faith is, muſt needs be all of Grace, and cuts off all occaſion of boaſting; for Chriſt is made to us of God, Wiſdom, Righteouſneſs, Sanctification, and Redemption, *to the end that he that glorieth may glory in the Lord*, 1 Cor. i. 30, 31. And it is *by Grace that we are ſaved through Faith; and not of Works, leſt any Man ſhould boaſt*, Eph. ii. 8, 9. *Where is boaſting then? It is excluded, by what Law? Of Works? Nay, but by the Law of Faith*, Rom. iii. 27.

Again, the Promiſe is therefore of Faith that it might be by Grace, *to the end that the Promiſe might be ſure to all the Seed*, as well of the Uncircumciſion as of the Circumciſion. The Promiſe of Pardon and Life to the Gentiles, the greateſt Sinners, upon condition of Repentance, is ſecured and made ſure to them by their believing; becauſe the Promiſe ſo believed, is founded in the Death of Jeſus Chriſt, in whom all the Promiſes are Yea and *Amen*. For no Man can with the leaſt Appearance of Reaſon imagine, that the great God would ever expoſe one ſo great and ſo greatly beloved by him as his holy Son is, to ſuch Sufferings as he underwent to procure Pardon and Life for repentant Sinners, were he not fully and perfectly reſolved to pardon and ſave them upon their Repentance, notwithſtanding all their Sins they were guilty of before, how hainous ſoever they may have been. Upon which account our Saviour thus given by the Father to ſuch an end, is ſaid to be *ſurety of the new Covenant*, Heb. vii. 22. that is, he is the great Security which the great God hath given to the World, of performing whatever he hath promiſed us upon his Son's account in that Covenant. *God that ſpared not his own Son, but delivered him up for us all, how ſhall he not with him freely give us all things?* Rom. viii. 31. And now who ſees not but that this is an act of exceeding rich Grace in God, not only to reſolve to beſtow upon the Children of Men ſuch great things as he hath promiſed, but alſo to give them ſuch a Security for it as he hath done, by giving his Son to prepare the way for it?

Now the Senſe and Comfort of all this Grace, and ſo our aſcribing the Glory of it unto God and our Lord Jeſus Chriſt, depends upon our believing theſe things. And therefore God hath entailed the Promiſe of Benefits upon that Faith as a condition, without which we can have no ſenſe of all that Grace of God expreſs'd in the Promiſe. And therefore well might the Apoſtle ſay, *It is therefore of Faith, that it might be by Grace.*

Beſides, the Promiſe appears to be of *Grace* in reference to the *Condition* on which it is made, whether we conſider the vaſt Diſproportion between the things promiſed, and the Condition on which they are promiſed; or the eaſineſs of the Condition it ſelf. Conſidering what by Sin we have deſerved, it would have been matter of Grace in God, and great Grace too, if he had promiſed us no more but a deliverance from the Wrath to come, and that upon any poſſible Condition, though otherwiſe never ſo rigorous or hard to have been performed; as ſuppoſe it had been the greateſt ſeverity the Nature of Man could undergo, to be exerciſed by us on our own Bodies. If this had been the caſe, yet herein there would have been as much Grace and Favour ſhewed us, as ſuch temporary Severities would come ſhort of eternal Torments in Hell. And if this would have been matter of Grace, as moſt certainly it would, how much more doth it appear to be ſo, when God hath promiſed not only Exemption from the Vengeance of Eternal Fire, but alſo to exalt our Nature, and to prefer us to an Immortal Happineſs and Glory, far greater probably than the Happineſs of an Earthly Paradiſe would have been, in caſe we had never ſinned at all; and yet all this too upon ſo eaſie a condition as Faith is. For eaſie it is in the attaining to it, if we conſider what Proviſion God hath made, and what Aſſiſtances he is ready to afford, to enable us to believe. And it's eaſie in it's Exerciſe and Work, if we conſider what we are to do by Vertue of it, which beſides Affiance in God and our Saviour, is but to abſtain from that we had better be without than have, though we ſhould not be concerned in a future ſtate in another World; and to do no more, but what tends to the perfecting of our Nature and the comfort of our Lives, beſides the future Glory; except in the caſe of Perſecution for Righteouſneſs ſake. In ſuch reſpects as theſe I have mentioned, it plainly appears, that God's making of Faith to be the Condition upon which his great Benefits are promiſed us, tends greatly to manifeſt the Grace of God and our Lord Jeſus Chriſt, and to fill us with a ſenſe of it; for which cauſe, we ſee, he hath choſen it to that Office of being the Condition of Pardon of Sin and Eternal Life, through Jeſus Chriſt our Lord.

And one Reaſon why God would have his own Grace ſo manifeſt in all theſe his Proceedings and Dealings with us, and why he would have us poſſeſſed with ſo great a Senſe of it, is, I conceive, becauſe he knows this is the direct way of reconciling us to himſelf, of making us to have good and honourable Thoughts of him, ſuch as incline and diſpoſe us to be reconciled to him. And this brings me to another reaſon why Faith is made the Condition of the great and precious Promiſes aforeſaid, which is this:

2. Such a Faith as I have deſcribed, does beſt accommodate God's deſign of Grace towards us, in reconciling us to himſelf by Jeſus Chriſt, in order to our happineſs; which may be another Reaſon why Faith is made the Condition of the promiſed Benefits. There is a certain *aptitude* in Faith to reconcile us to God, and to produce that in us which is the Matter of our Juſtification, as well as of our Reconciliation to God. And the reaſon hereof is, becauſe the Motives by which Men come to be perſuaded to be reconciled to God, receive their *ſtrength from Faith* in one reſpect, as they do from the goodneſs of the Nature of God and his Veracity in another.

I have intimated before, that it is from an apprehenſion which Men have of God's willingneſs to be reconciled to them, that inclines them to be reconciled to him. While Men look upon God as a reſolved Irreconcileable Enemy to them; well they may dread him as the Devils do, but cannot love him nor be reconciled to him, no more perhaps than the Devils can. All the good Thoughts of God, as of one that delights not in our Deſtruction, but concerns himſelf for our Salvation, and which any way incline us to be reconciled to him, take their riſe from thoſe Declarations which God hath made to us of his willingneſs and deſire to be reconciled to us, upon ſuppoſition of our willingneſs to be reconciled to him. Hence it is that we are ſaid to *love God, becauſe he firſt loved us*, (1 John iv. 19.) *and to be reconciled to God by the death of his Son*, becauſe God thereby commended his Love to us while we were yet Sinners, and gave us an ample and full proof of his willingneſs to be reconciled to us, as making way thereby for it, *Rom.* v. 8, 9, 10. And thus *God was in Chriſt reconciling the World unto himſelf*, by aſſuring us of a readineſs in him to be reconciled to us, and not to impute to us our Treſpaſſes; ſuppoſing ſtill that we refuſe not to be reconciled to him, 2 *Cor.* v. 19. By this declared willingneſs in God to be reconciled to us, and by his declared reſolution not only to pardon us, but alſo to exalt us to Immortal Glory, provided we refuſe not to be reconciled to him, but to puniſh us as obſtinate Rebels and irreconcileable Enemies, if we do; I ſay, it is by theſe Motives that Men are perſuaded and prevailed withal to be reconciled to God; or to his Nature, as when they become pleaſed with the ſame things which pleaſe him, and diſpleaſed with what is diſpleaſing to him, and to his Law and Government, as when they conſent to the Wiſdom and Goodneſs thereof, and accordingly ſubmit to it as beſt.

But then it is by means of *Faith* that theſe *motives* do affect us, and operate to our Reconciliation to God. There is no other way to affect the Soul with all the great things which God and Chriſt have done for us, and conditionally promiſed to us, but by means of this Faith. For we do not know that Chriſt is the Son of God, or for what end he died, nor that God will both Pardon and give Eternal Life to Sinners upon condition of their being reconciled to him, but by Divine Revelation; which Divine Revelation doth not affect us, or *operate* upon us, farther than it is *believed*. Theſe Motives not being ſenſible Objects, have no Being in the Soul, and ſo no Operation, till Faith give them a Being there, by giving credit to that Doctrine by which they are revealed. For *Faith is the Subſtance* or Confidence *of things hoped for, and the Evidence* or Conviction *of things not ſeen*, Heb. xi. 1. *We know and believe the Love that God hath to us*, 1 John iv. 16.

Faith is the great Inſtrument of reconciling us to God, both as it acts upon its Object, and as it acts upon its Subject. Divine Revelation is its Object, and by crediting that, the aforeſaid Motives are received into the Soul as real things. And then Faith acts upon its Subject, the Soul it ſelf, in which Faith dwells, by fixing the foreſaid Motives in the Mind, and working them into the Will, by which the Work of Reconciliation and Converſion unto God is wrought and brought about. In this way, or in this reſpect, Love to God, Obedience to his Precepts, and all Divine Virtues and Holineſs of Life, flow from Faith. And therefore it's no marvel that Faith is mentioned in Scripture as the *ſummary* Condition on which the Promiſes of the Goſpel are made. Hence we may ſee the Reaſon why *Sanctification* is attributed to Faith, as it is, *Acts* xxvi. 18. and more particularly the *Purity of the Heart*, *Love to God and Men*, and *Victory over the World*, Acts xv. 9. Gal. v. 6. 1 *John* v. 4. Yea, the whole of Evangelical Righteouſneſs, of Godly Sincerity both in Heart and Life, ſo often ſtiled the *Righteouſneſs of God*, is ſaid to be by *Faith*, as the next and immediate Productive Cauſe of it, *under the Operation of the Spirit of God*, Phil. iii. 9. Rom. iii. 22. This Faith therefore having ſuch an aptitude in it, as I have ſhewed, to reconcile us unto God, by renewing our Nature, and conforming us to him, without which Faith we could not, by the great and precious Promiſes themſelves, be made Partakers of a Divine Nature, we may ſee reaſon enough why it is made the Condition of the Promiſes of the Goſpel.

3. By *Affiance* in God and in our Lord Jeſus Chriſt, which is one ſpecial Act of Faith, we give and aſcribe unto God, as much as in us lies, the Glory of his Attributes and the Perfections of his Nature, his Truth and Faithfulneſs, Power, Wiſdom and Goodneſs: Which may be another reaſon why this Honour is by God put upon Faith, ſo as to be accounted to us for Righteouſneſs, and to be made the Condition of God's making good to us the great Promiſes of the Goſpel, Forgiveneſs of Sin, and Eternal

Life. By this *Affiance* we venture our ſelves Soul and Body, and our whole concern for all Eternity, upon the Truth of God's Word and Promiſe, upon his Faithfulneſs and Power to perform it, and upon the All-Sufficiency of Chriſt Jeſus to be our Saviour and Redeemer, when we commit our ſelves and the Conduct of our Lives wholly to his Rule and Government, out of a confident Expectation of having God's Promiſe made good to us, and of the Sufficiency and Prevalency of our Saviour's Performance for us. This Truſt and Confidence God is pleaſed to take as ſuch a piece of Honour done to him, as that the Scripture calls our *receiving God's Teſtimony, a ſetting to our Seal that God is true*, John iii. 33. a juſtifying of God againſt the Jealouſies and Suſpicions of Men, and the Reproach which their Unbelief caſts upon God, *Luke* vii. 29. *For he that believeth not the Record which God hath given of his Son, hath made him a Liar*, 1 John v. 10. *Thus Abraham gave Glory to God, when he ſtaggered not at his Promiſe through Unbelief, but was fully perſuaded that what he had promiſed he was able alſo to perform*, Rom. iv. 20, 21. And in that he did thus give Glory to God in believing, this in the next words is given as the reaſon why his Faith was *imputed* to him for Righteouſneſs. *Therefore*, ſaith he, *it was imputed to him for Righteouſneſs*, ver. 22. And thus we ſee, that God is pleaſed to honour that moſt in Men; to wit, their Faith, by which they moſt honour him.

4. In what Capacity thoſe under the Goſpel are, to perform the condition of the Promiſe by believing. For Faith is Man's Act, whatever the Aſſiſtances are by which he is enabled to perform it. With the Heart *Man believeth* unto Righteouſneſs, ſaith St. *Paul*, Rom. x. 10. For our better underſtanding in what Capacity Men are of believing, it will be neceſſary to conſider, 1. What God hath done towards the working of Faith in Men, antecedent to the Act of Believing. 2. What Man himſelf can do through the antecedent Grace of God, towards his believing. 3. What ſubſequent Grace of God does and will vouchſafe for the perfecting the Work of Faith, and carrying it quite through, unto ſuch as do not groſly neglect to do what they may and well can do, towards their own believing, by uſing and improving the antecedent Grace of God.

1. That which God hath done towards the raiſing of Faith in Men antecedent to any Act of Faith in them, or of any Endeavours of theirs towards ſuch a thing, is his vouchſafing unto them the Goſpel, and the Evidence of its Divinity; and by it to reveal to them the things which are to be believed. And this we call the objective Grace of God as well as the antecedent; and is that alſo which we call preventive Grace. And in theſe reſpects the Goſpel is ſometimes ſtiled the Grace of God, and ſometimes the Faith: For it is both the Object of Faith, and a means to raiſe it in Men: For Faith comes by hearing it, *Rom.* x. 17. In reſpect of this preventive antecedent Grace, God is ſaid to have offered Faith to all Men (ſo it is in the Margin) in that he hath raiſed Chriſt from the dead; that is, to all to whom this is revealed by the Goſpel, *Acts* xvii. 31. By this Revelation God hath vouchſafed unto all ſuch to whom it comes, means by which they may come to believe, if they be not greatly wanting to themſelves.

2. Conſider we next what Men themſelves can do towards the raiſing of this Faith in them, by means of this antecedent objective Grace of God. 1. They can hear this Goſpel as well as any other Subject of Diſcourſe which is offered to their Conſideration, and this is one ſtep towards their believing of it; for Faith comes by hearing, *Rom.* x. 17. 2. They can conſider the things they hear from it, and that's another ſtep towards believing. Thus the *Bereans*, by conſidering of and ſearching into the things they heard, came to believe, *Acts* xvii. 11, 12. They can conſider whether they have not immortal Souls to take care of as well as mortal Bodies, and whether there be not a future State after this Life: For of ſuch things as theſe the Goſpel treats. They can conſider of ſuch Reaſons when they hear them, as tend to ſatisfie the Mind and Reaſon of Man, that there is ſuch a future State. For Heathens, by the Light of Nature, without the Revelation of the Goſpel, came ſo far as to be perſuaded of ſuch a thing. And when by conſidering they come to be perſuaded either that there is ſuch a future State, or that it's far more probable that there is than that there is not; then they can hardly forbear to conſider and think more or leſs, what is like to become of them in that future State. And upon Suppoſition that they are perſuaded in their own Minds that there is ſuch a future State, they can no more put off a Deſire of being happy in it, than they can put off Nature it ſelf, and ceaſe to be Men.

They can diſcern a difference between moral good, and evil in very many things, and the different Tendency of them to their Happineſs or Miſery in the future State. They cannot, though they would, think that Evil tends to the Happineſs, and Good to the Miſery of that future State, but the contrary. They can conſider and think on ſuch things as by which the Holy Scripture directs to this Happineſs, as well as they can the Contents of other Books. Before Men have debauched their Natures by a cuſtom of ſinning, there is hardly any but have ſome ſuch Thoughts as theſe ſpring up more or leſs in their Minds. And to what degree they do ſo, they have a Tendency to bring Men to a Belief of the Goſpel, and a good Life, as I ſhall farther ſhew afterwards.

3. The ſubſequent Grace of God and Work of the Holy Spirit, is that by which the former Conſiderations which had ſome Tendency to Faith, are heightned, improved and carried on until ſuch a Faith is produced in the Soul, as is a believing unto Righteouſneſs. And this ſeems to be done chiefly in ſome ſuch way as this. Firſt by preſenting the objective Grace of God (the Goſpel) more frequently to their Conſideration, and by holding their Thoughts more intently upon the great and concerning Matters contained therein. Secondly, By aſſiſting the intellective Faculties of the Soul by more frequent and repeated Conſiderations, to underſtand and diſcern the Nature and Import of the great Doctrines of the Goſpel, as containing God's deſign of Wiſdom and Goodneſs for the recovery of loſt Men from Sin and Deſtruction for Sin, by Jeſus Chriſt.

And by this means a greater Light breaks into the Soul, by which the Evidence of the Truth of what the Goſpel reports, is better diſcerned than it was before; and ſo are a Man's own great concerns for Eternity, which are therein laid open. And thereby alſo is the Mind prevailed upon to aſſent to the Truth of our Saviour's Doctrine in the Goſpel, and the Will to conſent to act according to the great concerns of a Man's Soul. And therefore Mens Converſion is in Scripture, deſcribed by their being turned from Darkneſs to Light, by their being enlightned, and having the Eyes of their Underſtanding opened, and the like.

And ſometimes this Work of Faith, or Grace in the Soul, is aſcribed to the former Work of God upon the Mind, *viz.* the holding the Mind and Thoughts unto a more cloſe, ſerious and intent Conſideration of the great things of the Goſpel, and a Man's own great concerns therein. Thus in *James* i. 25. *Whoſo looketh into the perfect Law of Liberty, and continues therein* (i. e. *continues looking into it*) *he being not a forgetful Hearer, but a Doer of the Work, this Man ſhall be bleſſed in his Deed.* Here we ſee one that continues his looking into the Doctrine of the Goſpel (which is meant by the Law of Liberty) and a forgetful Hearer are oppoſed to each other; and ſo is a forgetful Hearer and a Doer of the Work. By which it plainly appears, that the reaſon why one's hearing ends in the doing of the Work, and in being bleſſed in his Deed, and the other does not, is for that the one conſiders and continues from time to time ſeriouſly to conſider the Weight and Importance of what he hears, and of his own great concern in it; but the other does not, but is a forgetful Hearer, as little minds it, as if he were not concerned in it.

The ſame thing is doubtleſs meant by another Metaphor which the ſame Apoſtle had uſed, *ver.* 21. Where he calls the Word which is able to ſave the Soul, an *ingrafted Word.* For if the Word be able to ſave the Soul but as it is an ingrafted Word, then it becomes an effectual means of Salvation, as it is faſtened upon and let into the Soul by ſerious Conſideration. For Conſideration anſwers the Metaphor of ingrafting here uſed. If the Juice of a Cyon, the Branch of a good Tree, turn the Sap of a Crab-Tree Stock into it's own Nature, and cauſe it to bring forth better Fruit than before, it is by means of its being let into it and bound faſt upon it, that it does ſo. In like manner, if the Word turn the Temper of the Soul into its own Nature by mingling with it, it is by means of Conſideration, which unites the Word and the Mind, and binds it upon the Soul. For the Word does not work after the manner of a Charm or Spell, but operates in a way of rational Conſideration. For this is the way of the Spirit's working by the Word: When Men with *open Face behold* as in a Glaſs the Glory of the Lord, they are changed into the ſame Image as it were by the Spirit of the Lord, 2 *Cor.* iii. 18. The Holy Spirit works this Change indeed, but it is by the Goſpel, and by the Goſpel looked into, beheld and well conſidered.

This conſidering Temper of Mind ſeems to be ſignified by the good Ground in the Parable, by which thoſe are reſembled, who when they have heard the Word, *keep it*, to wit, in their Minds and under Conſideration; in oppoſition to thoſe other Hearers of the Goſpel, who for a total want of Conſideration, immediately loſe all they hear, as thoſe do who are reſembled by the High-way on which ſome Seed fell, where it had no covering at all: And in oppoſition to thoſe who, for want of *much Conſideration*, wither when Perſecution comes, like thoſe reſembled by the rocky Ground on which ſome of the Seed was ſown, where there was not *much Earth* to give it ſufficient Rooting and Nouriſhment: And alſo in oppoſition to thoſe who through an *inſufficient degree of Conſideration*, have the Word driven out of their Minds, or weaken'd in its Operation, by the over-powering Thoughts, Cares, and Pleaſures of this preſent Life, as thoſe reſembled by the thorny Ground have; and ſo bring forth no *fruit to perfection*, but only the Ear without the full Corn in the Ear, *Luke* viii.

In this thing then, which we call *Conſideration*, ſeems to lie the difference between thoſe who hear the Goſpel, ſo as effectually to believe it, and thoſe other ſeveral ſorts of Hearers, who, though they hear it, yet do not believe it to the ſaving of their Souls. For which cauſe it may well be, that the Author to the *Hebrews* preſſeth the Chriſtians, who were in danger of withering like the Corn which had not much Earth, through heat of Perſecution, to *give the more earneſt heed* to the things which they had heard, leſt at any time they ſhould let them *ſlip*, *viz.* out of their minds, *Heb.* ii. 1. *David*, no doubt, well knew of how great Concernment it is to have good things kept warm upon the Mind by often repeated Conſideration, when he prayed thus unto God: *Keep this for ever in the Imagination of the Thoughts of the Hearts of thy People, and prepare their Heart unto thee*, 1 Chron. xxix. 18.

We have ſeen now in part what Men (by advantage of the Goſpel, which is the preventive Grace of God, antecedent to all Endeavours of ours) can do towards their own believing: And likewiſe what that ſubſequent Grace is, by which we are enabled to believe throughly and effectually unto Righteouſneſs and Salvation. There is yet one thing more to be taken into Conſideration, before we can ſo well be reſolved as then we may, in what capacity Men are of performing the Condition of the promiſe of Pardon and Life: And therefore I ſhall add that one thing more, which is this.

4. We have aſſurance given us of having the ſubſequent Grace of God conferred upon us to enable us to believe unto Righteouſneſs, if we do not groſly neglect to do what we can do towards our believing, in uſing and improving the antecedent Grace of God. See this clearly proved by that of our Saviour, *Mark* iv. 24, 25. where he ſpeaks to his Followers and Hearers thus: *Take heed what you hear; with what meaſure ye mete, it ſhall be meaſured unto you: and unto you that hear, ſhall more be given. For he that hath, to him ſhall be given; and he that hath not, from him ſhall be taken even that which he hath.* By which our Saviour ſeems to mean, that Men ſhall receive Benefit by the Goſpel, according as they attend to, and conſider their own great Concerns handled in it: And that if by thus doing they do not neglect, but uſe and improve this antecedent Grace, that then more ſhall be given; to wit, more means and more help to believe: Which is the ſubſequent Grace I have been ſpeaking of, by which Men are thorowly enabled to believe unto Righteouſneſs, and ſo unto Pardon and Life.

Theſe words of our Saviour, which according to our Tranſlation we read, *Take heed what you hear*, are render'd by Dr. *Hammond*, *Conſider what you hear*. So that it ſeems, Take heed what you hear, does in this place ſignifie, Take heed to what you hear; or to give heed to it, as thoſe do who conſider of it and weigh the import of it, as whether they are concerned in it, and if yea, then how far. And the reaſon which our Saviour adds to inforce this Precept and Direction of his, ſhews this to be the ſenſe of it. For he ſays, *With what meaſure we mete, it ſhall be meaſured to us*, to wit, in the Bleſſing and Benefit deſigned us by ſending the Goſpel to us, which is to bring us to believe unto Righteouſneſs, that ſo we may be ſaved. And he adds again, That to thoſe *that hear*, *viz.* that thus hear, *more ſhall be given*; and backs this alſo with that general Rule mentioned five times in three of the Evangeliſts: *For he that hath, to him ſhall be given; and he that hath not, from him ſhall be taken even that which he hath.* Now what can the Meaſure be which is meted in hearing the Goſpel, to which the Promiſe of receiving more is made, but an attentive Conſideration who it is that ſpeaks, what he ſpeaks, and of what Concernment it is? And what can that Meaſure be, which is meted in hearing, which is threatned with a remanding of what had been depoſited in their Hands; but a not minding, regarding, or conſidering the Weight of what is ſpoken, nor how they are concerned in it?

If this then be the meaning of our Saviour, as I doubt not but it is; then we ſee the Promiſe of Divine Aſſiſtance is made to ſuch Endeavours of ours, as we are capable of uſing, through that Providence of God by which Man's Faculties are ſuſtained and aſſiſted, to operate according to what is proper to the nature of them. So that if any Man who enjoys the Goſpel periſh, it is through his own neglect to do what he was able to have done towards his own believing: It is indeed for his not believing, but then the reaſon of his not believing and the fault of it, is imputable only unto him, and lies wholly at his door. Becauſe he might have believed and would certainly have been enabled to believe, if he had not groſly neglected to do what he could, and might have done towards it.

If this were not ſo, that Men might as certainly believe, repent and make themſelves new Hearts (if they can but be perſuaded to do what they can towards it) as if they had all the Power requiſite thereto in their own hands; then to what purpoſe are they required by God in Scripture as they are, to *believe*, to *make themſelves new Hearts*, and to *repent and turn themſelves from all their Tranſgreſſions*, *to circumciſe their Hearts*, *to waſh their Hearts from Wickedneſs*, *to cleanſe themſelves from all Filthineſs of Fleſh and Spirit?* Or why, and in what reſpect elſe can Men be ſaid *to ſave themſelves?* Which yet they are, 1 *John* iii. 23. *Ezek.* xviii. 30, 31, 32. and xiv. 6 *Deut.* x. 16. *Jer.* iv. 14. 2 *Cor.* vii. 1. 1 *Tim.* iv. 16. It is from the Certainty of God's cooperating with Mens Endeavours to the producing of theſe Effects, if Men fail not to do what they well may do, that theſe Effects are aſcribed to Men as well as unto God; though God be indeed the principal Agent beyond all Compariſon, and Men but in a very inferior Degree the ſubordinate. Though Salvation be of the Lord, and that beſides him there is no Saviour, in a Senſe proper to him, yet in a Senſe proper to Mens Endeavours; St. *Paul* diſdained not to aſſure *Timothy*, that if he *took heed to himſelf* and to his Doctrine, and continued therein, that then in ſo doing he ſhould both *ſave himſelf* and thoſe that heard him, 1 *Tim.* iv. 16.

It is a common thing in Scripture, where ſeveral free Agents concur to the producing of the ſame Effect, to attribute the Effect to both, though the Agency of the one of them be never ſo inferior to the other. Thus though God is ſaid to give a new Heart and a new Spirit, and to circumciſe the Heart (*Ezek.* xxxvi. 26. *Deut.* xxx. 6.) yet Men are ſtill ſuppoſed to be in ſome capacity to make themſelves new Hearts, and to circumciſe their own Hearts; inaſmuch as they are required to do it, as I have ſhew'd: That is, they are ſuppoſed to be in a Capacity to do ſomething towards it, though very little in compariſon of what is done by God therein, when it is done indeed. Thus again Men are required to work out their own Salvation, when yet it is God that worketh in them both to will and to do of his good Pleaſure, *Phil.* ii. 12, 13. Which is not ſo to be underſtood, as if God did work in them to will and to do excluſive of all Endeavours of theirs: For if that had been his meaning, he would thereby have rendred his own Exhortation and the Reaſon of it uſeleſs, in perſuading them to work out their own Salvation for that reaſon; becauſe it is God which worketh in them both to will and to do of his good Pleaſure. Nor yet is it ſo to be underſtood on the other hand, as if Men could do all of themſelves which is neceſſary for the working out or carrying the Buſineſs of their Salvation quite through, without ſupernatural Aſſiſtance. But his meaning then ſeems to be, that it is the good Will and Pleaſure of God to work in ſuch Men both to will and to do to the ſaving of their Souls, who do endeavour through the preventive and concomitant Grace of God, to do what they can do towards it. When the Work of Grace in Man is aſcribed to God and Chriſt, it is not to be underſtood excluſively of all Endeavours of Men. When our Saviour ſpeaking of his Diſciples bringing forth Fruit, ſaith, *Without me ye can do nothing*; he does not ſay nor mean, that with him they could do nothing. When it was ſaid to the *Iſraelites*, Deut. viii. it is God that *giveth you power to get Wealth*, their own Endeavours in that Acquiſition, were not excluded; but the meaning was, I ſuppoſe, that the Means, the Opportunities and Advantages on that behalf, were of God, and the ordering of his good Providence towards them. Though *Solomon* ſays in one place, *The Bleſſing of the Lord maketh rich*, yet he ſaith in another, *The diligent hand maketh rich.* Though it be but very little which Man doth towards his believing, in compariſon of what God doth, yet the Effect of that doing, the Act of believing, is ſtill from place to place aſcribed unto Men; for it is they that are ſaid to believe. How much ſoever God doth in producing Faith in Men, yet therein ſtill Man's Faculties are preſerved in ſuch a free Uſe and Exerciſe, as is proper to ſuch a Creature as God hath made Man to be, and from thence it is denominated his Act, as I have ſaid.

Now then if this were not ſo, that God hath by advantage of the Goſpel where it comes, given ſo much Power unto Men of acting towards their own believing, and ſo much Aſſurance of his farther Aſſiſtance to enable them to believe unto Righteouſneſs, if they groſly neglect *not to do* what they can do towards it: I ſay if this were not ſo, how can it poſſibly ſtand with the infinite Goodneſs of the Nature of God, for him to damn Men for not believing, or with the Sincerity of ſuch Sayings of his in which he hath declared, That he is not willing that any Man ſhould periſh, and that he would have all Men to be ſaved, (2 *Pet.* iii. 9. 1 *Tim.* ii. 4.) How will God be juſtified in this in the ſight of Angels and Men, and in the Conſciences of condemned Sinners themſelves, if their Unbelief and periſhing for it, were not through their own neglect? And how elſe could Mens Deſtruction be ſaid, as it is, to be of themſelves? *Hoſ.* xiii. 9.

We ſee then from the nature of the thing and the Honour of God, as concerned in it, as well as from the Evidence of Scripture, what reaſon we have to hold, that all Men under the Goſpel are in ſuch a capacity of performing the condition of the Promiſe of Pardon and Life by believing, as that if they do it not, it is through their own groſs and wilful neglect to do what they might have done towards it. And for any to make God ſo the Author of Mens Deſtruction, as to affirm that he never put them into a capacity of preventing it by believing, is a daring Undertaking, whoever ventures upon it; and tends to tempt Men to think diſhonourably of the Goodneſs of God, and of the Truth and Sincerity of his Declarations in his Word.

To ſay, God did give ſuch Men Power in *Adam*, will not ſalve the Buſineſs. For we cannot ſay that any ſuch Power was given to *Adam* himſelf before his Fall, much leſs that all his Poſterity had ſuch a Power in him. We cannot ſay, that *Adam* had power to do more than what was neceſſary to continue him in that State in which God created him; and conſequently we cannot ſay, that God gave him Power to repent when he had no occaſion for it, or Power to believe the Goſpel, when there was no Revelation of it, nor occaſion for ſuch a Revelation. No, this Power depends upon an After-work of Grace through our Bleſſed Redeemer.

Nor is this Doctrine touching the Power which God hath given unto Men of acting towards their own believing, at all contrary to that where Men are ſaid to have *believed through Grace*, Acts xviii. 27. or to that where Faith is ſaid to be *the Gift of God*. For it is through the preventive and antecedent Grace of God, as I have ſaid, that they are enabled to act towards their believing. For though what they do towards their own believing, is by a free Uſe of their natural Faculties, yet it is by means of the preventive and antecedent Grace of God; to wit, the Goſpel, that thoſe Faculties act any thing towards their believing the Goſpel. For without ſuch an Object of Faith as the Goſpel is, Mens Faculties could act nothing towards the believing of it. And then farther, though Men do exerciſe their natural Faculties upon the objective Grace of God, and thereby act ſomething towards their own believing; yet in that hereupon more Power is given them to believe home, effectually and fully to Righteouſneſs and Salvation, this Power is from the ſubſequent Grace of God. So that the whole Buſineſs of believing from the beginning to the end of it, is of Grace; firſt of Grace antecedent, and then of Grace ſubſequent.

There is only ſo much of Man in raiſing Faith in him, as belongs to the free uſe of his natural Powers and Faculties. The Grace of God in working Faith, does not put new Faculties into Man, nor deſtroy that Freedom which is proper to the Will as ſuch: It only rectifies and regulates the Motions and Operations of the Will in reference to its Objects: So that the Change is not natural, but moral. And this moral Change in rectifying and regulating the Acts and Motions of the Will, is made partly by opening the Underſtanding and enlightning the Mind better to diſcern the nature of things, and whereto they tend. And this is done partly by holding the Thoughts more frequently and more intently upon things that concern the Soul and another Life: And partly by aſſiſting and ſtrengthening the Underſtanding in making a right Judgment of things. And then the Will is prevailed upon to chuſe the right end, and the way to it, by having the great Motives of the Goſpel kept upon it, by a more frequent and conſtant Conſideration. For by that more frequent Conſideration, and by the Illumination

nation of the Mind about the great Motives of the Goſpel, the power and force of thoſe Motives is better felt by the Will. So that as a Man comes to have other Apprehenſions of things by Illumination of the Mind, ſo he comes to have other Affections for them in the Acts and Motions of his Will. This Change thus made in the Mind and Will, is called the *renewing of the Holy Ghoſt*, becauſe it is his Work upon and by both, *Tit.*iii. 5. and a being *renewed in the Spirit of the Mind*, Eph. iv. 23. It is a reſtoring the Natural Faculties, that were depraved in their Operations, to their right Uſe and Exerciſe for which they were made, which was to act for the Honour of their Maker, and for their own Happineſs, and not contrarywiſe as they do, when perverted by the power of Sin. This Renovation in the Natural Faculties therefore tends to the perfecting of our Nature. For which cauſe perhaps Men thus renewed, are in Scripture ſtiled *perfect* in the favourable ſenſe of Grace. This one thing is farther to be noted, That whatever is done upon the Natural Faculties of Mind and Will by the Goſpel, or by the Spirit of God, to change and renew them, is alſo done by thoſe Faculties. Men are not made to underſtand or believe the Goſpel, which they did not before, otherwiſe than by exerciſing their Mind and Will about it.

By all this then it appears, I hope, that what is aſcribed unto Man, in acting towards his own Believing, is no ways contrary to Grace, unleſs you will ſay an Effect cannot be of Grace, if the Natural Faculties have any thing to do in the producing of it, as they muſt, if it be Man's act.

I might ſhew how that the Goſpel, by the giving of which God hath been aforehand with us, and prevented all Endeavours of ours, is of it ſelf, and in the very nature of it, ſo apt to work upon the Humane Faculties, and to encline Men to embrace it, if they would but a little attend to it and conſider it, (which one would think they might eaſily do, if they would, before their Natures are debauched by a cuſtom of Sinning) I ſay, it is ſo apt to gain upon them, that it hardly fails to do ſo, more or leſs, but where it meets with ſuch as wilfully call off their Natural Faculties from attending to it, and the things it treats of, and that employ them about Objects of another nature, as thoſe did, who in the Parable of our Saviour are ſaid to be invited to the Supper which a King made for his Son, when they made their ſeveral Excuſes. This is well repreſented by our Saviour, when he ſays of ſuch, that *they cloſed their eyes, leſt at any time they ſhould ſee with their eyes, and hear with their ears, and ſhould underſtand with their hearts, and ſhould be converted and I ſhould heal them*, Matth. xiii. 15. Theſe are words which ſeem to ſignifie more than a bare omiſſion or neglect, and denote a kind of oppoſition, a ſtriving with themſelves not to think upon, or to be affected with things of that nature, as thoſe of a ſpiritual concern are. And ſuch People do not only not *incline* their Ears to hear, nor *give ear* to hear, as the Scripture ſpeaks, but they *turn away their ear* from hearing; they *reject the Word of the Lord*, and *the Counſel of God againſt themſelves*.

We do not therefore attribute any ſuch great matter unto Men, when we ſay that they, by the advantage of the Goſpel, may do ſo much towards their own believing, if they will, as would through the help of God's Holy Spirit (who is always ready to aſſiſt Mens honeſt and good Endeavours) iſſue and end in an effectual believing. Nay, there is ſo much of the Grace of God vouchſafed towards the calling of Men, by the very ſending of the Goſpel to them, as will in all probability prevail upon them, if they do not much oppoſe, reſiſt and ſtrive againſt its prevailing upon them, as I have ſhewed: For the Goſpel is the Power of God to Salvation.

Now then if this be true, that God by means of his antecedent Grace, hath given ſuch power unto Men, of acting towards their believing unto Righteouſneſs, as hath been ſaid there is; then there is very great reaſon this ſhould be made known to them, and that they ſhould not be made believe that they have no more power of acting towards their own Salvation, than there is in a dead Man to raiſe himſelf to Life; I ſay, there is great reaſon for this, becauſe their Salvation or Damnation are much concerned in it. For to perſuade Men that they have no power to act towards their believing, is the direct way to take them off from the uſe of means tending thereto. For what greater diſcouragement can be given unto Men to attempt a thing, than to perſuade them that they have no power of accompliſhing it if they do. *As good never a whit as never the better*, as the Proverb runs.

The quite contrary is doubtleſs to be done by ſuch as would not betray Mens Souls to deſtruction, nor lay a ſtumbling-block in their way, nor cramp their endeavours in ſeeking to be ſaved. They ſhould be throughly acquainted with what power God hath put into their hands of being ſaved if they will, by having given them his Goſpel and Power to hear and conſider the Terms of Salvation that are therein offered to them, and the powerful Motives that tend to perſuade them to believe and obey it. They ſhould be brought to a great ſenſe that God is not, nor will be wanting to them in his Grace and Aſſiſtance, nor in the matter of their Salvation, if they be not greatly wanting to themſelves, in not doing what they may and can do towards it. That God hath ſet Life and Death before them, and perſuaded them to chuſe Life; and that he hath given them power to do ſo much towards it, by the helps wherewith he hath prevented them, as that he will not fail to give them ſo much more as ſhall put them into an immediate capacity of Salvation, if they will but make ſuch uſe as they may and can, of that which he hath already given them: And that therefore if they periſh, it is of their own choice, becauſe they judge themſelves unworthy of Everlaſting Life. And that for this cauſe they will be left without all excuſe if they periſh, and that God will be juſtified in their Condemnation, in that he hath done that which was ſufficient on his part to have prevented it.

It was not the manner of our Saviour to perſuade Men that they could do nothing towards their own Salvation, but complains of them ſaying, *Ye will not come to me that ye might have Life: How oft would I have gathered you as a Hen gathereth her Chickens under her Wings, and ye would not*; and expoſtulates the matter with them, ſaying, *Yea, and why even of your ſelves judge ye not what is right:* And from time to time, cryed to them in his Doctrine, with an extended Voice, ſaying, *Whoſoever hath Ears to hear, let them hear*; meaning, that if they would make uſe of their teachable and conſiderative Faculties in any thing, then, about thoſe things he preached among them. And upbraided thoſe that would not, when they had Eyes to ſee and Ears to hear other things, wherein they were nothing ſo much concerned as they were in his Doctrine, ſaying, *They ſeeing, ſee not, and hearing, hear not, neither do they underſtand.* And can any Man, that thinks well of our Saviour, wiſely think alſo that he upbraided them for not doing that which they had no power to do.

Nevertheleſs, although it be God's *ordinary* declared method of proceeding with Men in reference to their Salvation, to add a ſubſequent power to enable ſuch to believe unto Righteouſneſs, who had not groſly neglected to uſe and improve the antecedent Power and Grace which had been vouchſafed them before: Yet doubtleſs God always reſerves unto himſelf a liberty of acting *extraordinarily* in a way of Grace towards Men, where and when, and to what degree he pleaſeth, though they have not improved, but groſly neglected their firſt Talents. Several Inſtances of this nature there have been in Men, whoſe Natures and Lives have been debauched with a cuſtom of ſinning, who yet have been ſurpriſed as it were on a ſudden, and their Conſciences awakened and let looſe upon them, either by a Sermon, or ſome great Affliction, or ſome other Providence, and ſuch a change preſently wrought, that they have afterward become very good Men. And ſo *God hath been found of thoſe that ſought him not*, as the Prophet ſpeaks; as he was by the extraordinary Converſion of thoſe of the Gentile Nations upon the firſt going out of the Goſpel among them, many of whom till then had lived *without God in the World*, as the Apoſtle ſpeaks.

Now this liberty of ſhewing more Grace and Favour to ſome than to others, God may well make uſe of; and yet no Man have cauſe to complain that he does ſo, ſo long as he is not wanting to the reſt in that which is ſufficient unto their Salvation, but puts it within their own power to be ſaved, if they will. So that if they periſh, it is through their own wilful neglect to do what they might have done. Indeed God can no more wrong one Creature than another, becauſe he cannot but do right to all: But in diſpenſing Favours, it is no ways unbecoming his Wiſdom and Goodneſs, to do more for one Creature than for another; no more than it was in the Work of Creation, when he did not make all Men Angels, nor all Brutes Men. *Is it not lawful for me to do what I will with mine own? Is thy eye evil becauſe I am good?* ſaith the Houſeholder in the Parable, to him that murmured for that he that laboured but one Hour in the Vineyard had as much as the hire of another for a whole Day came to, *Matth.* xx. 15.

Since then it is but God's unuſual and extraordinary way to convert ſome ſuch Men by ſurpriſing them with the mighty Operations of his Grace, as had in a manner wholly neglected the Improvement of their firſt Talents, the antecedent Grace of God: And ſince he hath made no promiſe of doing ſo for any Man, but rather on the contrary threatned to take away from ſuch that which they had received before: It remains then that no Man preſume, or take any Encouragement, to neglect God's ordinary and preſcribed way and means of attaining to Grace and Salvation, in hope that God ſhould go out of his uſual way to meet with them, and to convert them in a way and manner that is unuſual and extraordinary. No Man, in his Wits, will act by ſuch Meaſures in things pertaining to this preſent Life and the outward Man. Some Men we now and then ſee have ſtrange and fortunate hits in the World, Eſtates conferred on them unexpectedly without any Labour or Induſtry of theirs. But will any Man, in hopes it may ſo fall out with him, neglect to labour in his Calling for a Livelihood? To be ſure no Man worthy the Name of a Man will. What Folly then is to be compared with that which ſuch Men commit, that deſpiſe their own Souls in taking leſs care for them, though of Eternal Duration, than for this ſhort and tranſitory Life?

But yet although God hath not promiſed that any ſhall *have*, but thoſe that *ask*, nor *find* except they *ſeek*, nor have it *opened* to them, unleſs they *knock*; to the end that none might promiſe themſelves an obtaining without ſo doing: And although God vouchſafeth unto Men the Goſpel as a means ſufficient of it ſelf to perſuade them to conſider their Eternal Concerns, and to look after them more than any thing that concerns only this preſent Life, and to leave them without all excuſe if they do not: Yet when I conſider the exceeding Riches of the Goodneſs of God, and how full of Compaſſion he is, and how unwilling he is that any ſhould periſh; I cannot, I confeſs, but think that he does more to prevent the Deſtruction even of thoſe that do periſh, than what is abſolutely neceſſary and barely ſufficient to prevent it, if Men did not through their own Obſtinacy and Wilfulneſs receive ſuch Grace of God in vain. I cannot but think that God does more to bring Men to Repentance, both thoſe that do and thoſe that do not actually and eventually repent, than what he ever promiſed or engaged himſelf to do, by his Spirit's ſtriving with them by many inward and ſecret Motions and Operations upon their Minds and Conſciences, until by long and obſtinate Reſiſtance, the good Spirit is cauſed to withdraw his Applications; by which withdrawing that which they before had, is taken from them, according to what is threatned to ſuch as will not improve their Talent, and they delivered up to a reprobate Mind to be hardened. Why ſhould we not think but that God is as ready by his Holy Spirit to excite and ſtir up Men to that which tends to their Happineſs, as evil Spirits are to tempt them to that which tends to their Deſtruction? When all the Methods whereby God ſeeketh to bring Men to Repentance are thwarted and withſtood, the Holy Ghoſt is in Scripture then ſaid to be reſiſted: Which ſhews, that the Holy Ghoſt is much concerned in thoſe Methods.

I doubt not, but that when the Scripture ſaith, That *God would have all Men to be ſaved*, we may ſafely conclude, that he uſeth all means both internal and external to effect it, ſo far as is agreeable to his perfect and unerring Wiſom, when all Circumſtances in the caſe are weighed and conſidered; and that it is really better and will appear ſo one Day, that ſuch Men ſhould periſh which do periſh, rather than any more ſhould be done by God to prevent it, than he hath done before Deſtruction befal them. And it is better, not becauſe God takes more Pleaſure in the Damnation than in the Salvation of ſuch as periſh, ſimply and in it ſelf conſidered: For he himſelf hath told us, and ſworn it, leſt we ſhould not firmly believe it, That *he hath no pleaſure in the Death of the wicked, but that the wicked turn from his way and live*, Ezek. xxxiii. 11. But it is better in reference to the publick good of his Creation in general, the Peace and good Order whereof is thereby ſecured, which otherwiſe was and ſtill would be diſquieted and put into Confuſion by them; as it is now by the Devils, while they are not ſhut up in Priſon, as hereafter they will be. This Reaſon of the Puniſhment of ſuch as have neglected their own Salvation, as it refers to this publick good, is implied in thoſe words of our Saviour, *Matth.* xiii. 41. Where he ſays, *The Son of Man ſhall ſend forth his Angels, and they ſhall gather out of his Kingdom all things that offend*; and in thoſe likewiſe, *ver.* 49. where he ſays, *ſo ſhall it be at the end of the World: The Angels ſhall come forth, and ſever the wicked from among the juſt.* And another Reaſon among others of ſuch Mens Puniſhment referring to the publick good, is, That Virtue and Goodneſs on the one hand, and Wickedneſs and Vice on the other, might the better appear to be what they are in their own nature, by their ſenſible Effects, and ſo be loved or hated accordingly; which we cannot conceive they would ever be ſo effectually as now they are and will be, if they were not attended with Rewards and Puniſhments by the wiſe ordering of the Author and Governour of all Beings. It was by the ſenſible Effects of eating of the forbidden Tree, that *Adam* had that Knowledge of Evil as differing from Good, which he had not before. Now ſuch Knowledge of the difference between Good and Evil by Rewards and Puniſhments, is of great Uſe in the univerſal Kingdom and Government of God. And if it were not better in reference to the general Good, that Men ſhould periſh for their wilful neglect and refuſal to make uſe of ſuch means to prevent their Deſtruction, as God hath vouchſafed them, and by the Uſe whereof they might have prevented it if they would, we could not well conceive how there ſhould be any ſuch thing as the Deſtruction of wicked Men, other than what lies in the very Nature of their Sin it ſelf, (it putting the courſe of Nature into Diſorder, Confuſion and Torture) ſo long as God takes no pleaſure in their Deſtruction for their Deſtruction ſake.

So much may ſuffice to ſhew in what Capacity Men are of performing the Condition on which the Pardon of Sin and Eternal Life are promiſed; which Performance is of abſolute and indiſpenſible Neceſſity to their Juſtification. And if in doing this, I have ſaid more than was barely neceſſary to this end, yet perhaps not more than was neceſſary to prevent Mens Miſunderſtanding, Miſinterpretation, and Miſimprovement of what was neceſſarily ſaid on that Head of Diſcourſe; conſidering how apt ſome of weak Minds are to ſuſpect, if not to cry out *Pelagianiſm*, where any Ability in Men to work out their own Salvation is mentioned, though there be not the leaſt ground for it.

5. The laſt thing I propoſed to enquire into concerning Faith, is how we may conceive that Faith does more immediately *operate to our Juſtification*. And what hath been ſaid already touching Faith in the forementioned Particulars, may with a little Reflection upon them, ſatisfie us in this Enquiry. For ſuch a Faith as I have deſcribed, a Faith that is a vital and vigorous Principle of Regeneration and of a holy Life, does *operate* to our Juſtification as it is our *Covenant-Righteouſneſs*, as it is the Peformance of the condition on which Pardon of Sin and Eternal Life are promiſed. For as it is ſuch, and as it comprehends in it its proper Effects, it doth *conſtitute* thoſe in whomſoever it is found, *righteous* Perſons according to the Tenour of the Goſpel-Covenant; and ſo qualifies them to be ſo adjudged by God, againſt all Accuſations to the contrary by what or by whomſoever. It is that which makes their Cauſe good when they come to be tried and judged by the Law of Liberty, becauſe it is all which that Law requires to denominate them righteous, and to entitle them to the Benefit of that Law. This Righteouſneſs of Faith is the eſſential Matter or material Cauſe of our Juſtification, without which no ſuch thing could be; and ſuppoſing which, it cannot but be, ſo long as the Goſpel-Covenant ſtands in Force. It makes thoſe that have it, the proper *Subjects* of Juſtification: For as God will condemn the wicked, ſo he will moſt certainly juſtifie the righteous, ſuch as are made ſo by his own Grace: Without reſpect of Perſons he judgeth according to every Man's Work and the Nature of his Cauſe. In theſe, and the like reſpects, doth the Righteouſneſs of Faith operate to our Juſtification. Theſe things ſtand proved in what hath been ſaid before, in opening the Nature of the Covenant of Grace, and the Nature of Faith and the Reaſon of its Deſignation by God to its Office and Work. And may be yet farther confirmed by thoſe Scriptures where Faith is ſaid to be *counted and imputed to us for Righteouſneſs*, as it was to *Abraham*, Rom. iv. 3, 6, 11, 22, 24. *Gal.* iii. 6. *Gen.* xv 6. *James* ij. 23. For if God count it to us for Righteouſneſs, then it is our Righteouſneſs: For God accounts of things but as they are, when they are what they are of his own making, as this Righteouſneſs of Faith is. And if this Faith be our Righteouſneſs in God's Account, then they muſt needs be righteous in his Account that are righteous with this Righteouſneſs, and be approved of and adjudged ſuch by him. And thus Faith operates to our Juſtification, as it is the eſſential and intrinſical Matter of our Juſtification.

CHAP.

CHAP. V.

How God himſelf operates to our Juſtification.

I Come now in the laſt place to enquire in what reſpects Juſtification is attributed to God, and what his Operation is in producing this great Effect of Juſtifying ſuch as have been Sinners. That he doth juſtifie Believers by ſome Acts proper to him, is no Chriſtian's doubt. *It is one God which ſhall juſtifie the Circumciſion by Faith, and the Uncircumciſion through Faith*, Rom. iii. 30. *Who ſhall lay any thing to the charge of God's Elect? It is God that juſtifieth*, Rom. viii. 33.

Now God may be ſaid to juſtifie in ſeveral reſpects, ſome more remote, and ſome more proximate and immediate. God is the Author, Spring and Fountain, and principal efficient Cauſe of all other Cauſes that any way concur or co-operate to our Juſtification. Chriſt himſelf, which is the Foundation-Stone in this Building, by virtue of whoſe Mediatorial Righteouſneſs we are juſtified, *He is made to us of God, Wiſdom and Righteouſneſs*, 1 Cor. i. 30. It is alſo God which hath given Being to the New Covenant, which is the Covenant of his Grace, by virtue of which alſo we are juſtified. And the Righteouſneſs of Faith, which is the Matter of our Juſtification, is of God's working in us by his Spirit. Whence it is that both our Sanctification and Juſtification are attributed to the Holy Ghoſt, 1 *Cor.* vi. 11. *But ye are ſanctified, but ye are juſtified, in the Name of the Lord Jeſus, and by the Spirit of our God.*

But that which we have now principally to conſider, is, what that laſt Act is, or thoſe laſt Acts are, by which God juſtifies us. And his Operation herein is judicial; for he juſtifies as a Judge, and therein proceeds by his own Law of Grace, as the Rule of judging of Men and their Cauſe. And God's judicial Juſtification of Men doth ſtand, I conceive, in theſe two things principally.

1. God in juſtifying of Men *approves* of them for ſuch as have performed the Condition, on which he in the Covenant of Grace promiſed Pardon of Sin and Eternal Life: That is, he approves of them for true Believers, and ſuch as have given up themſelves to obey the Goſpel, to live according to the Doctrine of their Saviour, and adjudgeth them to be ſuch.

2. Thoſe whom God approveth of as true and ſincere Obſervers of the new Law, the Goſpel or Covenant of Grace, thoſe he adjudgeth to be righteous Perſons, and that Faith of theirs by which they have fulfilled it, to be their Righteouſneſs. True Believers, and ſuch as have given up themſelves to obey the Goſpel, they are juſtified by the Goſpel; that is, they are Righteous in the ſenſe and meaning of that Law. For that practical obediential Faith of theirs, is their conformity to this Law of Chriſt, the Goſpel; and therefore it muſt needs be their Evangelical Righteouſneſs. But there is this difference between being juſtified by the Goſpel, as it is the new Law of Grace, and by being juſtified by God: The Goſpel-Covenant pronounceth all true Believers in *general* to be righteous Perſons, but doth not determine whether this or that Perſon in particular be a true Believer, and ſo a Righteous Man or Woman. But God in juſtifying Men determineth and adjudgeth this and that Man in ſpecial to be a true Believer, and therefore a Righteous Man in the ſenſe of the Law of Grace. It is the Work of a Judge to apply the Law as a general Rule, to the ſpecial Caſes of particular Men, and to juſtifie or condemn Men in particular in reference to their particular caſes, by and according to the general Rule of the Law. And ſo doth God the Judge of all, in the caſe before us. He knows and conſiders every Man in particular, whether he be a true Believer or not: And thoſe whom he finds to be ſo, thoſe he adjudgeth to be Righteous according to the tenour of the Goſpel, which is his juſtifying of them.

Now that God juſtifieth Men this way, and after this manner, does I conceive plainly and fully appear by thoſe Scriptures which tell us, that *God doth juſtifie us by Faith*, and that *he doth impute or account Faith to us for Righteouſneſs*. One vein of Scripture acquaints us, that *God juſtifieth us by Faith* and *through Faith*, Rom. iii. 28, 30. and v. 1. *Gal.* ii. 16. and iii. 8. By another vein of Texts we are told, that *God imputes, accounts*, and *reckons Faith to us for Righteouſneſs*, Gen. xv. 6. Rom. iv.

3,5,11,22,24.

3,5,11,22,24. Gal. iii. 6. Jam. ii. 23. Now theſe two Veins of Scripture put together, the ſenſe that reſults out of them is I think plainly this, *That God juſtifies us by accounting our Faith to us for Righteouſneſs.* This is ſo plain, as that I know not what can well be plainer. In the one vein it's ſaid, that *God juſtifieth us by Faith*; in the other, that *he imputes and reckons Faith to us for Righteouſneſs.* And for God to account Faith to us for Righteouſneſs, and to reckon and adjudge us to be Righteous upon the account of our Faith, ſignifies, I think, the ſame thing.

That God juſtifies Men, by approving and adjudging them to be Righteous, by being true Believers, and therein conformable to the Terms of the Goſpel, on which the Promiſes of it are made, will farther appear, if we conſider Juſtification in a Notion oppoſite to Condemnation. In Condemnation, or when Men are condemned by God, they are convicted of a double Guilt. Firſt, of a guiltineſs of Fault; that they are guilty of ſuch Tranſgreſſion of the Law by which they are tryed, as is damnable in the ſenſe of that Law. Secondly, of the guilt of Penalty, upon which they are adjudged and ſentenced to ſuffer that Penalty. The guilt of Fault, of which they are convicted, and for which they are condemned to ſuffer the Penalty, is *final Infidelity*, *Impenitence*, and *wilful Diſobedience* to the Goſpel.

Now God in juſtifying Men, does as Judge vindicate and defend them againſt all Accuſations, from being guilty of ſuch Unbelief, Impenitency and Diſobedience; which Vindication and Defence is the ſame thing with his adjudging them to be true Believers, penitent, and ſuch as have delivered up themſelves ſincerely to obey the Laws of their Saviour, which is his juſtifying of them.

And now having thus endeavoured to open and explain the Doctrine, the Nature and Notion of Juſtification in its ſeveral Cauſes; I ſhall now recapitulate or rehearſe in a few words the Sum and Subſtance of what hath been more largely diſcourſed about it, to the end the whole of it may come under our view at once.

The Obedience of Chriſt to the Law of Mediation in dying for us, does operate to our Juſtification, by obtaining Terms of God's being reconciled to us: And his Obedience to the ſame Law in publiſhing the Goſpel, does operate to the ſame end, by perſuading us by it to be reconciled to God in obſerving thoſe Terms, upon the Obſervation of which we become juſtified by God, as well as reconciled to him, and juſtified becauſe reconciled.

The New Covenant operates to our Juſtification, by virtue of the Death of Chriſt, by which it was obtained, as it is a new Law of Grace, ſtating, ſettling, and ſetting forth the Benefits therein promiſed; Pardon of Sin and Eternal Life, and alſo the Terms on which theſe Benefits are to be conferred and received, to wit, a vigorous and operative Faith: And this Covenant farther operates to our Juſtification, as by the Promiſe of the foreſaid Benefits, it is God's great Inſtrument to perſuade Men to obſerve and perform thoſe Terms, or that Condition in Believing, on which they are promiſed, which Performance is that which qualifies us for the Bleſſing of being juſtified.

Faith operates to our Juſtification, as it is the performance of the Condition on which the promiſe of the Pardon of Sin and Eternal Life is made through Chriſt; and as that Faith is the New Covenant-Righteouſneſs, and ſo the Matter of our Juſtification.

Almighty God himſelf operates to our Juſtification, as he reckons, imputes, and counts this Faith to us for Righteouſneſs, and as he does approve each one that hath this Faith as a Righteous Perſon, according to the tenour of his own Law of *Grace*, and as he doth adjudge him to be ſo.

Having, as I conceive, now competently proved that God's judicial Juſtifying of us ſtands in his adjudging us to have performed the Condition on which he hath promiſed Pardon of Sin and Eternal Life, in that we have believed the Goſpel, and delivered up our ſelves to the conduct of it; and likewiſe in accounting this Faith to us for Righteouſneſs, and in approving of us as Righteous hereupon: I ſhall now proceed to ſhew ſomewhat of the difference that is between Juſtification and Remiſſion of Sins, at leaſt as I apprehend it.

CHAP. VI.

Of the Difference between Juſtification and Remiſſion of Sin.

There is, doubtleſs, ſuch a thing as a real difference between Juſtification and Remiſſion of Sin. For when St. *Paul* ſaith, that Chriſt is made to us of God *Righteouſneſs, Sanctification and Redemption*, 1 Cor. i. 30. he certainly means ſomething elſe by *Redemption* than he doth by *Righteouſneſs*. That by *Righteouſneſs* in this place he means *Juſtification*, I think none will deny. By Redemption, doubtleſs, he means a Deliverance first and laſt from all the Evils and Miſeries we ſuffer, or have deſerved by reaſon of Sin: Deliverance and *Exemption* from which, is *properly Pardon* in Act. And indeed St. *Paul* in another place explains Redemption by Pardon, when he ſays, *in whom we have Redemption through his Blood, even the Forgiveneſs of Sins*, Col. i. 14. We ſee then that St. *Paul* did reckon Juſtification and Remiſſion of Sins to be two diſtinct things, Benefits of a different Nature. I ſhall now name to you ſome of thoſe things wherein they differ.

1. Juſtification is God's *adjudging* us to have performed the condition in believing, on which he hath made Promiſe of Pardon. But Pardon it ſelf is his *conferring* that Benefit upon us which he conditionally had promiſed. By the one God approves of us, as having done our part and Duty in *keeping Covenant with him*: By the other he *keeps Covenant with us*, in performing what he promiſed. And therefore Juſtification and Remiſſion of Sin ſeem to differ as much as God's adjudging us to have performed the condition on which he promiſed Pardon, differs from actual Pardon it ſelf; and as much as his adjudging us to have kept Covenant with him, differs from his keeping Covenant with us.

2. By Juſtification we are *acquitted* and abſolved from being guilty of *Infidelity, Impenitency and Inſincerity of Obedience*: But we are *not thereby acquitted* and abſolved from being guilty *all other Sins*, but come to be *diſcharged* from them by way of *Pardon*, whether they be ſins againſt the Law or againſt the Goſpel, whether wilful and preſumptuous Sins before Converſion, yea former Infidelity and Impenitency, or of human Frailty and Infirmity after; together with all Defects and Imperfections of Duty towards God and towards Man. A Pardon of all theſe is promiſed on condition of that Faith with its Effects, by which God juſtifies us and approves of us as righteous and good Men, according to the Tenor of the Goſpel or new Covenant. But then God's pardoning theſe ſins, and his juſtifying us as not guilty of preſent Infidelity, Impenitency, and Inſincerity of Obedience, on which he promiſed Pardon, are things greatly different.

Some becauſe they cannot underſtand how we can be juſtified by any Righteouſneſs but ſuch as is commenſurate and *adequate to the Demands of the Law*: And becauſe there is none to be found in any Man but in our Saviour himſelf; therefore they think we cannot be juſtified any other way than by having his perſonal numerical Righteouſneſs transferred to us, and ſo made ours; as that we by it may be accounted to have fulfilled the whole Law, and anſwered all the Demands of it. But ſuch ſhould conſider, that we do not come off from the Charge that lies againſt us, for not anſwering the Demands of the Law, by our fulfilling it by another, but by being *pardoned* by virtue of Chriſt's Atonement, and by virtue of the new Law of Grace which he hath obtained by his Obedience, we performing the condition on which Pardon is procured and promiſed; which Performance, God according to his Grace in the Goſpel, counts to us for Righteouſneſs.

3. That Righteouſneſs of Faith by which we are juſtified, *qualifies* us for the *poſitive* Happineſs and Glory of the next World: But ſo does not Remiſſion of Sin as ſuch. That operative Faith by which God juſtifies us, *renews* our Nature and makes us inherently righteous, without which we cannot ſuppoſe that God would adjudge us righteous; without which neither can we ſo much as ſee the Kingdom of God, or be capable of enjoying the Heavenly State. But now this *Renovation* in our Nature, is not made by Remiſſion of Sin. That makes a Change in a Man's State indeed, but the Change which is made in our Nature, by which we are made capable of the Heavenly

venly Glory, is by that Faith and the Righteouſneſs of it, by which we are juſtified. And therefore there is a great Difference between the Righteouſneſs of Juſtification and Remiſſion of Sin in this reſpect alſo.

By reaſon of which Difference, I cannot underſtand how it can be truly ſaid, That Juſtification by Remiſſion of Sin (as ſome phraſe it) *will ſtand us in as much ſtead before the Tribunal of God, as Juſtification upon a perfect Juſtice would do.* For if it could be ſuppoſed (as it cannot upon good ground) that Remiſſion of Sin might be had without any inherent Righteouſneſs in our Nature; yet we could not thereby be ſo much as capable of being Partakers of the Inheritance of the Saints in Light, for which they are *made meet* by that Change which is made in their Nature through Faith, which God in juſtifying of us, reckons to us for Righteouſneſs.

4. Pardon of Sin, as it does not qualifie our Nature for the Heavenly Glory, ſo neither does it at all *entitle Men to it*, as the Righteouſneſs of Juſtification by Faith does. We that forfeited the firſt Right which Man had to Happineſs, by our Apoſtacy from God, can now have no Right or Title to it but what God of his own Grace through Chriſt is pleaſed *to give us*, or by Gift or Grant to make over to us. And this Right which he has given us, depends partly upon a *conditional Promiſe* of his; and partly upon *God's adjudging us to have performed that Condition* mentioned in that Promiſe. Now God in his new Law of Grace, upon account of what our Saviour hath done and ſuffered to obtain it, hath made Promiſe of Eternal Life to us upon condition of our believing and obeying the Goſpel. Which Condition being performed by us, our initial Right to Eternal Life accrues to us from this Promiſe of God founded in our Saviour's Mediatory Performance. But then our *compleat* Right to it accrues to us from a *judicial Act of God*; which is his adjudging us to have performed that Condition on which Eternal Life is promiſed. The one is as a Right in Law, the other as a Right by Act of Judgment grounded on Law. Which judicial Act of God, is that by which he juſtifies us, as that Judge to whom it belongs to judge, whether the Terms of his own Law of Grace be performed or no, before he confers the Benefit promiſed therein. And whenever he doth adjudge us to have performed thoſe Terms; that Judgment and Determination of his for us, gives us an *immediate* and compleat Right and Title to the Heavenly Happineſs.

But now Remiſſion of Sin, or Impunity, was never made the Condition of the Promiſe of Heavenly Glory; nor is it Man's Act but God's, and ſo not capable of being made a Condition of ſuch a thing: And therefore it cannot in virtue of any Promiſe, give us that which I call our initial Right to the Heavenly Glory; which Right accrues to us by virtue of God's Promiſe, upon our Performance of the Condition of it. Nor can this Remiſſion give us that immediate and compleat Right to the Heavenly Glory, which flows to us from God's adjudging us to have performed the Condition on which he hath promiſed it; becauſe this Remiſſion is no Condition of God's Promiſe to us, nor Act of our performing. Here then is a manifeſt Difference between Remiſſion of Sin and Juſtification, in reſpect of the Right we have by the one which we have not by the other, to the Heavenly Glory.

Some have indeed argued, that Pardon of Sin will ſtand us in as much ſtead as to our Reſtauration to Happineſs, as *a perfect legal* Righteouſneſs would have done to have continued us in it. Becauſe as they reaſon, the Puniſhment of Loſs is by Pardon taken off, as well as the Puniſhment of Senſe: And that as by Pardon we are delivered from the one, ſo by it we are alſo reſtored to our Title to the other, to what we loſt, and ſo to a Title to Eternal Life. The Force of which arguing depends upon a Suppoſition which will not be granted, nor as I conceive ever be proved. And that is, that if *Adam*, and ſo his Poſterity, had continued in their Integrity, they would thereby have had a Right and Title to the Celeſtial Happineſs and Glory of the upper World. Whereas St. *Paul* tells us, *That Fleſh and Blood cannot inherit the Kingdom of God*, and that the *firſt Man was of the Earth earthy*, 1 Cor. xv. 47, 50. So that *Adam* himſelf ſhould he have continued in that perfect State in which he was created, yet would not for all that have been capable of the Celeſtial Glory; unleſs he had put off Fleſh and Blood, or elſe ſhould have had his Body transformed from Natural into Spiritual: Which whoſoever affirms that he ſhould, will doubtleſs be wanting in his Proofs. It is far more probable, that the Deſign of Chriſt's undertaking as Mediator, was to *advance the Nature of Man to a more glorious Perfection* and Happineſs than that which was natural to him in pure Nature. He was made *a little lower* than the Angels, though he was crowned with Glory and Honour, *Pſal.* viii. 5. *But they that* *ſhall be accounted worthy to obtain that other World, and the Reſurrection from the Dead*, are equal to the Angels: Which cannot be meant in reſpect of *Immortality* only; for *Adam*, who was made lower than they, would have been equal to them in that, had he never ſinned. *Luke* xx. 35, 36. But our bleſſed Saviour *came that we ſhould have Life, and that we ſhould have it more abundantly*; a Life ſurpaſſing that which was loſt by the Fall, *John* x. 10. And he hath taught his Diſciples and Followers, in hope of this Celeſtial Glory, to ſet more light by this World, than perhaps *Adam* would have been obliged to, had he never fallen, and hath given ſeveral other Precepts, which perhaps tranſcend the Natural Law it ſelf, as to what *Adam* was obliged to by it before his fall, and all to qualifie them for a higher ſtate.

I might farther ſhew how that our Title to the heavenly Inheritance ariſeth out of our Adoption to it, as joint-heirs with Chriſt, and from God's free and bounteous Donation, as Eternal Life is the Gift of God through Jeſus Chriſt our Lord, and from our performance of the Condition on which it is promiſed: Bleſſed are they that do his Commandments, that they may *have right to the Tree of Life*. From all which Remiſſion of Sin differs, and is another thing.

5. Our *Right and Title* to Remiſſion of Sin it ſelf depends upon the ſame Terms as our *right* to Glory does, and yet that depends upon our Juſtification: For God firſt *juſtifies* whom he after *glorifies*, *Rom.* viii. 30. And if our Right to Remiſſion of Sin depends upon the ſame Terms as Right to Glory does, then Remiſſion of Sin can be no more the ſame thing with Juſtification, than Glorification is, but depends upon it as an Effect upon a Cauſe without which none can receive it.

Our Right to Remiſſion of Sin depends upon our Believing, as the Condition on which God hath promiſed it, as well as our Right to Glory does: *To him give all the Prophets witneſs, that through his Name whoſoever believes in him ſhall receive Remiſſion of Sins*, Acts x. 43. And this *Right* to Remiſſion of Sins depends as much alſo upon God's *adjudging* us to have performed the Condition on which he hath promiſed Pardon, as our Right to Glory does. For God does no more actually pardon any, than he glorifies them, until he firſt adjudgeth them to have performed the Condition on which he promiſed Pardon; which Dijudication of his, is his juſtifying of them. And therefore Remiſſion of Sin does as really differ from Juſtification as Glorification does, and is as certainly ſubſequent to it as Glorification is, and therefore cannot be the ſame thing properly and ſtrictly conſidered.

6. God does not forgive all a Man's Sins at once, nor before they are committed and repented of, but multiplies Pardons as his Servants multiply Sins of Infirmity and their Repentances and Petitions for Pardon. And if ſo, and if God do not multiply as many Juſtifications as he does Pardons to the ſame Perſon, then here is another difference between Juſtification and Remiſſion of Sin.

7. Juſtification is God's *imputing Righteouſneſeſs* to us, or our Faith for Righteouſneſs. But Pardon of Sin is his *non-imputation of Sin* to us. God by not imputing Sin to us, does not reckon us not to have ſinned, nor not to have deſerved Eternal Deſtruction; but he then does not impute Sin, when he does not inflict the Puniſhment deſerved by, and due for Sin. But when he imputes Righteouſneſs or Faith for Righteouſneſs to us, he adjudgeth us to have anſwered the Terms of his new Law of Grace by believing, by which Law that Faith becomes our Righteouſneſs. Now there is a great difference between God's adjudging us to have anſwered the Terms of his New Law, and his not inflicting the deſerved Penalty of the Old; between his awarding us a Recompence of our ſincere Conformity to the one, and his not exacting of us what we had deſerved to ſuffer for tranſgreſſing the other. And yet ſo much difference there is between Juſtification and Remiſſion of Sin.

As for thoſe who place Juſtification in God's pardoning of Sin, they may pleaſe to conſider, that the benefit of Remiſſion of Sin does not ſignifie the leſs by being called only by its proper name Pardon or Forgiveneſs, and not Juſtification, if by Juſtification be meant only Remiſſion of Sin, as they hold it is who limit Juſtification only to that. And if Remiſſion of Sin ſignifie no more when we call it Juſtification, than it does when we call it Pardon or Forgiveneſs. I ſee little reaſon why two or three, or ſome ſmall number of Texts of Scripture, which ſpeak of Juſtification ſomewhat obſcurely, ſhould be ſo much ſtrained as they are, to make them ſeem to mean only Remiſſion of Sin, when they may be fairly underſtood in another ſenſe, and that too perhaps with more congruity to the ſignification of the word Juſtification, and to the Nature of the thing, and to the Scriptures themſelves elſewhere. Nor can I diſcern what would be gained by it, if it ſhould be granted that Remiſſion of Sin were Juſtification, and Juſtification Remiſſion of Sin. For yet then the ſame thing, the ſame benefit would ſignifie no more when we call it Juſtification, than it does when we call it only Remiſſion of Sins, as we all agree the Scriptures do.

Nor does the placing of Juſtification in God's judicial Act, in approving and adjudging Men to be Righteous, in a Goſpel-ſenſe, who have performed the Condition on which Pardon of Sin and Eternal Life are promiſed, make the privilege of having our Sins forgiven, the leſs beneficial to us, or the leſs of Grace from God and our Lord Jeſus Chriſt. For God's approving us to be Righteous in a Goſpel-ſenſe, does not ſuppoſe or imply that we ſtand in no need of Pardon, nor of that Mercy of God and Merit of Chriſt from which Pardon flows: It only ſuppoſeth us to be Righteous with ſuch a Righteouſneſs of Faith, on Condition of which the promiſe of Pardon of all our Sins is made through the Blood of Chriſt. But God's juſtifying of us, or his approving of us to be Righteous in ſuch a ſenſe, does not make our Sins to become no Sins, nor is it I conceive God's pardoning Act; but yet it is that which doth *judicially qualifie* us for Pardon, and which as it were opens the door, and lets us into the poſſeſſion of it. For Pardon is the next and immediate Act, that in order follows God's adjudging us to have performed the Condition on which he promiſed us Pardon.

Having ſaid this much of the difference between *Judicial Juſtification* and *Remiſſion of Sin*, it ſeems requiſite to make ſome Enquiry into the Senſe and Meaning of thoſe Scriptures on which ſome ground an Aſſertion, limiting Juſtification to Remiſſion of Sin *only*. And thoſe Scriptures which above all others ſeem moſt to countenance ſuch an Aſſertion, and which are moſt relied on by thoſe of that Perſuaſion, are, *Acts* xiii. 39. *Rom.* v. 16. and iv. 6, 7. To an Enquiry into the Meaning of which, I will only premiſe this: That if we ſhould find cauſe to think that it may be proved from theſe or any other Scriptures, that we are pardoned by being juſtified; yet we can have no good reaſon thence to conclude, that we are juſtified *only* by being pardoned; no, nor yet in the propereſt ſenſe neither, when we conſider how expreſs the Scriptures are elſewhere for a Judicial Juſtification, to wit, God's juſtifying us by Faith, and by accounting or adjudging Faith to us for Righteouſneſs, or for a performance of the Terms of the Goſpel; our conformity whereto is as truly our Evangelical Righteouſneſs, as our conformity to the Terms of the Law would have been a legal Righteouſneſs, if it had been found in us.

To begin now with *Acts* xiii. 39. the words are theſe, *And by him all that believe are juſtified from all things, from which ye could not be juſtified by the Law of Moſes.*

To be juſtified from Sin, ſometimes ſignifies to be freed from the Power and Dominion of it. Thus in *Rom.* vi. 7. St. *Paul* having ſaid in Ver. 6. *Knowing this, that our old Man is crucified with him, that the body of Sin might be deſtroyed, that henceforth we ſhould not ſerve ſin*; adds in Ver. 7. *For he that is dead is juſtified from ſin.* For ſo it is according to the Marginal Reading; and ſo the *Dutch* Tranſlation *Engliſhed* reads it; though in our Tranſlation it is rendred *freed*, inſtead of *juſtified* from Sin. And in this ſenſe St. *Auſtin* underſtood this, *Acts* xiii. 39. as I find him quoted. And to this ſenſe of the word *Juſtifie*, agrees the reading of *Revel.* xxii. 11. which ſome upon occaſion uſe: *Let him that is filthy, be filthy ſtill; and he that is righteous, let him be* juſtified *ſtill.* To the ſame ſenſe of the word *Juſtifie*, ſome alledge *Rom.* viii. 30. *Tit.* iii. 5. compared with Ver. 7. and 1 *Cor.* vi. 11. *But ye are waſhed, but ye are ſanctified, but ye are* juſtified *in the Name of the Lord Jeſus, and by the Spirit of our God.* Where Juſtification ſeems to be aſcribed unto the Spirit of God in one reſpect, as to the Lord Jeſus in another. And doubtleſs Juſtification is the effect of the Operation of all the Bleſſed Trinity, though the manner of their Operation be different.

Now that to be juſtified from all things, from which ye could not be juſtified by the Law of *Moſes*, may be underſtood in this ſenſe, there are two things to be ſaid to render it probable. The one is the good Agreement which this ſenſe has with other places of Scripture, which ſhew that Men are freed from Sin through Chriſt by his Goſpel, ſo as they could not be freed from it by the Law of *Moſes*. Thus *Heb.* vii. 18, 19. *There is verily a diſannulling of the Commandment going before, for the weakneſs and unprofitableneſs thereof. For the Law made nothing perfect, but the bringing in of a better hope did.* And again, *Rom.* viii. 2, 3, 4. *For the Law of the Spirit of Life which is in Chriſt Jeſus, hath made me free from the Law of Sin and of Death. For what* *the Law could not do in that it was weak through the Fleſh, God ſending his own Son in the Likeneſs of ſinful Fleſh, and for Sin condemned Sin in the Fleſh, that the Righteouſneſs of the Law might be fulfilled in us, who walk not after the Fleſh, but after the Spirit.* So likewiſe *Rom.* vi. 14. *Sin ſhall not have Dominion over you: For ye are not under the Law, but under Grace.* By all which we ſee that the Law of *Moſes* could not juſtifie Men from Sin, as Chriſt by the Goſpel-Diſpenſation does, if by being juſtified from Sin we underſtand a being freed from Sin it ſelf as to its Dominion.

The other thing which may incline us to underſtand the words under Conſideration in this Senſe; is what may be obſerved from the Context. St. *Paul* had ſaid in *ver.* 38. the words immediately before, *Be it known to you Men and Brethren, that through this Man (Chriſt) is preached unto you the Forgiveneſs of ſins.* Now then if in *ver.* 39. he ſhould mean no more by being juſtified, than a being pardoned, he would ſeem but to ſay over the ſame thing again in other words, which he had ſaid before, which is not uſual with him.

But if this ſhould not be the meaning of thoſe words: And ſhould we ſuppoſe that by being Juſtified from all things from which they could not be juſtified by the Law of *Moſes*, ſhould be meant a being juſtified from the Guilt of Sin, as that ſignifies a being freed from the Puniſhment deſerved by it; yet let us conſider whether it will neceſſarily follow that the Apoſtle in thoſe words, defines Juſtification by Remiſſion of Sin; or whether rather he does not thereby only ſet forth the ſubſequent Benefits that would accrue to them by being juſtified by believing, which could not be obtained by their obſerving the Law of *Moſes*. And if ſo, then the meaning would be only this, That by their being juſtified by their believing, they ſhould be delivered from, or ſecured againſt the evil Effects of their Sin, from which they could not be ſecured by obſerving the Law of *Moſes*. Now that to be juſtified by believing, by virtue of the Blood of Chriſt, and to be freed from the Puniſhment of Sin, which is Pardon, are two different things, ſeems to be very plain from thoſe words of St. *Paul*, Rom. v. 9. where he ſaith, *much more than being now juſtified by his Blood, we ſhall be ſaved from Wrath through him.* He infers the Certainty of their being pardoned or ſaved from Wrath, from their being juſtified: And the Inference, and that from which it is made, are doubtleſs two things. We ſee then that Men may be pardoned by virtue of their being juſtified, and ſo be *juſtified from Sin*, and yet not juſtified by their being pardoned. It will no more follow, that becauſe by Juſtification we are pardoned, that therefore Pardon is our Juſtification, than it will follow, that becauſe by believing we are pardoned, that therefore our Pardon is our believing, and our believing our Pardon.

And now if we ſhould underſtand the words juſtified from all things, from which ye could not be juſtified by the Law of *Moſes*, in both the forementioned Senſes, for a being delivered both from the guilt of Sin, and from the Power and Pollution of it, I know no Inconvenience in it, both being true. But if we do ſo, yet we do not thereby neceſſarily conclude Pardon of Sin to be Juſtification; but only that Pardon of Sin is by Juſtification, as depending upon it. For God's adjudging of us to have performed the Condition in believing on which he promiſed Pardon, which is his juſtifying of us, together with his imputing that Faith to us for Righteouſneſs, intervenes, comes between our believing and our being actually pardoned, and is that which gives the immediate Right to it, as I ſhewed before.

What hath been ſaid then may ſuffice, I ſuppoſe, to ſhew that in all Probability no ſuch thing can be concluded from thoſe words in *Acts* xiii. as that we are juſtified by being pardoned.

The next Scripture I ſhall enquire into, is *Rom.* v. 16. the words theſe: *Not as it was by one that ſinned, ſo is the Gift: For the Judgment was by one, or by one Offence, to Condemnation; but the free Gift is of many Offences unto Juſtification.* That which is firſt neceſſary to be done here, is to conſider the Tranſlation; becauſe theſe words, *the free Gift of many Offences unto Juſtification*, ſeem as we have them in our Tranſlation, a little uncouth and ſomewhat unintelligible. I have ſeen the Matter in this part of the Verſe tranſlated from the Original thus: *But the free Gift is unto Juſtification from many Offences*, not *of* many Offences. Dr *Hammond* renders it thus: *But the Mercy was by occaſion of many Offences unto Juſtification.* Agreeable to this reading is that Note of *Grotius* upon the place in theſe words: *Occaſion being taken from many Sins:* And ſo is that of *Piſcator* and *Simplicius*, in theſe words: *Occaſion being taken not only from the Sin of* Adam, *but alſo from the proper Sins of all Believers.*

So that the Senſe of the place, according to this rendring of the words, ſeems to be to this Effect: That from the ſad Condition into which Men were fallen, not only by the one Offence of *Adam*, but alſo by their own many perſonal Offences, God took occaſion to manifeſt his own Grace and Mercy through Chriſt, to miſerable Men; in giving and granting them new Terms, by which they might attain unto Juſtification, or a being approved of by God as righteous, their many Offences notwithſtanding. And this in *ver.* 17. is called *the Gift of Righteouſneſs*; and in *ver.* 18. *the free Gift unto Juſtification of Life, through the Righteouſneſs of one*; to wit, Chriſt. And accordingly the Grant which God hath made us of being ſaved by Faith in Jeſus Chriſt, is ſaid to be *of Grace*, and to be the *Gift of God. By Grace are ye ſaved, through Faith, and that not of your ſelves: It is the Gift of God*, Eph. ii. 8. Now according to this rendering of the words by all theſe great Men of Learning, there is not the leaſt Appearance of any ſuch thing as that Juſtification is by Remiſſion of Sin.

None of thoſe worthy Perſons abovementioned do ſay the free Gift is *of* many Offences, but all of them ſay it is *from* many Offences. So that if we read it thus, according to the Tranſlation I firſt mentioned, *the free Gift is unto Juſtification from many Offences*; the Senſe will be this, I conceive: That through the free Gift, we are by Juſtification ſecured from ſuffering the Deſert of our many Offences; and is the ſame in Senſe with the Interpretation of *Acts* xiii. 39. laſt ſuggeſted. Where was ſhewed, that though Remiſſion of Sin is by Juſtification, that is, a Benefit accruing to us thereby; yet we cannot therefore ſay, that Juſtification is by Remiſſion of Sin. The Terms are not convertible: We cannot ſo well ſay that Juſtification is by Remiſſion of Sin, as we can that Remiſſion of Sin is by Juſtification.

The other Scripture, which is much inſiſted on to prove Remiſſion of Sin is Juſtification; or that Juſtification ſtands in Remiſſion of Sin, is *Rom.* iv. 6, 7. *Even as David alſo deſcribeth the Bleſſedneſs of the Man unto whom God imputeth Righteouſneſs without Works; ſaying, bleſſed are they whoſe Iniquities are forgiven, and whoſe Sins are covered.* In which words, as it is argued, Juſtification is deſcribed by God's forgiving Iniquity. But then it is counter-argued, that this Deſcription by *David*, ſeems *not* to be a Deſcription of the Juſtification of the Man to whom God imputeth Righteouſneſs without Works, but a Deſcription of his *happy State* and Condition in having his Sins pardoned. St. *Paul* doth not ſay even as *David* deſcribeth the Juſtification of the Man to whom God imputeth Righteouſneſs, but the Bleſſedneſs of the Man. Now the Bleſſedneſs of having Sin pardoned, is a Benefit conſequent upon a Man's believing, and ſo of his being juſtified by that Belief: For Pardon is promiſed but on that Condition, *Acts* x. 43. And the Promiſe and the Condition of the Promiſe cannot be the ſame. Which very Conſideration, if there were no more, were enough to ſhew that Juſtification is not deſcribed by Forgiveneſs of Sin.

It appears at firſt ſight, that theſe words of the *Pſalmiſt* were brought to prove ſomewhat ſaid by St. *Paul* a little before. And if they ſhould be brought to prove that Faith is counted to a Man for Righteouſneſs, which was the thing St. *Paul* had aſſerted in the next precedent Verſe, then they could not be brought to prove that Forgiveneſs of Sin is counted to him for Righteouſneſs; for Faith and Forgiveneſs of Sin are two different things. By this it appears already, that theſe words of *David* were not alledged to prove Juſtification to be by Remiſſion of Sin, as it will farther appear by and by.

To the end then we may the better underſtand for what purpoſe theſe words of *David* are here recited by St. *Paul*, we will conſider his words in the two next precedent Verſes. *Now to him that worketh* (ſaith he) *is the Reward not reckoned of Grace but of Debt*, ver. 4. In which words St. *Paul* ſeems to have ſtated the Opinion of the Phariſaical *Jews*, againſt whom he diſputed. They held, as it ſeems, that the reward, to wit, all the Benefit, all the Happineſs they expected from God, to be due to them as a Debt for their obſerving the Law of *Moſes*. They did not expect that their Obedience ſhould be accepted or counted to them for Righteouſneſs, for the ſake of another, and upon the account of the Death and Sacrifice of the Meſſias: For they held that he, when he ſhould come, ſhould never die, *John* xii. 34. and that therefore their Sin was not to be expiated by the Sacrifice of his Death, but by their own legal Sacrifices; and that the Blood of Bulls and Goats did take away Sin, *Heb.* x. 4. and that thoſe Sacrifices, with their other legal Obſervances, were of themſelves their Righteouſneſs; and that upon account hereof, Juſtification and Life were due to them in the Nature of a Debt in Oppoſition to Grace; and that the Gentiles were ungodly, and uncapable of Righteouſneſs and Juſtification, until they were Proſelytes to their way of Worſhip. This is that St. *Paul* calls their own Righteouſneſs, in oppoſition to that which is of God by Faith of Jeſus Chriſt, *Phil.* iii. 9. By all which they rendred the Death of Chriſt of none effect, and Juſtification to be of Works, and not of Grace, as appears by *Gal.* ii. 21. and v. iv. In Ver. 5. St. *Paul* aſſerts the contrary, to wit, That *to him that worketh not, but believeth on him that juſtifieth the ungodly, his Faith is counted to him for Righteouſneſs.* Which Aſſertion of St. *Paul*, if true, proves the Reward to be of Grace, and not of Debt, whether by Reward you underſtand only Juſtification, or alſo the Benefits ſubſequent to it. For if God count ſuch Mens Faith for Righteouſneſs which work not, which have no ſuch Works as by which to reckon the Reward to be of Debt, and not of Grace; yea, ſuch Mens Faith for Righteouſneſs, which had been ungodly; then the Reward muſt needs be of Grace, and not of Debt. This being a ſelf-evident Truth, That after a Man by Sin hath once made a Forfeiture of all to God, whatever good he after receives from him, muſt needs be of Grace. Which made St. *Paul* ſay, *All have ſinned and come ſhort of the Glory of God, being juſtified freely by his Grace*, and that too *through the Redemption which is in Chriſt Jeſus*, Rom. iii. 23, 24.

Theſe words of *David* then in Ver. 6, 7. ſeem to be alledged by St. *Paul* by way of Confirmation of his aforeſaid Doctrine, and to prove out of one of the ſacred Books owned by his Adverſaries, that their worthy Anceſtors, ſuch as *David*, whom they could not deny to be juſtified Men, acknowledged themſelves Sinners, ſuch as ſtood in need of Pardon, and ſuch as counted it their great happineſs to be Pardoned; and and that therefore they could not be look'd upon as receiving the reward of Debt, but of Grace. For when he ſays, *Even as David alſo deſcribeth the Bleſſedneſs of the Man to whom God imputeth Righteouſneſs without Works, ſaying, Bleſſed are they whoſe Iniquities are forgiven*, &c. It thereby appears that he looked upon thoſe words of *David* to be fully agreeable to his own Doctrine aſſerted in Ver. 5. in oppoſition to his Adverſaries conceit and opinion touching the Rewards being reckoned of Debt, and not of Grace. And indeed how could St. *Paul* think better to convince them of their Error, and to ſhame them out of their Conceit of meriting the Reward by obſerving the Law of *Moſes*, than by ſhewing them that their famous Anceſtors, who obſerved the Law of *Moſes* as well as any, were yet ſo far from claiming the Reward of their Obedience as a Debt by way of Merit, that they acknowledged themſelves Sinners, and therefore undeſerving, and counted it their great Felicity to be pardoned through the great Mercy and Favour of God.

We will yet conſider this matter a little more particularly and diſtinctly. The thing St. *Paul* aſſerts againſt his miſ-believing Adverſaries, is, as I have ſaid, that the reward is of Grace and not of Debt, which he makes out two ways. 1. From the *Nature* of that *Righteouſneſs* which is *rewarded.* 2. From the *Nature* of that *Reward* it ſelf. Firſt, from the Nature of the Righteouſneſs that is rewarded; and this is deſcribed by the Condition or Quality of the Perſon in whom this Righteouſneſs is found, *He that worketh not*; that is, though it be one that hath not obſerved the Law of *Moſes* in being circumciſed and the like. And that he means ſuch an one by *him that worketh not*, and yet may be Righteous, appears by the Inſtance he gives in *Abraham*'s caſe, who was Righteous with the Righteouſneſs of Faith, before ever he was Circumciſed, *ver.* 9, 10. Secondly, It is deſcribed by the Nature and Property of that Faith which is the Chriſtians Righteouſneſs; it is *a believing in him that juſtifieth the ungodly*, upon his Repentance and Belief in the Lord Jeſus: Which very Belief contains, in the nature of it, a firm Perſuaſion that God's juſtifying of ſuch a Perſon muſt needs be of Grace, and not of Debt. Thirdly, It is deſcribed by that Act of God by which ſuch a Faith becomes a Man's Righteouſneſs, and that is by way of *imputation* or account: *His Faith is counted to him for Righteouſneſs*; which argues it to be of Grace and Favour, becauſe he to whom it is ſo imputed, is otherwiſe a Sinner ungodly, and upon that account cannot merit it. Now then, if the Righteouſneſs it ſelf, which is rewarded, be of Grace, then the Reward of that Righteouſneſs muſt needs be of Grace. This we ſee is one way by which St. *Paul* makes out the Reward to be of Grace, and not of Debt.

Secondly, The other way is from the Nature of the Reward of that Righteouſneſs. And this I call another way of proving the Reward to be of Grace, and not of Debt. For when St. *Paul* ſaith, ver. 6. *Even as David alſo deſcribeth*, &c. That word *alſo* ſeems to ſignifie an addition of proof of his Aſſertion by another *medium*. And this *medium* is taken from the Nature of the Reward of that Righteouſneſs which God imputes to Men in juſtifying them, as the former was from the Nature of the Righteouſneſs it ſelf. And the Apoſtle's Argument or Proof is to this effect. The Reward of that Righteouſneſs, by which God juſtifies Men, muſt needs be of Grace and not of Debt, becauſe in great part it conſiſts in Remiſſion of Sins, and Remiſſion of Sin is an Act of Grace in the natural Notion of it, and in the common Senſe of Mankind.

And that St. *Paul*'s deſign in alledging this Saying of *David*, was not to ſhew that Remiſſion of Sin is the Righteouſneſs by which Men are juſtified, but the Reward of it, appears by the very tenour and purport of his words. For he doth not ſay, that *David* deſcribeth the Righteouſneſs or Juſtification of the Man to whom God imputeth Righteouſneſs, as we have cauſe to think he would have done, if he had known or thought that Remiſſion of Sin had been Mens Righteouſneſs or Juſtification; but he ſays, he deſcribes the *Bleſſedneſs of the Man to whom God imputeth Righteouſneſs.* Now what doth *Bleſſedneſs* in Scripture import, when applied to Men, but ſome Happineſs vouchſafed them as an effect of *God's Grace*, yet ſo as by way of Reward alſo of the Performance of their Duty? Thus, *Bleſſed is the Man that feareth the Lord. Bleſſed are they that hear the Word of God and keep it. Bleſſed are they that do his Commandments, that they may have right to the Tree of Life*, and the like. So here, the *Bleſſedneſs* of that Man to whom God imputeth Faith for Righteouſneſs, ſeems to ſignifie the Happineſs that does accrue to ſuch a Man as a Reward of that Faith which is imputed for Righteouſneſs, or of that Righteouſneſs which is imputed: And the Happineſs here ſpecified, which does accrue to ſuch a Man, is the having his Sins pardoned.

Now to underſtand St. *Paul* here in this ſenſe, does fully agree with his ſcope and deſign in hand, which was to prove the Reward to be of Grace, and not of Debt. After he had oppoſed the Righteouſneſs of Faith to the Phariſaical *Jews* Righteouſneſs by Works of the Law; then he ſhews the Reward of this Righteouſneſs to be of Grace and not of Debt, becauſe it ſtands in Remiſſion of Sin. And whereas he does not uſe *Reward* here, but the word *Bleſſedneſs*, which yet ſignifies the ſame thing, it was probably but to accommodate his Speech to *David*'s Dialect, whoſe words he recites. And as the Senſe I have inſiſted on, correſponds fully with the Apoſtle's ſcope and deſign here; ſo it does alſo with the Tenour of the Covenant of Grace and the Scriptures elſewhere, which promiſe Pardon of Sin on condition of that Faith which is imputed for Righteouſneſs, as a reward of it and motive to it.

And if this ſenſe now repreſented be the ſenſe of St. *Paul* in theſe Verſes, or muchwhat the ſame (and you ſee what reaſon there is to think it is) then his intent here was not to ſhew that we are juſtified by being pardoned: He does not ſay it is Pardon of Sin which is imputed for Righteouſneſs, but *Faith*: Nor does he ſay that *David* deſcribes the Righteouſneſs of the juſtified Man in ſaying, *Bleſſed are they whoſe Iniquities are forgiven*, but the Bleſſedneſs of that Man, or the Reward of his Righteouſneſs.

And by this time I am thinking, much more need not be ſaid touching the difference between Juſtification and Remiſſion of Sin, nor to ſhew that Juſtification does not ſtand only in Remiſſion of Sin. For whatever is the right in this matter, there is the leſs need of contending about it; ſince thoſe who place Juſtification in Remiſſion of Sin, do hold an effectual operative Faith the neceſſary Condition of obtaining it, as well as they do who place Juſtification in the Righteouſneſs of Faith. The one placeth the Matter of our Juſtification in the Performance of the ſame Condition neceſſary to Juſtification; upon which Performance the greateſt ſtreſs is to be laid in this matter: Becauſe thoſe who perform the Condition of the Promiſe of the Goſpel, ſhall be ſure to be juſtified, whether their Judgment about the Nature of Juſtification be right or no: Whereas without this Performance they cannot, though their Notion of the Nature of Juſtification ſhould be never ſo orthodox and ſound. But although the Difference ſeems to be of no great moment, yet in as much as there is Divine Wiſdom in fitting Means to Ends, and in appointing ſuch or ſuch a thing to ſuch an Uſe, and not to another, or rather than to another; and that thoſe which he hath pitch'd upon, are in ſome reſpect or other better for the purpoſe than any we can ſubſtitute in their room: It follows then, that if God hath placed the Matter of our Juſtification in the Righteouſneſs which is by Faith, rather than Remiſſion of Sin, that then we ſhould not confine it to Remiſſion of Sin only.

And to ſpeak plainly, I cannot think it a Matter of ſuch Indifferency whether we hold Remiſſion of Sin our only Juſtification, or God's adjudging us righteous upon the account of the Righteouſneſs of Faith; but that it is well worthy our beſt Endeavours to find out which of theſe Opinions hath the Holy Scripture on its ſide, if it were but for this reaſon, if there were no more.

1. The Notion of Juſtification by the Righteouſneſs of Faith, is a more ready and more effectual way to detect the Opinion of Error and Miſtake, which placeth Juſtification in the Imputation of the Righteouſneſs of Chriſt to us in it ſelf; and not only in its Effects, than the Notion of Juſtification by Remiſſion of Sin is, For ſo long as the Scripture doth ſo plentifully and expreſly teſtifie as it does, that it is *a* Righteouſneſs by which we are juſtified; it is nothing ſo eaſie to ſatisfie the Reaſon of Mens Minds, either from the Scripture or from the nature of the thing it ſelf, why Remiſſion of Sin ſhould be ſtiled our Righteouſneſs rather than the Righteouſneſs of Chriſt imputed to us; as it is to convince them that neither the one nor the other is in Scripture ſtiled our Righteouſneſs in their Senſe, but that it is the Righteouſneſs of Faith that is ſo ſtiled there. While the Queſtion is only, which is counted to us for Righteouſneſs, whether the Righteouſneſs of Chriſt imputed, in the Senſe uſually oppoſed, or Remiſſion of Sin; the Competition is nothing ſo unequal in reſpect of Evidence from Scripture and from the nature of the thing, as it is when the Queſtion is, whether the Righteouſneſs of Chriſt imputed, or the Righteouſneſs of Faith by virtue of his Righteouſneſs, is counted to us for Righteouſneſs; becauſe the Scripture is expreſs for this, but not for either of the other. Let this then be but once well proved, that it is Faith itſelf, as the Principle of Evangelical Righteouſneſs, that is the thing which is imputed to us for Righteouſneſs, and that it is by it that God juſtifies us; and the Opinion of being juſtified by the Imputation of Chriſt's Righteouſneſs in the Senſe uſually impugned, will ſoon fall to the ground. If the former Notion be but well ſeated in the Mind, the later will of it ſelf fall out of it.

Conſidering then the Dubiouſneſs of both the foreſaid Opinions, there is the leſs reaſon to wonder that the Controverſy ſhould continue ſo long as it hath done, between thoſe who place Juſtification in the Imputation of Chriſt's Righteouſneſs, and thoſe who place it only in Remiſſion of Sin. For although the Reaſonings are (as I think) unanſwerable, which the one uſe againſt placing Juſtification in the Imputation of Chriſt's Righteouſneſs in the Senſe in which they oppoſe it: Yet while their arguings have not perhaps been ſo irrefragable for placing it in Remiſſion of Sin; it hath doubtleſs made the other the more tenacious in their Opinion, unleſs they could ſee better ground for that Opinion which has been offered them in exchange for theirs, than hath been tendered them. Whereas had Juſtification been placed in the Righteouſneſs of Faith and Sincerity, inſtead of being placed in Remiſſion of Sin: And had thoſe Scriptures been duly opened and applied, by which it may with great Strength and clear Evidence be proved, that it is Faith or the Obedience of Faith which is imputed to us for Righteouſneſs, and by which we are juſtified by God; the Controverſy would have been managed with greater Advantage for the convincing of thoſe of oppoſite Opinion, than it hath been by aſſerting that we are juſtified by being pardoned; and would ſooner have inclined them in all Probability, to have exchanged their own Notion of the Righteouſneſs of Juſtification for this. And the reaſon hereof is this; becauſe the Scripture is expreſs and plain for this, whereas ſo far as I can find, there is no one Text in all the Bible, that doth expreſly affirm that Pardon of Sin is our Righteouſneſs, or that it is counted to us for ſuch, no more than there is that the Righteouſneſs of Chriſt is in it ſelf imputed to us for Righteouſneſs, and formally and not only vertually made ours.

2. Beſides all this, it is to be conſidered, whether the Doctrine touching the Imputation of the Righteouſneſs of Faith to Juſtification, does not tend more and more directly to work in Mens Minds a Senſe of the neceſſity of a perſonal inherent Righteouſneſs, in order to their being approved of as righteous, than that does which teacheth that Men are made or accounted righteous when juſtified, by having their Unrighteouſneſs forgiven. For there ſeems to be more occaſion and room left by the one Notion than by the other, for ſuch as have a mind to be happy without being truly righteous, to hope that they may be ſo. For when they apprehend that they may become righteous by having their Unrighteouſneſs pardoned, they will probably be more apt and prone to preſume, through the abundant Mercy of God, to be made or accounted righteous this way upon their ſpeculative Faith, though not truly inherently righteous,

than they would or could be, were they but convinced that nothing leſs will paſs for Righteouſneſs in the account of God in juſtifying of Men, than that which is real perſonal inherent Righteouſneſs indeed.

We find, in Scripture, how apt and ready Men have been, to hope to be juſtified and ſaved by Faith without Works, or inherent Righteouſneſs, upon the account of a ſpeculative or notional Faith, *James* ii. Againſt which deceitful Notion St. *John* alſo warned the Chriſtians, when he ſaid, *Little Children, let no Man deceive you: He that doth Righteouſneſs is righteous*, 1 John iii. 7. as if he ſhould have ſaid, You will be deceived if you ſuffer your ſelves to be perſuaded to think you may be righteous any other way, without doing Righteouſneſs. Thoſe deluded People, it's probable, were willing to interpret the Doctrine concerning Faith when but generally and indefinitely expreſs'd, to a Senſe which would indulge them in a Life not truly holy; as alas too many do at this Day, who upon a general inoperate Belief of the Articles of the Chriſtian Faith, doubt not but they ſhall be juſtified by being pardoned, or by having Chriſt's Righteouſneſs ſo imputed to them as to be righteous with his Righteouſneſs. And although they be told, that ſuch a Faith as works by Love is neceſſary to their Juſtification as a condition of it, yet ſo long as Juſtification is defined by that which is eſteemed intrinſecally eſſential to Juſtification, without ſuch a Righteouſneſs of Faith; and ſo long as they apprehend there is a way of being accounted righteous by being pardoned; they will not ſo eaſily, as otherwiſe they would, be brought to a due Senſe of the neceſſity of a perſonal inherent Righteouſneſs unto Juſtification. Whereas were they but convinced that God will account none righteous upon any account whatſoever, nor pardon their Unrighteouſneſs, who are not righteous indeed with a perſonal inherent Righteouſneſs, they would be left without all Hope of being righteous, or of being accepted as righteous any way, without this inherent Righteouſneſs. And by this means they would come under a more ſenſible Obligation of becoming inherently righteous indeed; as ever they hope to be juſtified as righteous in one reſpect, or pardoned as Sinners in another. And it is a good Rule, that in all Controverſies about Points of Chriſtian Doctrine, which have an Influence on Practice, as all generally have, it is ſtill ſafeſt to adhere to that Senſe which moſt obliges Men to their Duty, and moſt directly and indubitably tends to their Happineſs; as this touching Juſtification by the Righteouſneſs of Faith, rather than by Remiſſion of Sin, I conceive does.

3. Moreover, to place Juſtification in Pardon, diſagrees to the natural Notion which Men have both of Pardon and Juſtification. Pardon in the natural Notion of it ſuppoſeth Guilt: As on the contrary, Juſtification in the natural Notion of it, ſuppoſeth Guiltineſs or Righteouſneſs, in reference to the Matter or Cauſe wherein a Perſon is juſtified; unleſs when the word Juſtification is uſed in an abuſive Senſe, to ſignifie the perverting of Juſtice by juſtifying the wicked. To ſay a Perſon is juſtified when we thereby only mean that he is pardoned, gives an uncertain Sound in common Senſe, and miniſters occaſion for the Notion of Juſtification to lie uneven, and to remain unfixt in the Mind. What I recited out of Mr. *Gataker* in my firſt Chapter, may here again be remembred; who ſaith, *To juſtifie is not to pardon; for the word is never found ſo uſed, either in the* Hebrew *or* Greek *Writers, ſacred or prophane, nor in our common Speech.* And if ſo, why ſhould it be made uſe of to ſignifie Pardon, contrary to the uſe not only of prophane but of ſacred Authors, and common Speech? Nor can I conceive, upon Suppoſition of the Truth of Mr. *Gataker*'s Aſſertion, but to uſe the word Juſtification to ſignifie Pardon, or the word Pardon to ſignifie that thing which is Juſtification, muſt needs convey the true Notion of Juſtification to the Minds of Men with Diſadvantage, as tending to obſcure it, if not to drown the proper Notion of it.

4. Farthermore, to place Juſtification in Remiſſion of Sin, is to confound things of quite a different Nature; for ſo Juſtification and Remiſſion of Sin, I conceive, are. The ſubject Matter of a Man's Juſtification, is his Righteouſneſs; but the ſubject Matter of his Pardon, is his Unrighteouſneſs. The ſubject Matter of a Man's Juſtification, is his preſent Conformity to the Terms of the Law of Grace; but the ſubject Matter of his Pardon, is his paſt Nonconformity to that Law, and what other Law of God ſoever he hath tranſgreſſed. It alſo confounds God's juſtifying Act and his pardoning Act, as if they were both one. Nay more than ſo; it excludes that which is moſt properly God's juſtifying Act, and introduceth his pardoning Act in the room of it. For it ſuppoſeth God to account or to make a Man righteous by pardoning his Unrighteouſneſs, inſtead of

his adjudging him Righteous, in that he hath performed the Terms of the Goſpel, on Condition of which he promiſed him Pardon.

5. Laſtly, the Notion of Juſtification by Remiſſion of Sin, does not, ſo far as I can ſee upon the moſt ſerious Conſideration, at all agree with St. *Paul*'s ſtated Notion of Evangelical Juſtification, in oppoſition to the *Jewiſh* Notion of Juſtification by the Law, or Works of the Law. For he doth not repreſent the difference of the Notion of Juſtification which he aſſerts, and that which he oppoſeth, to lie in this, that the one ſtands in a pretended Righteouſneſs, and the other in the Pardon of Mens Unrighteouſneſs, but in the different kinds of Righteouſneſs, the one ſtanding in the Righteouſneſs of Faith, or by Faith, the other in the Righteouſneſs of the Law, or by the Works of the Law. *The Gentiles*, ſaith he, *which followed not after Righteouſneſs, but attained unto Righteouſneſs, even the Righteouſneſs which is of Faith.* There is the Chriſtian Juſtification. *But Iſrael, which followed after the Law of Righteouſneſs, hath not attained to the Law of Righteouſneſs, wherefore? becauſe they ſought it not by Faith, but as it were by the Works of the Law:* And there is the Jewiſh Juſtification, *Rom.* ix. 30, 31, 32. *Not having mine own Righteouſneſs, which is of the Law, but the Righteouſneſs which is by Faith*, Phil. iii. 9. *Knowing that a Man is not juſtified by the Works of the Law, but by the Faith of Jeſus Chriſt*, Gal. ii. 16. The formal difference we ſee which St. *Paul* makes between the two Notions of Juſtification, lies in the different kinds of Righteouſneſs. The Chriſtian or Evangelical Righteouſneſs conſiſting in a Belief of, and Obedience to the Doctrine and Precepts of the Goſpel; but the Jewiſh Righteouſneſs, as they conceited, in their Conformity to the Law of *Moſes*. But St. *Paul* and the *Jews* both held Juſtification to be by *a Righteouſneſs*. Now to ſay we are juſtified by being pardoned, does not at all agree with St. *Paul*'s notion of being juſtified by an Evangelical Righteouſneſs of Faith; becauſe Pardon of Sin is no ſuch Righteouſneſs: It is neither a Believing of the Goſpel, nor Act of Obedience to it; but is part of the Reward promiſed to ſuch a Righteouſneſs. And as ſuch it is ſometimes alledged indeed to prove Juſtification by Faith to be of Grace, and not of Debt, as I have ſhewed from *Rom.* iv. but never throughout the whole Scripture ſtiled *Righteouſneſs*, that ever I could find. And if any think it is implyed in ſuch Scriptures, where the Reward of Righteouſneſs is ſtiled *Righteouſneſs* by a Figure; yet if it ſhould be ſo, it would no more prove Remiſſion of Sin to be Juſtification, than it would prove Glorification to be Juſtification; which yet in St. *Paul*'s account is quite different from it. For he ſays, *Whom he juſtified, them he alſo glorified*, Rom. viii. 30.

And now for theſe Reaſons I hope it will not be thought unneceſſary nor unprofitable to have endeavoured to ſhew that there is a difference between Juſtification and Remiſſion of Sin: However what hath been done herein is ſubmitted to the Conſideration and Judgment of the judicious Reader.

But there is another Opinion which I but now mentioned, of worſe Conſequence, as I apprehend it, of which I have ſaid but little: And that is the Opinion of thoſe who place our Juſtification in the Imputation of the Righteouſneſs of Chriſt to us; not only in its *effect* as we all hold, but *in it ſelf*, as if it were ſo transferred to us, that we were Righteous with the very ſame perſonal and numerical Righteouſneſs wherewith he himſelf is Righteous, and that it is ſo reckoned ours, as if we had wrought it in our own Perſons; yea, that indeed we have wrought it in and by him. The nakedneſs of which Opinion hath been plentifully expoſed by others; and I ſhall not concern my ſelf with it now, farther than what I have already done in theſe Papers. Wherein I have ſhewed, that the Righteouſneſs of Chriſt operates to our Juſtification in quite another way: And likewiſe that it is the Chriſtian Faith, as operative and practical, that is imputed to us for Righteouſneſs, and that by virtue of Chriſt's Righteouſneſs, and God's Act of Grace upon the account of it. But then this, which yet is the plain Doctrine of the Holy Scripture, is quite another thing than the transferring of Chriſt's Righteouſneſs it ſelf to us.

Indeed this Opinion excludes and ſhoulders out the Chriſtian Evangelical Righteouſneſs, from the Office and Uſe to which God hath deſigned it, and is attended with ſeveral dangerous Conſequences and Abſurdities otherwiſe, as hath been ſet forth at large in ſeveral Books which treat of this Subject, which I ſhall forbear to repeat. For my deſign in theſe Papers was not to treat of Juſtification in a way of Controverſie, nor ſo much to detect what is to be avoided, as what is to be imbraced and held faſt in this matter. For I reckon, that if that which is the Truth be received into the Mind upon ſatisfactory grounds, that which is its contrary will fall off of it ſelf.

The CONCLUSION.

WE have now ſeen how much hath been done by the Eternal Father and his Holy Son our Bleſſed Saviour, that we might be Juſtified, Pardoned, and Glorified: All things on their part are prepared and made ready. The Father hath made, and the Son hath fulfilled the Law of Mediation, to bring about a Reconciliation between an offended God, and us Rebel-Creatures. Chriſt hath now no more Sorrows, nor Pains, nor Deaths to undergo and ſuffer for us. There are no *Terms* of Grace and Mercy, of Pardon and Peace, of deliverance from Hell, and of obtaining the Glory of Heaven, which are not already obtained for us, and by the Goſpel plainly made known and freely offered us.

For it is, as I have ſhewed, of Grace in God, and obtained by the Mediatorial Righteouſneſs of Chriſt, that Faith, or the Righteouſneſs by Faith, is made the Condition of Pardon of Sin and Eternal Life, as well as the conferring of Pardon and Life is on that Condition.

Since then ſuch Terms of Happineſs are obtained for us, it remains on our part that we receive not this Grace of God in vain, but that we be as careful to obſerve thoſe Terms, as we are deſirous to enjoy the Benefits annexed to them; becauſe we cannot enjoy the one without obſerving the other. We cannot enjoy the Benefits of the *new Covenant*, but by becoming *new Creatures*, and by living *new Lives*. For this is the *new Righteouſneſs* by Faith, on Condition of which the great Promiſes of the *new Covenant* are made. Whoever will come to the *Wedding-Supper of the Lamb*, muſt come in his *Wedding-Garment*, or elſe he will be excluded. And the Wedding-Garment, in which the Bride the Lamb's Wife is ſaid to be arrayed, is ſaid to be *the Righteouſneſs of Saints*, Rev. xix. 8. And now Chriſt our Paſſover is ſacrificed for us, we muſt keep the Feaſt on this Sacrifice, not with the *old leaven of Malice and Wickedneſs*, but with the *unleavened Bread of Sincerity and Truth*, which is the Evangelical Righteouſneſs I have been ſpeaking ſo much of, 1 *Cor*. v. 7, 8.

Old things are paſt away now, and behold all things are become new. Our old Righteouſneſs, in which Man was firſt made, is loſt, and a new Righteouſneſs inſtituted. In the room of the old Terms of Happineſs, perfect Innocency, now the new ones of Faith and Godly Sincerity are introduced. This new and living Way into Heaven is now conſecrated for us through the Fleſh and Blood of Jeſus Chriſt. Nothing but a *new Man*, a new Heart, a new Spirit, and newneſs of Life, will correſpond or ſuit with the *new Covenant*, nor with the *new Jeruſalem* which is above. Theſe are all of one piece, there is no parting of them, nor having an intereſt in the one, without having the other.

And now conſidering that all this happineſs of Pardon of Sin, and the Glory to come, and the Terms of obtaining both, is brought about only by the Grace of our God, and the Mediatorial Righteouſneſs of our Lord Jeſus Chriſt; what can we do leſs than to joyn with thoſe *Redeemed of the Lord*, mentioned in *Rev*. v. who are ſaid to have ſung a *new Song* to the Everlaſting Honour of our Redeemer, ſaying, *Thou art worthy to take the Book, and to open the Seals thereof: for thou waſt ſlain, and haſt redeemed us to God by thy Blood, out of every Kindred, and Tongue, and People, and Nation; and haſt made us unto our God Kings and Prieſts.* How much more cauſe have we to ſound forth the Praiſes of the Redeemer of the World, than thoſe Myriads of Holy Angels, which have no ſuch need of a Saviour as we have? who yet out of a grateful ſenſe of it, celebrate the Memory of his moſt wonderful and worthy Undertaking and Performance for the Redemption of us, poor miſerable and loſt Men; *Saying with a loud voice, Worthy is the Lamb that was ſlain to receive Power, and Riches, and Wiſdom, and Strength, and Honour, and Glory, and Bleſſing.*

And well may we, with thoſe bleſſed Spirits, ſing aloud of the Riches, Wiſdom, and Strength of the Lamb that was ſlain, as moſt worthy to receive theſe, becauſe he uſeth them to ſo worthy a purpoſe as to lift up a miſerable World that was caſt down and laid very low indeed. He certainly is moſt worthy of his unſearchable Riches, ſince ſuch is his Goodneſs as that he was not content to be happy alone, nor to ſee us lie in Poverty and Miſery, ſo long as he was able to relieve us and make us happy with his Riches; but rather than he would be wanting in this, he choſe for ſome time in ſome ſort to empty himſelf to fill us. *Ye know*, ſaith St. *Paul*, *the Grace of our Lord Jeſus Chriſt, that though he was rich, yet for your ſakes he became poor, that ye through his Poverty might be made rich*, 2 Cor. viii. 9. This is not the manner of Men indeed, nor was it in the Power of Angels; and therefore his Glory is to be exalted above the Earth and Heavens, and both made to ring with joyful Acclamations and Praiſes of and to our bleſſed Redeemer.

And it is very obſervable, that thoſe in *Rev.* xiv. who are ſaid to have *ſung a new Song before the Throne*, are deſcribed by the Virginity of their Chriſtianity, as not being prevailed upon by any Temptations whatſoever, to be unfaithful to Chriſt, but are ſaid to be ſuch as *do follow the Lamb whitherſoever he goeth, and in whoſe Mouths is found no Guile*; ſtill denoting that Sincerity by which the Evangelical Righteouſneſs hath been deſcribed. And it's farther obſervable alſo, that it's ſaid there, that *no Man could learn this new Song, but thoſe which are redeemed from the Earth.* And the reaſon is evident, becauſe thoſe who moſtly and chiefly mind earthly things, and ſet their Affections upon them (as thoſe which are not redeemed from the Earth do) neither have nor can have ſuch a grateful Senſe of that ſtupendous raviſhing and tranſporting Love and Goodneſs of our bleſſed Redeemer, in what he hath done and ſuffered for us; as is requiſite to qualifie them to ſound forth his Praiſes with that Feeling and Affection, which the redeemed of the Lord do. Our Saviour hath told us, that the Cares of this World, the Deceitfulneſs of Riches, and the Luſts and Pleaſures of other things, choke the word of the Kingdom, and ſo hinder its Operation. Though Men hear it and profeſs it, yet the great Senſe which too many ſuch have of theſe preſent things, ſtifles their Senſe of ſpiritual, inviſible, and abſent things; ſo that they prevail not upon them to work any ſuch deep Senſe in them of the unparallell'd Love and Goodneſs of our Saviour, in procuring theſe things for us, as they do upon them who have learned to ſing that new Song. Theſe that are unredeemed from the Earth, they ſavour the things of the Fleſh and of the World, more than the things which be of God, and therefore they cannot ſing this new Song with Grace in their Hearts to him.

None then we ſee but *new Covenant Men*, ſuch as are *renewed in the Spirit of their Minds*, can learn this *new Song*: They are a peculiar ſort of Men and Women, a choice or choſen Generation, that can ſhew forth the Praiſes of him who hath called them out of Darkneſs into his marvellous Light. Thoſe whom the Lamb that was ſlain hath redeemed from Hell by his own Blood, are ſuch who are firſt redeemed from the Earth; both from the earthly Minds, and evil Manners of Men of the Earth, whoſe Portion is only in this Life.

This bleſſed Redeemer, whoſe high Praiſes ſhould be in our Mouths, is the Lord from Heaven, and his Kingdom is not of this World, as he himſelf ſaid: And they muſt be of a Heavenly Extraction and born from above, that can skill of the manner of his Kingdom and Government, and of the Nature of the Work and Buſineſs of that People. The Diſcourſe of things proper to that Spiritual State, is to mere Natural Men almoſt like ſpeaking to them in a Language they do not underſtand. Hence when *Nicodemus* heard our Saviour diſcourſe of the neceſſity of being born again, or from above, his Thoughts ran of a Man's entering a ſecond time into his Mother's Womb to be born again. The things of the Spirit of God to the Natural Man, are Fooliſhneſs; ſo far as he is alienated from the Life of God, 1 *Cor.* ii. 14. And the Scripture ſpeaks of the Sons of God, ſuch as are born from above, as of Perſons whom the World knoweth not, 1 *John* iii. 1. All this ſtill ſhews how abſolutely neceſſary it is, in order to our learning the new Song which is ſung before the Throne to the Honour of the Lamb of God that takes away the Sins of the World, that we become new Men, endued with new Principles of living, and with a new Righteouſneſs.

And by being ſo, we ſhall not only be qualified to offer Spiritual Sacrifices of Thankſgiving, acceptable to our Saviour and to the Father by him, but we ſhall thereby alſo recommend him to the World as altogether lovely; which is the greateſt Honour we can do him. For the *new Man* is created after his Likeneſs, in Purity, Humility and Charity; in univerſal Righteouſneſs, Gentleneſs, and Goodneſs, in which reſpect the Followers of Chriſt are ſaid to be *Partakers of a Divine Nature*, and to have *put on Chriſt*. And when Men ſee that his Diſciples become ſuch by following his Doctrine and Example; this redounds to the Honour of their Maſter from whom they learned it, and greatly tends to reconcile Mens Thoughts and Affections to him and to his Religion. And thus they help forward his great Deſign (on which he ſet his Heart) of recovering thoſe that were run from God and Goodneſs, and from their own Happineſs, than in doing which we cannot gratifie him more or pleaſe him better. By becoming ſuch, and by being in the World, as he was in the World, we ſhall ſhew forth the Virtues of our Lord, and what is venerable and praiſe-worthy in him: In reſpect whereof his Followers are ſaid to be the Glory of Chriſt.

And if we have any mind to make our bleſſed Saviour any other return of that ſtupendous Love, which he hath expreſt towards us, beſides Songs of Praiſe and Thankſgiving to the Honour of his Name, he hath told us how we may do it to his great Satisfaction, when he ſaid, *If ye love me, keep my Commandments*, John xiv. 15. As if he ſhould have ſaid, If ye would expreſs the grateful Senſe of my Love to you by Expreſſions of yours to me, then keep my Commandments. For ſaith he again, *Ye are my Friends, if ye do whatſoever I command you* (John xv. 14.) *He that hath my Commandments and keepeth them, he it is that loveth me.* (ver. 21.) Our doing his Commandments tends to the full Accompliſhment of his Deſign of reconciling God and us, and ſo of making us happy. For unleſs we keep his Commandments, we cannot be reconciled to God, and conſequently God will not be reconciled to us. So that if we will not keep his Commandments, we fruſtrate and diſappoint him of his Deſign of Good toward us, and render all his ſore Sufferings to bring this to paſs, to be in vain and of none Effect in reference to us, which muſt needs much diſpleaſe him. But on the contrary, if we do keep his Commandments, then he has the end of his Mediatorial Undertaking, which is the reconciling God to us and us to God, which cannot but be Matter of high Satisfaction and Pleaſure to him; than in contributing towards which, we can no way better gratifie him for all the Love he hath ſhewed us.

And among all the things which he hath commanded us, there is one which he hath ſignalized for his Commandment in ſpecial, as that on which he hath much ſet his Heart, which he expreſſeth in theſe words: *A new Commandment give I unto you, that ye love one another as I have loved you, that ye alſo love one another*, John xiii. 34. In doing of which we ſhall write after his Copy, and ſhew the World whoſe Diſciples we are, and by whom we have been taught. For *by this*, ſaith he, *ſhall all Men know that ye are my Diſciples, if ye have love one to another*, ver. 35.

And we do in ſome poor Meaſure love one another as he hath loved us, when we put on Bowels of Mercy and Kindneſs towards one another; for ſo did he towards us, when he put on our Nature and ſuffered for us in it. And ſo we do alſo when we bear one another's Burthens, and ſo fulfil this Law of Chriſt. For he was touched with the feeling of our Infirmities: He himſelf took on him our Infirmities, and bore our Sickneſſes, as the Scripture ſpeaks. And ſo we do likewiſe when we prefer the publick Good, the Good of many, before our own Eaſe and private Conveniency, like St. *Paul*, who ſought not his own Profit, as he ſays, but the Profit of many that they might be ſaved. For thus our Saviour loved us, when he expoſed himſelf to the ſoreſt Sufferings for the publick Good of Mankind. And becauſe he thus laid down his Life for us, *therefore we alſo ought to lay down our Lives for the Brethren*, when the Intereſt and publick Concern of the Church of God calls for it. And ſo we do in like manner love one another as he hath loved us, when we uſe our Wiſdom, Riches, and Power to make others happy as well as our ſelves. For ſo hath our bleſſed Saviour uſed his to make us happy: Yea he made himſelf poor that we through his Poverty might be made rich. Indeed there is ſo much of that in this Love, which enabled our bleſſed Saviour to do and ſuffer ſo wonderfully for us, for our Good and Benefit as he did, that in nothing we draw more near him, nor in any thing make our ſelves more like him; nor can we in any thing more pleaſe him, than in loving one another, as he hath loved us. Inſomuch as St. *John* ſaith, *He that dwelleth in Love, dwelleth in God, and God in him*, 1 John iv. 16.

And if we love one another, as he hath loved us, we ſhall not only reſemble him in the Act of Love and doing Good, but alſo in the Pleaſure and Satisfaction which he took, and does take, in loving us, and doing us good, as he hath done; and ſo ſhall in ſome ſort *enter into our Maſter's joy*, now for the preſent, by ſharing with him in the joy of doing good. As for our Bleſſed Saviour, the proſpect which he had of how much good he ſhould procure and do for a poor miſerable undone World, by the Shame and Pain which he ſuffered for us, and the Satisfaction and Joy that would accrue to him thereby, was that which in a great meaſure carry'd him through thoſe unparallell'd Sufferings which he underwent for us. *He for the Joy that was ſet before him, endured the Croſs and deſpiſed the Shame*, Heb. xii. 2. The Joy that was ſet before him, was not only his own glorious Exaltation, as the reward of his Sufferings, but alſo the Deliverance and Exaltation which he ſhould procure for all the *Redeemed of the Lord*. Touching this Joy and Pleaſure, and the high Content and Satisfaction which does accrue to our Lord and Saviour upon the account of the good the World receives by what he hath done, ſuffered, and does do for it; the Prophet ſpake by way of Prediction, when he ſaid, *He ſhall ſee of the Travel of his Soul, and ſhall be ſatisfied*, Iſai. liii. 11. What other Motive do we think has the Almighty God and Father of all, to fill Heaven and Earth with his Goodneſs, and to commiſerate a loſt World, and to raiſe up the Tabernacle of *Adam* that was fallen, but the Pleaſure he takes in his Love, and in doing good? *He pardoneth Iniquity, and paſſeth by the Transgreſſion of the Remnant of his Heritage*; and why? but *becauſe he delighteth in Mercy. He exerciſeth Loving-kindneſs, Judgment and Righteouſneſs in the Earth*; and why? *For in theſe things I delight, ſaith the Lord*, Jer. ix. 24.

And moſt certain it is, that if we love one another as Chriſt hath loved us, if we are thus Partakers of a Divine Nature, and are of the Spirit and Temper of Chriſt, and in that ſenſe have put on Chriſt; if we do good to others, by eaſing them of their Burthens, and ſupplying their Needs, both Spiritual and Temporal, refreſhing and comforting them both in Body and Mind, and the like; we ſhall not fail of great Pleaſure and Satisfaction of Mind in doing thus, but ſhall ſhare with our bleſſed Redeemer in our meaſure, in that Joy and Satisfaction which accrues to him in loving us, and doing good to us. St. *John* the loving and beloved Diſciple of our Lord, when once he was ſenſible that he had been an Inſtrument of converting Men to Chriſtianity, and of bad to perſuade them to become good, profeſſeth that he *had no greater Joy than to ſee his Children walking in Truth*, 3 John 4. The Scripture ſuppoſeth it as a known and experienced Truth, that there is great Conſolation in Love, when it ſaith, *If there be therefore any Conſolation in Chriſt, if any Comfort of Love*, &c. Phil. ii. 1. Col. ii. 2. There is doubtleſs no ſuch ſolid Satisfaction in any, no nor in all Worldly Enjoyments, as there is in what doth ſpring up to a Man from a ſenſe of having done good in his Life. *I know*, ſaith *Solomon*, *there is no good in them, but for a Man to rejoice and do good in his Life*, Eccleſ. iii. 12. The ſame *Solomon* ſaith in another place, *That a good Man is ſatisfied from himſelf*, Prov. xiv. 14. And how comes it to paſs that it is ſo? but from his ſenſe of being good, and doing good. *It is a more bleſſed thing*, ſaid our Saviour, *to give than to receive*, Acts xx. 35. And it is ſo, as for other Reaſons, ſo for this, becauſe the Pleaſure of doing good, in a good Man, is greater than the Pleaſure that comes in to another by receiving relief from him.

If then we would be glad to do ſomewhat that might be grateful to our bleſſed Saviour that hath done ſo much for us; if we would at once both pleaſe him, and pleaſure our ſelves with a Chriſt-like, with a God-like Pleaſure; then it behoves us to be loving one another, and doing good to one another, as he hath loved us and done good to us.

To conclude all then in a word: As the New Covenant it ſelf is the fruit of our Saviour's Love to us, ſo the Righteouſneſs of this Covenant, on Condition of which the Bleſſings of it, Pardon of Sin and Eternal Life, are promiſed, conſiſteth in ſuch a Faith as worketh by Love to God and our Saviour, and in loving one another as he hath loved us; and by this Righteouſneſs of Faith, through our Lord Jeſus Chriſt, ſhall we be ſure to be juſtified by God, if it be found in us.

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DISCOURSE

OF

Divine Aſſiſtance,

And the METHOD thereof:

Shewing what Aſſiſtance Men receive from GOD, in performing the Condition of the Promiſe of Pardon of Sin and Eternal Life.

BRITISH MUSEUM

THE

PREFACE to the READER.

MUCH indeed hath been written of the Divine Aſſiſtance in parts, and upon occaſion of handling other Doctrines, ſuch as Repentance, Faith, Regeneration, &c. *But yet I cannot ſay, That much hath been done by any entire and ſet Diſcourſe upon this Subject, eſpecially not upon God's preventing Grace and preparatory Aſſiſtance; which yet is one Branch of the whole, and hugely neceſſary to be well underſtood and conſidered. Upon which account I cannot but think that ſomething farther of this nature, though but vulgarly done, may be of good Uſe to vulgar Capacities, who can better underſtand this great Doctrine when they ſee the parts put together, and how they relate to, and depend one upon another, than otherwiſe they can.*

And therefore the better to prepare the Reader for the enſuing Diſcourſe, I ſhall inſtance in ſome few things, to ſhew the Uſefulneſs of a clear and diſtinct Underſtanding of the Nature and Method of Divine Aſſiſtance, and the Terms on which it may be expected.

And firſt, touching the Method *of God's Aſſiſtance. It is endeavoured in the following Diſcourſe, to ſhew, That God by his preventing Grace uſually begins with Men, in aſſiſting them towards Performance of the Condition of the Promiſe, by raiſing in them a* Senſe *of their Guilt and Danger, and by awakening their Fear; and all to ſtir them up to apply themſelves to the Remedy. For Fear, being a moſt powerful Principle and Spring of Action, when any thing ſtrong, will, if any thing will, put them upon Endeavours to provide for their own Safety. But if Men be ignorant and unacquainted with this Method of God's Aſſiſtance, they will be in much danger of taking theſe firſt Operations of God upon their Minds, to be but like other Thoughts which come and go there, without being much taken notice of: Or elſe but for a fit of Melancholy, to be withſtood and ſtriven againſt; and ſo unawares they may quench the Spirit, under the Notion of removing Melancholy Thoughts. Whereas, if they were made ſenſible of the Nature of God's preparatory Aſſiſtance, they would probably be more afraid to ſlight ſuch working of their Thoughts, leſt in doing ſo, they ſhould ſlight the Warning of God himſelf, and the Safety of their own Souls.*

The Knowledge of this Method of God's Aſſiſtance, ſerves alſo to direct thoſe who labour the Converſion of Souls, and to help on the Work of Repentance in Men, frequently to inculcate upon the Minds of unreformed Sinners, ſuch Arguments and Conſiderations as are apt and proper to make them ſenſible of their Guilt and Danger, and to awaken their Fears. For when by their doing ſo, theſe Applications from without, by the Word, meet with God's Applications to the Mind by his Spirit within, the Operation will be ſo much the more powerful, and the more likely to prevail.

And becauſe Men are too apt to diſcharge themſelves of ſuch Fears, as much as they can, by ſome vain and deluſive Reaſonings in their Minds: And becauſe a Reſolution to become new Men hereafter, though they delay it for the preſent, is one of them; therefore to prevent this, the Greatneſs of the Folly, and the Greatneſs of the Danger of ſuch a Delay, ſhould be ſtrenuouſly urged upon them, as a Folly ſo great, that the Folly of thoſe that ſee their whole Eſtates, or their Lives in apparent Danger, and yet do not make all the haſte they can to ſecure them, is no Folly in Compariſon of this. For they are not only in danger thereby of being eternally loſt, by being ſnatched away under ſuch a Delay, but alſo of being deprived of all Divine Aſſiſtance for the future, although they ſhould live never ſo long. For from him that hath not (i. e. *hath not uſed which that he firſt had)* ſhall be taken away that which he hath, *ſaith our Saviour.*

Bad Men are apt to flatter and deceive themſelves with this Opinion alſo, viz. *That they have no power to be better, or to perform the Condition of the Promiſe, nor never had, and that they cannot be better till God give them of his Grace to be ſo, by giving them more power to that end, than ever yet he gave them: And that it is not conſiſtent with his Mercy, nor with his Juſtice, neither to deſtroy Men for not doing that which he never gave them power to do: From both which together, they are apt to conclude themſelves in a ſafe Condition, eſpecially conſidering, That Chriſt died for them, though otherwiſe they are apparently vicious in their Lives.*

But if they would but underſtand the Method *and* Order *of Divine Aſſiſtance, and* *the Nature and Terms of it, they would find themſelves under a great and dangerous miſtake. For the very Reaſon which they urge as part of the ground of their Confidence of the Safeneſs of their Condition,* viz. *That it is not conſiſtent with the Mercy, nor with the Juſtice of God, to deſtroy Men for not doing that which he never gave them power to do, is a ſtrong Argument to prove, That he doth give ſuch Men whom he deſtroys, before he deſtroys them, power to do that, for the not doing of which he doth deſtroy them; and conſequently, That he hath given ſuch bad Men, as reaſon, as aforeſaid, power to have been better; and that therefore the Mercifulneſs of God can be no Security to them of not being deſtroyed, until they become better. If this were not ſo, it would follow, That either none ſhould periſh, or that it is inconſiſtent with the Mercy and Juſtice of God that they do, according to the Tenour of theſe Mens reaſoning. Both which are equally falſe, and the latter blaſphemous alſo. And therefore it is a deceitful and abſurd way of reaſoning, for ſuch Men to conclude, That the reaſon why they are no better is, becauſe God hath not given them power to be ſo.*

It is true indeed God hath not given power unto Men that are bad, to have been better neceſſarily and unavoidably; for if he had, they could not have been ſo bad as now they are. Nor do I ſay, That God hath given Men ſuch an immediate power to do all that which belongs unto a compleat Performance of the Condition of the Promiſe, but he gives them a remote power to do it, by giving them an immediate power to begin it. And if they do but make uſe of this power, by an actual beginning to perform this Condition, as they may, God will then give them ſo much more of it, as whereby they may finiſh it, unleſs they refuſe to make uſe of it. So that if Men do not perform the Condition of the Promiſe, it is not for want of power, but for want of making uſe of that power which God hath already given them by his preventing Grace; otherwiſe their Deſtruction would not be of themſelves, which yet it is, as all grant.

There are none but upon that awakening which they have had from God one way, and one time or other, might out of a dread of him, and of his Wrath revealed from Heaven againſt all Ungodlineſs and Unrighteouſneſs of Men, have begun to reform and to become leſs ſinful by leaving off ſome ill Practices; and they would have found they could have done ſo in caſe they had been ſure they ſhould have loſt their Lives or Eſtates preſently if they had not. Though they had not power all on a ſudden to become good, yet they had power through God's preventing Grace not to have been ſo bad. The worſt of Men, doubtleſs, had power before ſuch time as by their Obſtinacy and Oppoſition againſt God and his dealing with them they ſinned it away, to have reformed in part: Which to have done out of a dread of God, would have been a beginning to repent, and ſo a beginning to perform the Condition of the Promiſe of Pardon. The Men of Nineveh *by the awakening of their Fears by the preaching of* Jonah, *could, we ſee,* turn from their evil ways, *and in particular,* from the Violence that was in their hands, *Jonah* iii. 8, 10. *And by the ſame aſſiſtance and power by which Men may become leſs bad, they may be able alſo to make more uſe than they have done of the means of Grace, and to become poſitively better thereby to a degree. Which if they do, and do not by ſeeking out vain Reaſonings and Evaſions, obliterate that* Senſe *by which they began to be better, God will ſupply them with more power to proceed in the Work of* Reformation, *until it come to a Work of* Renovation *of the whole Man, both in Heart and Life, and therein unto a Performance of the Condition of the Promiſe.*

And as it is, we ſee, matter of great moment that the People be made to underſtand the Method of Divine Aſſiſtance, ſo is it of no leſs Concernment for them to underſtand upon what Terms it may be expected; as whether upon previous Conditions or without. For if it be not to be expected but upon Conditions to be performed on our part, and yet we think otherwiſe, we ſhall be in extream great danger of depriving our ſelves of that aſſiſtance, by neglecting what belongs to us, to make our ſelves capable of it.

And therefore for a right Underſtanding of this matter, we muſt diſtinguiſh between ſuch an Aſſiſtance as is only preparatory to a farther Aſſiſtance; and that by means of which, the Condition of the Promiſe is compleatly performed. And if we do, we ſhall find that the preparatory Aſſiſtance is indeed afforded unto Men without any Condition at all, ſave what our Saviour hath performed by his Mediatorial Obedience to obtain it for us. And this preparatory Aſſiſtance is that which we call God's preventing Grace, becauſe by it he prevents all Endeavours on our part to make our ſelves capable of it. For he is aforehand with us in giving us the Goſpel, and the Miniſtry of it, who live where it is; and ſo he is by his ſecret Operations upon our Minds to make us ſenſible of our Danger, thereby to ſtir us up to bethink our ſelves how we may eſcape it: And all this before we do any thing our ſelves with an intent to raiſe ſuch a Senſe or Conſideration in our ſelves.

But although God's Preparatory Aſſiſtance and Preventing Grace is vouchſafed unto Men without any Condition, yet his farther *Aſſiſtance is promiſed but upon Condition of making uſe of his* former. *When God hath been at work in Mens Minds, to make them ſenſible of the danger of their ſinful ſtate, and bad tendency of their evil ways, and hath laid before them how they may eſcape it; if yet they will not make ſo much uſe of all this, as thereupon to concern themſelves more than they had done about the affairs of their Souls and another World, they can have no reaſon to promiſe themſelves any* farther *Aſſiſtance from* God; *nor can they be ſure to have any repetition of the firſt. For our Saviour hath told us, ſaying,* What meaſure ye mete, it ſhall be meaſured unto you: And to you that hear, more ſhall be given, *Mark* iv. 24. *According to what meaſure we mete in the attendance, or non-attendance of our Minds to make uſe of thoſe Aids and Aſſiſtances which God affords us, it will be meaſured to us, in affording, or not affording us more. And when he ſays, that* unto you that hear, more ſhall be given, *we cannot underſtand more thereby, than that the promiſe of more Aſſiſtance is made, but only to ſuch as do attend to what God hath already admoniſhed them of, and who have ſo far taken into Conſideration what he hath ſaid or done to them by his Word, and by his Works of Providence without, and by the awakening Operations of his Spirit within, as not to ſlight them, but to be inclined thereby to be more mindful and ſolicitous about their Salvation than ever they were before.*

And that our Saviour's words aforeſaid, To you that hear, more ſhall be given, *are to be underſtood in a Conditional ſenſe; that is, that more ſhall be given upon Condition of attending to what had been done before, is evident by his next words,* ver. 25. For he that hath, to him more ſhall be given; and he that hath not, from him ſhall be taken away even that which he hath: *That is, (as will be ſhewed in the following Diſcourſe) from him that hath not uſed and improved that which was firſt given him, ſhall be taken away that which he already had, rather than have any more given him. By which Aſſertion of our Saviour it appears, That this is a Law of Heaven, a Rule which Almighty God is reſolved ordinarily to obſerve, in diſpenſing his Aſſiſtances unto Men, that thoſe who do not make ſome good uſe of this preventing Grace, his former Aſſiſtance ſhall, after ſome time of trial, have that ſuſpended, and the current of it ſtopt: As, on the other hand, they that do ſhall have more of it given them. And if they make a good uſe of that* more *alſo, they ſhall have more added to that other more, a ſecond degree of Aſſiſtance added to the firſt, and a third to the ſecond, and ſo on. For God is and will be leading the way, he will be aforehand with us in his Aſſiſtances; and if we do but follow him in our Endeavours to make uſe of them, he will ſtill afford us more and more, until he hath carried us up to a good degree towards Perfection. He is ſtill working in us* to will and to do; *that is, to will better and to do better, by aſſiſting us ſo to do: And if we do but work too, as he expects we ſhould, by making uſe of his Aſſiſtances to work out our own Salvation, the great buſineſs of our Salvation will go on proſperouſly.*

This, I doubt not, is the Truth *which lies in the middle way, between the two contrary Extreams of* Pelagianiſm *on the one hand, and the Opinion of* Irreſiſtible Grace *on the other; into one of which, Men will be in great danger to fall, if they do not underſtand the Nature and Terms of Divine Aſſiſtance.*

The right Underſtanding and due Conſideration of this Doctrine of Divine Aſſiſtance, is very neceſſary alſo to make us all throughly ſenſible *how much the Work of Grace from the beginning to its greateſt growth and perfection, depends upon the Divine* Aids. *Tho' it is not God's method to convert Men without their own endeavours, and uſe of the Means appointed and vouchſafed by him, yet the ſucceſs of ſuch Endeavours depends upon the concurrent Operation and Influence of the Spirit of God.* Paul *may plant, and* Apollos *water, and we likewiſe uſe our Endeavours, but yet it is* God that gives the increaſe, *and cauſes them to proſper. Nay, it is God, who by his Preventing Grace does firſt excite in us that, from which all our Endeavours of this nature do ſpring: For it is* God that worketh in us to will and to do of his good pleaſure, *Phil,* ii. 13.

Whatever therefore our Endeavours may be, and how excellent ſoever the External Means are, which are vouchſafed us for the begetting or increaſing of Grace, yet it is not ſafe to depend upon theſe for either (otherwiſe than as they are means by which God conveys his Grace to us, but upon the gracious and powerful Operation of God by thoſe means. And that is the reaſon why in the uſe of all means we are to ſeek unto God by Prayer, for ſomewhat beyond what he hath put into the means or inſtruments of Grace only as ſuch. Hence building up our ſelves in our moſt Holy Faith, *and* praying in the Holy Ghoſt, *are joined together,* Jude 20. *What made the Goſpel to make ſo ſtrange an alteration* *in the World on a ſudden, as it did in the Minds and Manners of Men upon its firſt ſetting forth after our Saviour's Aſcenſion? but; that mighty Preſence of the Spirit that accompanied it unto the Minds of Men. We cannot ſay it was only becauſe of the Miracles that kept pace with it, which yet were wrought by the Power of the Spirit. For how little did the numerous and marvelous Miracles of our Saviour prevail, (though he ſpake alſo as never Man ſpake) until the time came that the Spirit was poured out in greater abundance, as well on the Hearers as on the Preachers of the Goſpel. The Apoſtles in their ſpiritual Warfare did indeed* pluck down ſtrong holds, caſt down imaginations, and every high thing that exalted it ſelf againſt the Knowledge of God; *but it was becauſe the* Weapons of their Warfare were mighty through God; *that is, through the mightineſs of his Operation that went along with them,* 2 Cor. x. 4, 5.

And as the ſenſe of how much the Work of Grace depends upon the Divine Aſſiſtance, proceeds from the Knowledge and Conſideration of the Nature *of it; ſo our* Application *to God, and* Dependence *upon him for it, depends upon the ſame Knowledge and Senſe alſo. For unleſs Men have ſome knowledge and ſenſe, as of their need of Grace, and of the neceſſity of their performing the Condition of the Promiſe in order to their obtaining the Benefits promiſed, ſo unleſs they have ſome ſenſe alſo of the neceſſity of Divine Aſſiſtance to perform that Condition, and on the Terms on which they may have it, they will neither deſire theſe things, nor uſe God's appointed means to obtain them, nor depend upon him for them in the uſe of means. But by how much the more ſenſe they have of their need of theſe things, and of God's willingneſs to aſſiſt them in the uſe of means for the obtaining them, and of his willingneſs to confer upon them ſuch Terms, by ſo much will they apply themſelves to God for them, and to the uſe of the means by which he conveys them, and in doing ſo depend upon him for them. And by how much they do thus, by ſo much they are likely to be* filled with the Spirit, *and to be taken out of the Spirit of the World, and to be acted by another Spirit, and to have their Hearts lifted up in the way of the Lord. For the Holy Spirit will moſt certainly be given unto ſuch, who out of a ſenſe of their great need of it, and of its Excellency and Uſefulneſs, do earneſtly beg it of God, and depend upon him for it, in a conſcientious uſe of that Aſſiſtance they have already received. For our bleſſed Saviour hath aſſured us, that* the Heavenly Father will much more, and much ſooner give the Holy Spirit to thoſe that ask it, than Earthly Parents will give good Gifts unto their Children, *Luke* xi. 13. I love them that love me, and they that ſeek me early ſhall find me, *ſaith the Wiſdom of God, and is truly applicable unto the Spirit of God,* Prov. viii. 17.

And by how much we are made ſenſible that all our Chriſtian Performances depend upon the Divine Aſſiſtance, by ſo much the leſs we are in danger of truſting in our own Strength, or of attributing them to our ſelves; and by ſo much we are likely alſo to aſcribe them all to God, and to ſay with David, Of thine own have we given thee; *and with the other Prophet,* Thou Lord haſt wrought all our Works in us; *and accordingly to love and to praiſe him for all his Aids.*

And laſtly, The knowledge of the Doctrine of Divine Aſſiſtance is of great uſe likewiſe to animate and hearten us in the way of our Duty, againſt the Diſcouragements we meet with in it, from the Difficulties of performing it, and Oppoſitions againſt us in it. For by the Doctrine of the Scriptures concerning Divine Aſſiſtance, we are aſſured, that if we do but in good earneſt ſet about our Duty in performing the Condition of the Promiſe, our Ability to perform it will increaſe upon our hands: They that wait upon the Lord ſhall renew their ſtrength; and to him that hath, more ſhall be given, and he ſhall have abundance. *And by how much our Strength doth increaſe through the Divine Aſſiſtance, by ſo much the Work will grow more and more eaſie, and the Difficulty wear off. That which is with difficulty done by one, while he hath but the ſtrength of a Child, will be done with eaſe and pleaſure when he grows towards the ſtrength of a Man. And altho' we meet with Oppoſition and Temptation, to turn us back again after we have ſet out, (and uſually the greateſt difficulty is found in our entrance upon the Work, while we are unaccuſtomed to it, while our Corruptions are yet ſtrong, and our Strength but little) yet if we do but hold on our Way, and rally again as oft as we receive any Foils, we ſhall be ſure to overcome at laſt, and come off with compleat Victory;* Becauſe, *as St.* John *ſaith,* greater is he that is in us, than he that is in the World. *And tho' our* beginning be but ſmall, yet our latter end ſhall greatly increaſe. *It is ſaid of our bleſſed Saviour,* that a bruiſed Reed he ſhall not break, and ſmoaking Flax he ſhall not quench, until he ſend forth Judgment unto Victory.

And thus we ſee how very much depends upon the due Knowledge and Underſtanding of the Nature and Method of Divine Aſſiſtance, and of the Terms on which we may expect it.

The better Underſtanding and practical Uſe of all which, by ſuch whoſe Abilities do not ſet them above it, is the deſign of the following Diſcourſe.

A DIS-

A
DISCOURSE
OF
Divine Aſſiſtance,
And the METHOD thereof.

CHAP. I.

How God prepares Men towards performing the Condition of the Promiſe, by cauſing Principles of Natural Religion to operate on the Mind.

ALmighty God and our Saviour have thus far prevented all Endeavours of ours towards the bringing about our Salvation: The Father hath given his Son to be the Saviour of the World, and the Son hath given himſelf a Ranſom for all, and taſted Death for every Man: And upon account of his Death and Paſſion, a Promiſe is made to all Men of Pardon of Sin and Eternal Life, upon Condition of Repentance, Faith, and ſincere Obedience. And God the Father, Son, and Holy Spirit, are not only ready, willing and deſirous to *aſſiſt us to perform this Condition*, but do actually aſſiſt even thoſe towards it to a degree, and until that Aſſiſtance is refuſed, oppoſed and rejected, who yet periſh for want only of performing that Condition.

Now this Divine Aſſiſtance which Men receive in performing the Condition on which Pardon and Life are promiſed, is intended to be the ſubject Matter of this Diſcourſe. In the entrance upon which, I ſhall ſuppoſe and take for granted, that the Promiſe of the Pardon of Sin and Eternal Life, is conditional; and that Faith, Repentance, and ſincere Obedience, make up the whole of this Condition.

And that we may the better come to underſtand the Nature, Manner, and Method of this *Divine Aſſiſtance*, I ſhall endeavour two things.

1. To ſhew what is done by God by way of *Preparation*, to prepare and diſpoſe the Minds of Men to perform the Condition of the Promiſe, in repenting, believing, and in ſincerely obeying the Goſpel.

2. To ſhew what is done by God to aſſiſt them in that Performance being ſo prepared.

That ſomething is done by God by way of *Preparation*, without which no Man does ſavingly believe in Chriſt, I gather from our Saviour's own words in *John* vi. 44. *No Man can come to me, except the Father which hath ſent me draw him.* And again, ver. 65. *Therefore ſaid I unto you, that no Man can come to me, except it were given unto him of my Father.* And in ver. 45. thus, *Every Man therefore that hath heard and learned of the Father, cometh unto me.* Theſe Sayings of our Saviour ſhew that ſomething muſt be done upon Men by God the Father, before they can repair to Chriſt, as to the great Maſter that hath the *words of Eternal Life*, as reſolving to be ruled and governed by his Doctrine and Precepts in ſeeking Salvation; or which is the ſame, before they can become his real and true Diſciples or Scholars, in learning practically of him the way to Eternal Life: For that is it I underſtand by *coming to Chriſt*. And this, according to our Saviour's Doctrine, no Man can do, that is not firſt prepared for it by the Father, by hearing and learning of him, and by being drawn by him.

Now what effect upon the Soul that is, or what Temper of Mind it is which is cauſed by the Father's teaching, and which does prepare Men ſo as that they come to Chriſt thereupon, is not here ſaid in the fore-cited words of our Saviour. But we may be able to make ſome Judgment of it, after two or three things are conſidered, which our Saviour's words direct us to.

1. It is not Faith it ſelf, as having Chriſt for its Object. For *coming to Chriſt*, or *believing in him*, is the effect of that Temper of Mind which is wrought by the *Father's teaching* and *drawing* here ſpoken of, or at leaſt is conſequent to it.

2. This Temper of Mind, wrought by the Father's Teaching or Operation, is ſuch in the nature of it as does incline and diſpoſe Men to come to Chriſt, and to believe in him, though it be not that *coming to him* it ſelf, nor that *believing in him*. *For every Man that hath heard and learned of the Father, does come to the Son.*

3. This Temper of Mind is ſuch an Effect, and that by which it is wrought ſuch an Act, as is moſt properly attributed unto God the Father. It is that which comes by Mens learning of the *Father*, it is that by which the *Father* draws them.

Theſe things conſidered, that Temper of Mind then which does moſt incline and diſpoſe Men to come to Chriſt, and to believe in him, to embrace the Grace offered through him and by him, and to ſubmit to the Terms on which it is offered, muſt needs be that Effect upon the Soul which our Saviour here ſpeaks of, without which no Man can come to him.

And this, I conceive, we ſhall find to be a *ſtrong Senſe* upon the Mind, of the Guilt of Sin, and of a liableneſs to God's Wrath thereby, accompanied with a fear of it, and with Anxiety of Mind about one's future ſtate after Death; and likewiſe a ſenſe of the different tendency of moral Righteouſneſs and Goodneſs, and a teachable Frame of Spirit, as the Effect and Conſequence of ſuch a *Senſe*.

For that Uneaſineſs of Mind which the foreſaid Senſe cauſeth, begets a teachable Frame of Spirit, makes Men willing to hearken to thoſe Terms which are offered in the Goſpel, to free them from the foreſaid Fears, Pain, and Anxiety of Mind. The Senſe I ſpeak of, and the Pain cauſed thereby, prevails againſt thoſe *Prejudices* by outweighing them, which Men before and till then had againſt thoſe Terms, without ſubmitting to which, Pardon and Salvation are not to be had, and makes them willing to accept of them. Though while they are but in the Way of Preparation to perform the Condition of the Promiſe, they are not come ſo far as to chuſe to ſubmit to that Condition out of love to thoſe things of which it does conſiſt; yet their ſenſe of danger, and the pain of fear of falling under it, may incline them to think their ſubmitting to the Condition of the Promiſe much more tolerable and ſupportable than their ſenſe of Danger and pain of Fear is, which is upon them; and that will diſpoſe them to take ſuch things into Conſideration, as will in a little time reconcile their Minds and Wills to thoſe things in which the Condition of the Promiſe doth conſiſt: And if it do but that, yet it is preparatory to that performance.

Now this *ſenſe* of Guilt and Danger, and of the better tendency of moral Righteouſneſs and Goodneſs, may be raiſed in the Mind by the Operation of Principles of Natural Religion, when God is pleaſed to ſet them home, and to make the force and power of them to be felt, as I ſhall after ſhew. And that may be the reaſon why all this preparatory Work upon the Mind is aſcribed unto *God the Father*, as we ſee it is by our Saviour. For Natural Religion, and the effects of it upon the Mind, are moſt properly aſcribed unto *God the Father*; and the reaſon is, becauſe Natural Religion was planted by him in the Nature of Man before the Fall, while Supernatural Religion by the Mediator had not yet any being in Men. And preparation for Religion ſupernaturally revealed (as the Religion of believing in Chriſt is) may well be aſcribed unto our being taught by Natural Religion, becauſe Religion Supernatural is founded in that which is Natural. Men muſt firſt believe the Being of God, and his Attributes, before they can believe Supernatural Revelations to be from him, and ſo to be undoubtedly true. *He that comes to God, muſt believe that he is, and that he is a rewarder of them that diligently ſeek him*, Heb. xi. 6.

Men may indeed be prepared by the Father to come to Chriſt, by ſome of the ſame Doctrines which our Saviour himſelf taught, when powerfully impreſs'd upon the Mind, and yet this be done by Principles of Natural Religion, becauſe a great part of his Doctrine is the ſame with Natural Religion; only Natural Religion is more perceptible by his Doctrine, than while only in the dark Minds of Men. He came, as he himſelf ſays, *not to deſtroy, but to fill up the Law*; to make a more compleat diſcovery of the Latitude and Spirituality of the Natural Law, than *Moſes* and all the Prophets had done, *Matth.* v. 17. But the Father's teaching and drawing, mentioned by our Saviour, being but to prepare Men to receive Principles purely Evangelical, it cannot reaſonably be thought to be done by ſuch, but by thoſe which are Natural.

To believe then the Being of God, and his Attributes, the Immortality of the Soul, and a future State, the different tendency of moral Good and Evil, and the Rewards and Puniſhments in another World, are Principles of Natural Religion. And a powerful Impreſſion of theſe Principles upon the Minds of guilty Perſons by Almighty God, hath a great tendency in it to prepare and diſpoſe them for a belief of the Goſpel, when made known to them with the Evidence of its Divinity; and that in a double reſpect.

1. As they come to be convinced thereby of the Guilt of Sin, and of their Obnoxiouſneſs by that to the Wrath of Almighty God, and to be anxiouſly concerned in their own Minds about their future ſtate after Death.

2. As they come thereby to a ſenſible diſcerning of the Nature and Tendency of moral Righteouſneſs and Goodneſs.

1. Such a powerful Impreſſion upon the Mind, of Principles of Natural Religion, as I have ſaid, prepares Men for a Belief in Chriſt, as they come thereby to be convinced of their Guiltineſs and of their Obnoxiouſneſs by that unto the Wrath of Almighty God, and to be anxiouſly concerned in their own Minds about their future ſtate after Death.

The natural Operation of natural Conſcience, doth ſomething to make Men ſenſible of the Guilt of Sin, and of their liableneſs to the Divine Diſpleaſure thereby. St. *Paul*, ſpeaking of the Heathen that had not the Law, ſaith, That their *Thoughts did accuſe them*, when Sin was committed againſt the Dictates of the Light and Law of Nature; and that their *Conſcience did bear them witneſs*, That ſuch Accuſations were true; *They knew the Judgment of God, That thoſe who did ſuch things were worthy of death*, Rom. ii. 15. and i. 32. The Conſequence of all which, when ſet home upon the Mind by God, by a vigorous Operation, muſt needs be diſquietneſs, fear, and anxiety of Mind, and doubtful apprehenſions touching God's diſpleaſure and the future State.

And that the very Heathen were upon this account in an uneaſie Condition, and under diſquieting Apprehenſions of the Divine Diſpleaſure, appears by the many Sacrifices which they offered to atone God, and to appeaſe the Clamour of their own Conſciences. And well might their Condition be very uneaſie to their Minds, while they were certain of their liableneſs to the Divine Diſpleaſure, but ignorant and uncertain of any Remedy againſt it. St. *Paul* deſcribes their Condition to be ſuch, as that they were *without hope*, *Epheſ.* ii. 12. that they *were in darkneſs*, not knowing whither they were going, or what would become of them at laſt. They had nothing of revealed Religion, whereby to know with any certainty, that God would pardon them upon Repentance. And therefore their future ſtate muſt needs have hung in doubt before them, and have cauſed fear day and night.

From this Fear and Doubtfulneſs of Mind, doubtleſs it was, that beſides their Sacrifices, they ran into ſo many other Superſtitions as they did, as hoping by them to appeaſe the Diſpleaſure of God, and to make ſome Compenſation for their Offences againſt him, as by puniſhing themſelves for them by Severities which they exerciſed upon their own Bodies, and ſometimes upon their own Children.

I mention theſe things, to ſhew in what anxiety of Mind the very Heathen were, by reaſon of the Operation of Natural Conſcience, under the ſenſe of their Guilt of Sin, and of their Obnoxiouſneſs to God thereby. And this Senſe, and theſe Fears, as the effect of Natural Conſcience, were increaſed and heightned, as it pleaſed God by his ſecret Operation upon the Mind, to give weight unto them; as we may eaſily conceive by what befel *Cain* and *Judas* in that caſe, when they were ſo unable as they were, to bear the Laſhings of their own Conſciences.

Nor could their Sacrifices give that eaſe to their guilty Conſciences which they ſought for by them, unleſs they could have diſcerned more of proportion in them to the Nature of the Immortal God which made Heaven and Earth, than they could with any great Confidence fanſie there was, to make Compenſation to him for their Offences. Thoſe Sacrifices which the Jews offered from time to time, though by God's own Appointment, could never make thoſe, for whom they were offered, *perfect as pertaining to the Conſcience*, as the Apoſtle ſpeaks, *Heb.* x. They could not *purge the Conſcience* from thoſe Fears and troubleſome Apprehenſions, which the Senſe of the Guilt of Sin raiſed in them. For which cauſe they, and not only Sinners of the Gentiles, *were through fear of Death, all their Life-time ſubject unto Bondage*, as not knowing for all thoſe Sacrifices, what the Event and Conſequence of Death might be unto guilty Perſons obnoxious to God, *Heb.* ii. 15.

It is true indeed, theſe Impreſſions of natural Religion, are not made by God on all Men alike, and conſequently all are not alike awakened by them: Though none, I preſume, are without Fears and Doubts, more or leſs, about their future State, until they are cured of them, by living up to Principles of revealed Religion; or elſe by a deſperate Courſe of ſinning, have ſinned themſelves into a kind of *reprobate Mind*, and become *paſt feeling*. And then indeed they may, through *Searedneſs of Conſcience*, come to have little or no feeling of thoſe diſquieting Effects of the Guilt of Sin, whereof I ſpeak.

But Men do not come to this, until they have greatly neglected, and not attended to this teaching of the Father by Impreſſions of natural Religion; not until they have been labouring to put all Thoughts about their future State, and their Liableneſs to God's Diſpleaſure out of their Minds, that they might be no more troubled with them.

But when Men will needs deal thus from time to time with God and themſelves, and bid God himſelf and all ſerious Thoughts about another World, depart from them; then indeed God many times withdraws his ſecret way of working upon their Minds by powerful Impreſſions of natural Religion (yea, and of revealed Religion too in like caſe) and leaves them to fall into that Spiritual *Slumber or Sleep* St. *Paul* ſpeaks of, *Rom.* xi. 8. By which Sleep the inward Senſes of their Souls are bound up, as the bodily Senſes in bodily Sleep are; ſo that they no more hear, ſee, feel, or perceive in a Spiritual Senſe, what God ſays or does to them, than a Man in a natural Sleep does perceive what is ſpoken or done to him.

But this is not the caſe of thoſe, whom the Father by his teaching draws to Chriſt: He keeps their Conſcience waking, and makes Sin uneaſie to them by the Fears it raiſes in their Minds, of what may be the Event of all at laſt.

Now ſuch an Operation of God upon the Mind, as I have been ſpeaking of, hath certainly a Tendency in it to draw Men to Chriſt, when ſufficiently revealed, and to make them willing to receive the Goſpel, and to become his Diſciples.

And the reaſon hereof is taken from the *Suitableneſs* that is between the Minds of Men ſo affected, and the Goſpel. Men ſo prepared by the Father's teaching, are ſenſible of the troubleſome and dangerous Condition into which Sin hath brought them. And nothing can be more acceptable to ſuch, than a Diſcovery and Offer of that which will give eaſe unto their troubled Thoughts and doubtful Minds; and this the Goſpel of Chriſt is exactly fitted and provided to do.

This Goſpel diſcovers unto them, that the Guilt of Sin, as to the penal part, is taken away by the Son of God, and by his ſuffering for them. This Goſpel contains a Proclamation from Heaven, publiſhing and declaring God's Willingneſs upon the account of his Son's ſuffering for them, to be reconciled to, and to pardon all Sinners whatſoever, that will but ceaſe from their wilful Rebellion againſt him, and come under his Son's moſt gentle and gracious Government, his eaſie Yoke, and light Burthen.

Such good News as this, was a *ſuitable Good*, to ſuch as were before under Doubts and Fears, Whether God would not prove an Enemy to them at laſt, who had carried it as Enemies to him all along, and avenge himſelf on them for their Oppoſition againſt him. This is a *Good* ſo *ſuitable* to ſuch, that nothing could give eaſe to their Minds like it. All the things this World affords, can no more do it, than Silver and Gold can eaſe the Pain of Hunger and Thirſt, when Food is denied. It is the Suitableneſs of the Goſpel, and a Mind ſo prepared, as I have ſhewed, that draws Men to Chriſt, when the Goſpel reveals him for ſuch a Saviour as he is.

This is that which makes the very Meſſengers, which bring the glad Tidings of the Goſpel, acceptable to ſuch for their Meſſage ſake. *How beautiful*, ſaith St. *Paul*, *are the*

the Feet of them which preach the Goſpel of Peace, and bring glad Tidings of good things? Rom. x. 15. And how beautiful were his Feet in the Eyes of the *Galatian* Gentiles, when he firſt brought the Goſpel among them? Who before were in Fear and Doubt about their future State, and without Hope: I ſay, how beautiful were his Feet upon this account, when they *received him as an Angel of God, yea, as Chriſt Jeſus*, as he himſelf ſaith, and counted *the Bleſſedneſs* ſo great, that, as he ſays, *they could, if it had been poſſible, have plucked out their own Eyes, and have given them unto him*, Gal. iv. 14, 15.

The News of ſuch a Saviour, as the Goſpel declares him to be, is to ſuch as are in Darkneſs and Anxiety of Mind, concerning their future State after Death, like the Day-Star and riſing Sun to ſuch as have been in the Uncomfortableneſs of a gloomy and dark Night. Hence he is ſtiled the *bright and Morning Star*, the *Day-Spring from on high*, the *Sun of Righteouſneſs that does ariſe with healing in his Wings.*

The Angel which firſt publiſhed the Birth of Chriſt to the Shepherds, ſaid, *Behold, I bring you good Tidings of great Joy, which ſhall be to all People*, Luke ii. 10. And ſo the Goſpel hath proved to be, eſpecially to thoſe who have been prepared to receive it, by being concerned in their own Minds how they ſhould do to be ſaved. Thus when our Saviour preached the Goſpel firſt in *Galilee*, it is ſaid, That *then the People ſaw a great Light, and to them who ſate in the Region of the Shadow of Death, Light was ſprung up*, Matth. iv. So ſuch as were *pricked* in their Hearts through a Senſe of Guilt and Danger, *gladly received* the Word, which brought them Tidings of Remiſſion of Sin through Chriſt upon Repentance, *Acts* ii. 37, 42. Thus again, When the Goſpel was firſt preached in *Samaria*, it is ſaid, *there was great Joy in that City*, *Acts* viii. The Gentiles alſo when they had the Goſpel firſt preached unto them at *Antioch, they were glad, and glorified the Word of the Lord*, Acts xiii. 47.

The Goſpel was not ſo welcome to all where it came; and what was the reaſon it was not as well as to others? The reaſon was, Becauſe they had not learned by the Father's teaching, as ſome had done, but ſtifled the Operations of natural Light in their Minds, and had laboured to lay their Conſciences aſleep again, after at any time they had been awakened by God. They laboured to put Thoughts about their future State out of their Minds, becauſe they found them troubleſome unto them. *They cloſed their Eyes and ſtopped their Ears* againſt any thing that tended to awaken them.

But all did not ſo, but remained thoughtful about their future State after Death, when God once had awakened them by ſtrong Impreſſions of natural Religion, to be concerned in their own Minds about it. And they were ſuch as theſe, who were wont to receive the Goſpel, and believe it when it came among them. As we ſee, for inſtance, in thoſe Gentiles to whom St. *Paul* and *Barnabas* preached, *Acts* xiii. 48. For it is ſaid of them, *As many as were ordained to Eternal Life, believed.* Or, as others from the Greek read it, *As many as were diſpoſed to*, or *for Eternal Life, believed:* That is, as I, after others, underſtand it, As many as were ordered, or whoſe Thoughts were ordered, and Minds diſpoſed for Eternal Life; that is, to look after Eternal Life, theſe were the People that believed.

And indeed the Goſpel was deſign'd in chief, as it ſhould ſeem, for thoſe whoſe Hearts and Minds are bruiſed or broken with Fears and Cares about their Salvation. For thus run the words of that Prophecy which was fulfilled in the Publication of the Goſpel by Chriſt. *The Spirit of the Lord is upon me, becauſe he hath anointed me to preach the Goſpel to the poor, he hath ſent me to heal the broken hearted, to preach Deliverance to the Captives, and recovery of ſight to the Blind, to ſet at liberty them that are bruiſed, to preach the acceptable Year of the Lord*, Luke iv. 18, 19. Which is true, not only in reſpect of thoſe that are bruiſed and broken in Heart with godly Sorrow for Sin, but alſo in reſpect of ſuch whoſe Hearts and Minds are bruiſed and battered with Fears and Terrours, in reference to that Miſery to which they ſtand expoſed for Sin.

And it is farther conſiderable to our purpoſe, that thoſe which our Saviour invites to come to him, and promiſeth them *Reſt* if they do, are ſuch as *labour and are heavy laden*; that *labour under, and are laden* with anxious Thoughts and Cares about their future State; for they are a weariſome Burthen to the Mind, *Matth.* xi. 28. And again, *If any Man thirſt, let him come to me and drink*, ſaith our Saviour, *John* vii. 37. and *let him that is athirſt come*, Rev. xxii. 17. to wit, ſuch as lack and long for ſome cooling and refreſhing to their Minds and Spirits, which are heated and inflamed with anxious Thoughts and Cares about the Condition of their Souls for the future, when they ſhall leave the Body. For this Invitation is made to ſuch as were not yet come to Chriſt, had not yet truly believed in him: For a true Belief in him quencheth this kind of thirſt. And therefore our Saviour ſaith, *He that believeth in me, ſhall never thirſt*, John vi. 35. And again, *Whoſoever drinketh of the Water which I ſhall give him, ſhall never thirſt*, John iv. 14. This Water, when once well drunk of, quencheth that Flame which before burnt up the Spirits.

Again, to ſhew what Preparation of Mind is neceſſary to make us prize Chriſt when offered, and willing to be governed by him in order to our cure and eaſe, conſider that ſaying of our Saviour, *Matth.* ix. 12. *The whole need not the Phyſician, but the ſick*; to wit, ſuch as are *ill at eaſe in their own Minds*, for that is the meaning of the Metaphor, I conceive. Other than ſuch have not a ſenſe of their need of a Phyſician, nor will care to be governed by his Methods of Phyſick. Which was the reaſon why our Saviour choſe rather to be among Publicans and Sinners than Phariſees: For thoſe being more ſenſible of their Obnoxiouſneſs to God's Diſpleaſure than the Phariſees were, who *truſted in themſelves that they were righteous*, were better prepared to receive the Goſpel than the Phariſees were. Which appears by that ſaying of Chriſt to them, *Matth.* xxi. 31. *Verily I ſay unto you, that the Publicans and Harlots go into the Kingdom of Heaven before you.*

Thus we ſee how the Teaching of the Father by Impreſſions of natural Religion upon the Mind, prepares Men for a Belief in Chriſt, and a Receiving his Goſpel, as they come thereby to be convinced of their Guiltineſs, and of their Obnoxiouſneſs to the Diſpleaſure of God thereby, and to be concerned in their own Minds about their future ſtate after Death.

2. I am now in the ſecond place to ſhew how the Teaching of the Father by natural Religion prepares Men for a Belief of the Goſpel, as they come thereby to a ſenſible diſcerning of the nature and tendency of moral Righteouſneſs and Goodneſs. Men are taught by natural Religion, that it is a thing good in it ſelf, and well becoming them to adore and worſhip God, the Author of their Being, and to ſeek unto him in all their needs; to be juſt and faithful, and kind one to another. And they know, and find by Experience, that when they moſt obſerve to do ſo, they have moſt eaſe in their own Minds. Their Conſciences never trouble them for any thing of this nature: Theſe things, when they do them, do not make them afraid of God, as things of a contrary nature do. Such as theſe are things about which Mens *Thoughts do excuſe* them, as the Apoſtle's Phraſe is, *Rom.* ii. 15. And Men find a vaſt difference between *excuſing* and *accuſing Thoughts*. Theſe do not draw Men before the Judgment-Seat of God, before the Judgment-Day does come, as accuſing Thoughts do.

Now the ſtronger ſenſe Men have of the excellent Nature of moral Righteouſneſs and Goodneſs, and of its peaceable and comfortable effects upon the Mind, the better prepared they muſt needs be to put on the Yoke of Chriſt, and to ſubmit to his Government and Precepts of Life; becauſe thoſe Precepts of his, are almoſt, and in a manner *all* of them, of *a moral nature*. The things which he enjoins his Diſciples are generally good in themſelves, and rather to be choſen than their contrary, in caſe there were no other reward attending them, but only their ſuitableneſs to Humane Nature. The Minds of Men are better appaid and ſatisfied in doing thoſe things which Chriſt enjoins, whether they know he enjoins them or no, than they would or can be in doing the contrary. To do to all Men as we would they ſhould do to us, under like Circumſtances, brings more ſatisfaction to the Mind than the contrary. Humility brings more eaſe to the Mind, than Pride; and ſo does Love, than Envy and Malice; and ſo does Meekneſs, than Wrath and Rage; and ſo does Mercy, than Cruelty; and ſo do moderate Deſires to the Accommodations of this Life, than thoſe which are exceſſive. And Temperance and Chaſtity contribute more to the eaſe and health of the Body, than Intemperance, and ſo of the reſt.

The Conſequence of all which is, That the more Men are, by powerful Impreſſions of natural Religion upon the Mind, made ſenſible of the Excellency of moral Righteouſneſs and Goodneſs, and of the peaceable and comfortable Effects of the Practice of it, the ſooner and the more eaſily they will be induced to embrace the Doctrine of our Saviour, which in reference to Practice, conſiſteth moſtly of matters of that nature.

For we muſt know that here the matter ſticks moſt with Men: They are well enough content to hear of Chriſt's having expiated Sin by the Sacrifice of his Death, and that

Forgiveneſs is preached in his Name. But to Men that are wedded to their ſeveral Luſts of Immorality, the Precepts of Chriſt, are quite contrary to thoſe Luſts, are to them ſo many *hard Sayings*, and they ſay within themſelves, *Who can hear them?*

But by how much Men are taught by natural Religion to diſcern the difference between Morality and Immorality, both in the Nature and Effects of them, as to the peace of the Mind on the one hand, and to the diſquiet thereof on the other; as to the honour of their Nature and Name on the one hand, and to the Shame thereof on the other; as to the eaſe and health of their Bodies on the one hand, and to the contrary on the other: By ſo much are they in a fit preparation of Mind to receive the Laws of Chriſt, which enjoin Morality with Promiſe of great Reward, but prohibit and condemn all Immorality under the ſevereſt Penalties.

The Condition on which the Pardon of Sin and Eternal Life are promiſed through Chriſt, conſiſts moſtly in a ſincere performance of moral Duties towards God and Men: It conſiſteth of ſuch a Faith as worketh by love to God and Men; which Love is an Evangelical fulfilling of the Moral Law, as we are taught, *Matth.* xxii. 40. *Rom.* xiii. 8, 10. *Gal.* v. 14. From which it ſtill follows, that by how much Men are improved in Morality by the Teaching of God, by ſo much is their Belief of the Doctrine of Chriſt, and the fulfilling of his great and precious Promiſes facilitated.

And the reaſon hereof is, becauſe his Rules and Precepts of Living agree with thoſe Sentiments and Notions of Righteouſneſs and Goodneſs which are planted in the Nature of Man; and therefore the conſent of their Minds to them, as juſt, reaſonable, and good, and fit to be obſerved, muſt needs be the more eaſily obtained. And not only ſo, but by means of this congruity between the Precepts of Chriſt *without*, and the Notions of moral Righteouſneſs *within* us, planted in the Nature of Man, way is made alſo to gain belief of the other Doctrines of Chriſt, which depend wholly upon ſupernatural Revelation; ſuch as are his being the Son of God, and the Forgiveneſs of Sin, and the like. For when they find our Saviour in his Doctrine preſſing and inculcating upon the Minds of Men ſuch Precepts of moral Righteouſneſs and Goodneſs, as they by their own natural Light know to be good, and therefore from God, but never any thing to the contrary, they will be the more eaſily induced to believe him to be no Impoſtor, but one ſent from God, as he affirmed he was, and conſequently to believe all his other Doctrines.

Now as concerning the manner how Almighty God doth raiſe ſuch a ſenſe in Men of the true Nature and Effects of moral Righteouſneſs and Goodneſs, as by which they are prepared to believe the Goſpel, I do not think he doth it only by aſſiſting their Faculties to act according to their natural liberty; for ſo he does aſſiſt them when they abuſe their liberty in acting ſinfully: But God does it by engaging their Minds more to conſider their Ways than they had done before; to conſider the Nature and Tendency of thoſe good ways which they had refuſed to walk in, and the like concerning thoſe evil ways which they had choſen. And by a frequent Repreſentation of theſe things to their thoughts, and by drawing their Minds to look more narrowly into them, they come better to diſcern the Nature and Tendency both of the one and of the other, and ſo to make a better Judgment of them. And by that means their former averſation from that which is good, and ſtrong and violent inclination to that which is evil, comes to be weakned and ſomething broken. And this prepares them to be quite overcome by the powerful Motives of the Goſpel, when they come to be conſidered, and to be turned quite about. This we ſee in *David* for an Inſtance, *Pſal.* cxix. 59. *I thought on my ways, and I turned my feet unto thy Teſtimonies.* And again, *Ezek.* xviii. 28. *Becauſe he conſidereth and turneth away from all his Tranſgreſſions which he hath committed, he ſhall ſurely live, he ſhall not die.* In theſe Scriptures we ſee Conſideration takes place firſt with Men before they turn, and by that means they are brought to turn: That which is conſequent upon Conſideration of one's ways, is turning from Tranſgreſſion, and to God's Teſtimonies.

Now God can, and does when he pleaſeth, pitch Mens Minds and Thoughts upon ſuch things as he would have ſeriouſly conſidered, and in ſome ſort terminate and hold them to them. *David* knew this when he prayed thus unto God: *Keep this for ever in the imagination of the Thoughts of the hearts of thy People, and prepare their heart unto thee*, 1 Chron. xxix. 18.

To exemplifie this whole matter of God's preparing Men for the Belief of the Goſpel; let it be conſidered how it came to paſs that thoſe few uncircumciſed Proſelytes from among the multitude of thoſe of the Nations of the Gentiles, at firſt came to be

ſuch.

ſuch. How came ſuch as the *Ethiopian Eunuch* and *Cornelius* to be ſuch devout Perſons, as they and other ſuch Proſelytes are deſcribed to be, when the Generality of thoſe Nations remained ſtill in groſs Gentiliſm? Doubtleſs it came to paſs by the awakening of their Minds by God, to conſider things more than their Neighbours did, to conſider the Nature and Tendency of Morality and Immorality, and what is like to be the Iſſue of both at laſt, in reſpect of Rewards and Puniſhments in another World. And the innate Light and Reaſon of our Minds would dictate to them, that Vice could not poſſibly tend to their Happineſs, nor Virtue to their Infelicity in the next World. And this made them, before they were Proſelytes, ſo far as the Light of Nature aſſiſted by God did lead them, to chuſe to do what was moſt likely to end in Happineſs, and to avoid what was moſt likely to make them miſerable at laſt. This, no doubt, made them betake themſelves to the Worſhip of the true God only, when others of their Neighbours did not; and in this to join with the People of *Iſrael*, though not intirely in the ſame Inſtitutions of Worſhip; becauſe they were not given them in Command, as they were to the *Jews*. This difference between them and other of their Country-men, did firſt ſpring as I ſay, from their taking important things more into Conſideration than others did. And by this they came to be prepared to receive the Goſpel; ſo that they fell in with it readily when it was preached unto them, ſometimes at the firſt hearing. Thoſe Proſelytes we read of, *Acts* xiii. 48. were ſuch as were ordered and diſpoſed in their own Minds towards Eternal Life, to wit, to look after it, and to be thoughtful about it; and as many as were ſo, did, as we there ſee, believe.

Such as theſe Proſelytes, were thoſe *other Sheep* (I doubt not) of which our Saviour ſpake, *John* x. 16. which, as he ſaid, *are not of this Fold, them alſo I muſt bring, and they ſhall hear my Voice.* They were made tractable afore-hand, ready to follow the Shepherd when they ſhould hear his Voice. Such alſo we may well ſuppoſe the good-Ground-hearers to be, who were of good and *honeſt Hearts*, as they are deſcribed, *Luke* viii. 15. of honeſt Minds, not willing to repreſent things to themſelves better than they are, nor to put a Cheat upon themſelves and their own Souls, by flattering them into a better Opinion of themſelves, and of their good Condition God-ward than there is cauſe. Like him of whom the Pſalmiſt ſpeaks, *Who flattereth himſelf in his own Eyes, until his Iniquity be found to be hateful*, Pſal. xxxvi. 2. They are not of ſuch partial and diſhoneſt Minds, as to be thoughtful and careful about the outward Man, and things of this preſent World, and to be altogether regardleſs and careleſs of their Souls the better part, and of the Concerns for Eternity, nor treacherouſly to betray them.

Thus far to ſhew how God hath prepared Men for the Belief of the Goſpel, only by making Principles and Notions of natural Religion, operative in them by a powerful Impreſſion of them upon their Minds.

CHAP. II.

How God by adding Revealed Religion to that which is Natural, prepared the Jews for the Performance of the Condition of the Promiſe.

IN Times under the Law, and before the Appearance of Chriſt in the World, Almighty God prepared the People of the Jews for the Faith in Chriſt, by adding revealed Religion to that which is natural, and by making that which was natural, more powerful and operative to ſuch an end, by that which was revealed.

After the Original Law, which is implanted in the Nature of all Men, became much blurred and defaced in the Minds of Men, a fair Copy of it was delivered to that People by God, written in two Tables of Stone. And this was done, as for other ends, ſo for this, to wit, to awaken in them a greater Senſe of the Guilt of Sin, and their Liableneſs thereby to the Wrath of Almighty God, and to Condemnation. *The Law worketh Wrath*, ſaith St. *Paul*, Rom. iv. 15. that is, it maketh the Tranſgreſſor of it the more puniſhable, and expoſeth him the more to Wrath; *For the Strength of Sin* *is the Law*, as the ſame Apoſtle ſaith in another place, 1 *Cor*. xv. 56. it is that which armeth thoſe Actions againſt a Man, which would not have been puniſhable if there had been no Law againſt them. *For where there is no Law, there is no Tranſgreſſion*, as he ſaith in the former Text: And where there is no Tranſgreſſion, there can be no Puniſhment due. And by Parity of Reaſon, where the Law is more obſcure, and leſs diſcernable, the Tranſgreſſion of it muſt be the leſs puniſhable: And the more manifeſt and expreſs the Law is, by which Men are left without all Excuſe of Ignorance touching the Evil prohibited, the greater and more criminal muſt the Offence needs be, as when committed againſt a Law promulgate and fully known. This is that which ſtops the Mouths of Men againſt all Excuſe and Plea of Ignorance, and lays them naked and open to the Penalty of the Law. *What the Law ſaith, it ſaith to them that are under the Law, that every Mouth might be ſtopt, and all the World found guilty before God, or ſubject to his Judgment*, Rom. iii. 19. And as the Offence againſt the Law is aggravated and enhanſed, by how much the more the Law is known to be expreſsly againſt it, by ſo much may the Puniſhment be expected to be increaſed by that means. *He that knew his Maſter's Will, and yet did it not, ſhall be beaten with many Stripes*, above what he ſhall ſuffer, whoſe Opportunity of knowing his Duty hath been leſs.

Now this was the caſe with the Jews: They were under the natural Law before it was promulgated to them, as well as all other Nations. But that Law of Nature was grown ſo blurr'd and illegible through the Pravity and Degeneracy of Men, that they could hardly diſcern that to be ſin in many caſes, which was ſin by the Law of Nature. As for inſtance, *I had not known Luſt to be ſin*, ſaith St. *Paul*, *unleſs the Law had ſaid, thou ſhalt not covet*. They could hardly diſcern inward Concupiſcence in this or that particular to be ſin, unleſs it brake out into open Act. But now by the Promulgation of the natural Law, this came to be known to be ſin; which indeed was ſo before, but not ſo certainly known to be ſo; and the like in other caſes. But when this and other things were by a promulgate Law more clearly known to be ſin, it was then at their greater peril, if they fell into them: And conſequently they muſt needs be the more apprehenſive of their Danger, and their Fear the greater in caſe they did. St. *Paul* perſonating a *Jew* both before and after the Promulgation of the Law, ſaith, *I once was alive without the Law, but when the Commandment came, then ſin revived, and I died.* He did not know himſelf to be in ſo ill a caſe, as the Law, when it came, diſcovered him to be. And therefore he ſaith again, that *ſin taking occaſion by the Commandment, deceived him, and by it ſlew him*, Rom. vii. By all this we may underſtand what St. *Paul* meant, when he ſaid, *That the Law entered, that the offence might abound*, Rom. v. 20. that is, that the Offence in the evil Nature and miſchievous Effects of it, might be more abundantly known, and Men made more ſenſible of their ſad Condition by reaſon of it: And that for this reaſon among others, that Grace might ſo much the more abound in the ſight of Men, when the way and means of eſcaping that Condition ſhould be made known to them. *Where ſin abounded, Grace did much more abound.* This State of theirs under the Law, was that State of the *Spirit of Bondage to fear*, whereof St. *Paul* ſpeaks, *Rom*. viii. 15.

But then this prepared the way of the Goſpel, by making that which tended to remove thoſe Fears the more acceptable. To you that *fear* my Name, ſhall the Sun of Righteouſneſs ariſe with *healing* in his Wings, ſaith the Lord, ſpeaking of his ſending Chriſt among them, *Mal*. iv. 2. he came with *healing* to thoſe Souls which had been *bruiſed* and made *ſore* before, by Fears and Terrors that did ariſe in their Minds out of that darker State of the Church, wherein the way of Salvation by Chriſt, was more obſcurely revealed.

But beſides this, by the Promiſe they had of the *Meſſiah*, and by the Types and Shadows of him in the Law, and by the many Predictions of the Prophets concerning him, the Lord prepared them for the Reception of him when he was come. *The Law* in theſe reſpects, was a *Schoolmaſter to bring them to Chriſt*, as the Apoſtle ſpeaks, *Gal*. iii. 24.

The many Precepts of Moral Righteouſneſs and Goodneſs alſo, wherein they were inſtructed out of the Law and the Prophets, prepared them likewiſe to receive Chriſt for the true *Meſſiah*, when he was come indeed, for this reaſon, *viz*. becauſe of that Harmony and good Agreement that was between our Saviour's Precepts of living, and what they had been taught before, both by natural Light, and by revealed Religion ſuperadded to it. By this former teaching of the Father, ſome of them became ſuch Sheep as our Saviour ſaid his Father had given him, *John* x. 27, 29. It was by virtue of this preparatory teaching of the Father, that they knew the Shepherd's Voice when they heard it. By this they could diſtinguiſh between the Voice of the true Shepherd or *Meſſias*, and the Voice of Strangers, the Voice of Hirelings. Becauſe the Doctrine of our Saviour agreed with that way of Righteouſneſs which they had learned by the teaching of the Father, as none others did that were but Pretenders. It was this that made ſuch of them as had heard and learned of the Father, to come to Chriſt, to follow this Shepherd when they heard his Voice, that is, to become his Diſciples.

And yet more particularly, *John* the Baptiſt was ſent by the Almighty Father, to prepare them by his Miniſtry for their Reception of Chriſt, and believing in him. It was foretold by the Angel before his Birth, that he ſhould *make ready a People prepared for the Lord*, Luke i. 17. and by a Spirit of Prophecy at his Birth, that *he ſhould go before the Face of the Lord to prepare his way*, ver. 76. which he did by two things eſpecially; by awakening them to Repentance, and by giving them notice of the near approach and appearance of the *Meſſiah*. *He came into all the Country, about Jordan, preaching the Baptiſm of Repentance for the Remiſſion of ſins*, Luke iii. 3.

The People of the *Jews* were in great part become ſuch a *Generation* as *Solomon* ſpeaks of, that *were pure in their own Eyes, and yet not waſhed from their Filthineſs*, Prov. xxx. 12. ſtrict Obſervers of the ritual part of the Law, but very immoral in their Temper and in their Lives: Full of a ſelf-choſen Righteouſneſs, *their Fear towards God, taught by the Precepts of Men*, to wit, the Tradition of their Elders. They were not ſenſible of the Badneſs of their State, their Obnoxiouſneſs to the Wrath of God, nor of their need of Repentance in amending their Lives. And under theſe Circumſtances a Chriſt that ſhould come to ſave them from their Sins, was not like to be very welcome unto them, nor to anſwer their Expectation, who looked to be ſaved from the *Roman* Yoke by the Meſſiah, but not from their Sins.

Now that our Saviour might not loſe the end of his coming amongſt them, *John* the Baptiſt was ſent before him to convince them of their bad Condition, of their Guilt of ſin before God, and of their Liableneſs to his Wrath. That whereas thitherto the Judgments upon their Nation, even the worſt that had befallen them, had been but like the lopping of Branches from off the Trees that would grow again. But now the Ax was laid to the Root of the Trees, to cut them quite down, never to grow again; that the utter ruine of their State, Nation, and Temple was not far off, if not prevented. And that nothing could prevent it but Confeſſion of ſin, and *bringing forth Fruit meet for Repentance*.

Now this raiſed a Spirit of Fear in them of the Wrath of Almighty God, which hung over them for their ſins; which made ſuch Multitudes to come to his Baptiſm, to confeſs their ſins, and by his Baptiſm to liſt themſelves as Penitents. And by this teaching of the Father, they were the better prepared to receive Chriſt when he came, eſpecially when pointing to him, he told them, *This is the Lamb of God, that taketh away the ſin of the World*, that ſin of theirs which expoſed them to ſuch Danger, and that put them in ſuch fear as aforeſaid.

And who were the Ring-leaders in oppoſing Chriſt when he was come, but the Phariſees, Lawyers, and Scribes, ſuch as rejected the Counſel of God againſt themſelves, and would not be baptized of *John*? They were ſuch as were never prepared by a Senſe of their ſin, and of the Danger they were in thereby, *but truſted in themſelves that they were righteous, and deſpiſed others*. They were ſuch as thought themſelves ſo whole as to need no ſuch Soul-Phyſician as Chriſt. They did not believe as the Publicans and Harlots did, that they were in any ſuch danger by reaſon of ſin, as *John* told them they were; and that was the reaſon why they kept themſelves out of the Kingdom of God, whilſt the others entered in, as our Saviour told them, *Matth*. xxi. 31, 32. *Verily I ſay unto you, that the Publicans and Harlots go into the Kingdom of God before you*. And he gives the reaſon of it in the next words; *For John came to you in the way of Righteouſneſs, and ye believed him not; but the Publicans and the Harlots believed him*. Thoſe who did believe *John*, and were awakened with a Senſe of their danger becauſe of ſin, they crouded, as it were, into the Kingdom of God while that Impreſſion laſted. *From the Days of John the Baptiſt until now, the Kingdom of Heaven ſuffereth Violence, and the violent take it by force*, ſaith our Saviour, *Matth*. xi. 12.

If Enquiry be here made, that ſince ſome of the Jews in our Saviour's time, were by the Father's teaching in thoſe ſeveral ways before-mentioned, ſo prepared as that they followed Chriſt the good Shepherd when they heard his Voice, and ſo became his Diſciples. Then how came it to paſs that all of them did not do the like, who had the ſame means of learning, and of being prepared?

To ſatisfie us in this Enquiry, it is neceſſary in the firſt place to take notice that there is a great difference between God the Father's Teaching of Men, and their Learning of him: He teaches all, when yet but few learn of him. Our Saviour ſaith, *Every Man that hath* heard *and* learned *of the Father, cometh unto me*, John vi. 45. Not every one that hath heard him, but every Man that hath heard him ſo as to learn of him, by receiving Inſtruction from him in a way of preparation. For theſe are two things, and the one, alas, too frequently found without the other. *Though I taught them riſing up early and teaching them, yet they have not hearkned to receive Inſtruction*, ſaith the Lord by his Prophet, *Jer.* xxxii. 33. There is a Teaching without a Learning.

Now the reaſon why they did not learn, when they had the ſame Teaching as others had; and ſo the reaſon why it was not afterwards given to them, as it was to the Diſciples of Chriſt, to know the Myſteries of the Kingdom of Heaven, is given by our Saviour, *Matth.* xiii. *Becauſe they ſeeing ſee not, and hearing they hear not, neither do they underſtand: This Peoples heart is waxed groſs, and their ears are dull of hearing, and they have cloſed their eyes; leſt at any time they ſhould ſee with their eyes, and hear with their ears, and ſhould underſtand with their heart, and ſhould be converted, and I ſhould heal them.* Which words ſignifie their refuſing, and more than a bare refuſing of that aſſiſtance which God for ſome time vouchſafed them, to prepare them for that farther Grace and Mercy which comes by Jeſus Chriſt: They ſignifie oppoſition and ſtriving againſt their being helped and healed; their endeavouring to throw off, and to defend themſelves againſt the means uſed by God to awaken them, and to bring them to conſider things in order to their Cure and amendment of Manners. *When God called, they refuſed; when he ſtretched out his hands to them, they regarded not; they ſet at nought all his Counſel, and deſpiſed all his Reproof, and hated Knowledge;* as *Solomon* expreſſeth the ill Carriage of ſuch as would not in the leaſt be prevailed with, or wrought upon by ſuch Applications as God made to them, with promiſe of farther aſſiſtance of his Spirit and his Word, if they would. *Turn ye at my Reproof: Behold, I will pour out my Spirit upon you, I will make known my Words unto you*, Prov. i. 23, and following Verſes.

Our Saviour by the foreſaid words in *Matth.* xiii. does not, I conceive, ſo much intend to ſet forth the then preſent ill Carriage of the Unbelieving Jews in not entertaining the Goſpel, as their Obſtinacy and Untractableneſs under God's former Applications to them in a lower way of Teaching, than that of the Goſpel. For their Carriage, ſignified by thoſe words of our Saviour, is alledged by him as the Reaſon why it was not given to them to know the Myſteries of the Kingdom of Heaven, as it was to his Diſciples. For they had oppoſed and withſtood thoſe lower Beginnings of God with them, by which he would have prepared them for higher Vouchſafements. And accordingly our Saviour applies that Saying to their Caſe, *Whoſoever hath not, from him ſhall be taken away, even that which he hath.*

God had been repreſenting to them by the Prophets, and by the Miniſtry of *John* the Baptiſt, beſides his ſecret Operations upon their Minds, the danger they were in by reaſon of their Immorality, notwithſtanding their outward Church-privileges, and notwithſtanding their numerous Sacrifices, and other Ceremonial Obſervances. But they laboured to ſilence the Clamour of their Conſciences, when God had any whit awakened them, and to lay their Souls aſleep, and to perſuade themſelves there was no ſuch danger did attend them, ſince they were a People with whom God had entred into Covenant to be their God, that they had *Abraham* to their Father, to whom God had ſaid, *I will be thy God, and the God of thy Seed.* Though they were proud and covetous, unjuſt, unfaithful, cruel, envious and malicious, *Yet they leaned upon the Lord, ſaying, Is not the Lord among us? None evil can come upon us*, as the Prophet ſpeaks, *Micah* iii. 11.

Theſe things conſidered, the reaſon appears plainly why all the Jews, who at firſt enjoyed much-what the ſame means, the ſame aſſiſtance from God to prepare them for a Belief of the Goſpel, yet were not prepared for it as others of them were. They refuſed, nay, they reſiſted God's firſt aſſiſting Grace, whereby he would have prepared them to receive farther aſſiſtance from him. And when Men do ſo, and continue to do ſo, God after ſome time of ſtriving with them, ſuſpends that Application which he formerly made to their Minds to prepare them for farther aſſiſtance. After which, though they may ſee the Works of God, and hear his Word, and be found in the uſe of ſome external Acts of Religion for faſhion-ſake, and to do as others do; yet then they do not perceive, underſtand, or conſider to any good effect upon themſelves, the end and deſign of them; and ſo are not one jot the better for them, but rather more ſtupid and ſenſleſs, which the Scripture calls *God's hardening* or *blinding* of Men. Not that I ſuppoſe the holy and good God infuſeth any malignant or obſtinate Quality into their Minds and Wills; for *God does not tempt any Man to evil*, James i. 13. but his *hardening* of them, is either his *with-holding* that *aſſiſtance* by which his Spirit did ſtrive with them to make them better, *Gen.* vi. 3. or permitting the evil Spirit more freely to tempt them, the conſequence of which is their growing worſe and worſe. And thus he dealt with ſuch-like untractable and obſtinate Jews in Ages long before the coming of our Saviour, *Pſal.* lxxxi. 11, 12. *My People would not hearken to my voice, Iſrael would none of me: So I gave them up to their own hearts luſts*; not reſtraining them, as ſometime he had done. And again, *Ezek.* xxiv. 13. *Becauſe I have purged thee, and thou waſt not purged, thou ſhalt not be purged from thy filthineſs any more*, Iſai. vi. 9, 10.

CHAP. III.

Of the Neceſſity of thoſe Effects on the Mind, which God ſometimes works by Principles of Natural Religion, to prepare all thoſe for the Performance of the Condition of the Promiſe, which do at all perform it.

AFter all this which hath paſs'd, you will ſay perhaps, What does all this diſcourſe concern us, who live after Chriſt is come, or any who call themſelves Chriſtians, and which do own Chriſt to be the true Meſſiah and Saviour of the World? The Jews indeed they were prepared for their receiving of Chriſt againſt he ſhould come, by Principles of natural and revealed Religion, and ſome of the Gentiles by Principles of natural Religion only. But how can this concern us Chriſtians, who have prevented the need of any ſuch preparation for receiving Chriſt, by having received him already, as having been taught by our Parents from our Childhood to do ſo, when they taught us all the Articles of the Chriſtian Faith?

Yet we, who live now after Chriſt is come, are as much concerned to be prepared for a ſaving reception of Chriſt, by the *ſame Temper of Mind*, as they were who lived before his coming. Our Saviour hath ſaid it, *That no Man can come to me, except it be given unto him of my Father*, John vi. 65. And again, *No Man can come to me, except the Father which hath ſent me draw him*, ver. 44. And if this be true with reſpect to all Men, then of us who live in theſe days, as well as of thoſe who lived when Chriſt firſt appeared in the World. For our Saviour's words, we ſee, contain an univerſal propoſition; No Man to whom it is not given of my Father; No Man whom the Father which hath ſent me draweth not, can come unto me. He does no more limit his Aſſertion to thoſe who did precede, than to thoſe who do ſucceed his coming.

There is no doubt but a ſenſe of our Obnoxiouſneſs to the Diſpleaſure of God, and the ſad effects of it in another World, upon the account of Sin, is as neceſſary now as ever it was, to prepare and diſpoſe Men heartily to receive Chriſt: Becauſe it is by this ſenſe on our Minds, that Chriſt is look'd upon as the moſt *ſuitable good*, and conſequently as the moſt *deſirable good*, as I ſhewed before. It is by means of this ſenſe, when any thing ſtrong and affecting, that Chriſt becomes precious unto Men, as he is to every one that believes. *To you that believe he is precious*, ſaith St. *Peter*, 1 *Pet.* ii. 7. A true ſenſe of the danger we are in, by having provoked the great God againſt us, gives great diſquietneſs to the Mind, until we come to know that that Diſpleaſure is taken off, and the Danger we were in thereby removed. And it is the ſenſe of this Danger that makes Chriſt precious to us, when we come to underſtand that we cannot eſcape this Danger but by him; and when we find that Pain removed by believing in him, which the ſenſe of Danger before put us to.

And it is this Senſe that prepares the Soul to receive Chriſt as Lord, as well as Saviour, by that time the Goſpel is well opened to Men. And the reaſon is, becauſe they underſtand thereby, that none can have the benefit of that Atonement and Satisfaction made by his Death, but ſuch as are content to be governed by him in their Lives, and to yield Obedience to his Precepts: That none can be ſaved by him, that refuſe to become ſincere Diſciples to him. And they will find it no unreaſonable thing for them to obey his Precepts, and to imitate his Example, when they underſtand that to do ſo, is in effect but to abandon thoſe Sins which created ſo much trouble in their Mind before, by making them liable to, and by putting them in fear of the eternal Wrath of Almighty God. The ſenſe of that Danger their Sins had expoſed them to, and of that Anxiety of Mind they were brought into thereby, will prepare the Mind and diſpoſe the Will to receive Chriſt as Lord, and to obey him in forſaking thoſe Sins, ſo long as they are well aſſured, that then, and not till then, they ſhall be pardoned through his Blood, and ſo be diſcharged from thoſe fears of the Wrath of God which had given them ſuch uneaſineſs of Mind before.

And when they have found the difference between the Eaſe of Mind and Peace in the Spirit, which they have by their Knowledge of Chriſt, ſo long as they obey him; and the ſad Thoughts, dark and doubtful Apprehenſions, miſgivings of Mind, and ſtorms in the Spirit, which Sin had wrought and raiſed in the Soul before, it will then make them out of love with Sin, and afraid to have any more to do with it.

And thus you ſee, according to the Reaſon and Nature of the thing, how uſeful and neceſſary ſuch a ſenſe is, as I have oft mentioned, to prepare and diſpoſe Men to go to, or to receive Chriſt, when he is made known to them by the Goſpel, and that as well now under the Goſpel as before; if by receiving Chriſt we underſtand ſuch a receiving as is ſaving. But otherwiſe Men may, and doubtleſs do, without any ſuch ſenſe as is effectual to its end, not only profeſs Belief in Chriſt, but alſo really believe in him with an inoperative, ineffectual and dead Faith.

And to the end we may yet farther ſee how neceſſary ſuch a *ſenſe* in Men of their danger, as I have been ſpeaking of, is, *to prepare and diſpoſe* them to come to Chriſt in good earneſt, and to believe in him with all their heart, I ſhall ſhew it you by the method which our Saviour and his Apoſtles uſed in their Preaching. Both he and they inſiſted mainly, in the firſt place, in order to Mens Converſion, upon ſuch Doctrines as tended to beget in them *a great ſenſe of their danger, by reaſon of guilt upon them.* And this they did by preaching Repentance; by which, as I ſhall preſently ſhew, they laboured to beget ſuch a *ſenſe* in Men.

Our Saviour began his Preaching with this, *Matth.* iv. 17. *From that time Jeſus began to preach and to ſay, Repent, for the Kingdom of Heaven is at hand.* And ſo did his twelve Apoſtles, when he ſent them out by two and two: *They went out and preached that Men ſhould repent,* ſaith St. *Mark* vi. 12. When the Author to the *Hebrews* gives a ſummary Account of the firſt Principles, or beginning Doctrines of Chriſt, *Repentance from dead Works* is not only one of them, but is *the firſt of all in order, Heb.* vi. 1. St. *Paul* gave this account to the Elders of the Church of *Epheſus*, both of method and ſubſtance of his Preaching publickly, and from houſe to houſe, when he told them, that he had teſtified both to the Jews and alſo to the Greeks, *Repentance towards God, and Faith towards our Lord Jeſus Chriſt:* Firſt Repentance, then Faith: Repentance for Sin, and from Sin; and then Remiſſion of it through Faith in Chriſt.

Now in thus preaching Repentance in the *firſt place*, they laboured to poſſeſs Men with a ſtrong ſenſe of the *danger they were in until they did repent.* For that was the great Argument or Motive by which they perſuaded them to it: *Knowing the terror of the Lord, we perſuade Men,* ſaith St. *Paul*, 2 *Cor.* v. 11. Thus our Saviour taught the People, that ſo long as they did not repent and reform, though it ſhould coſt them the cutting off their right Hand, and plucking out their right Eye to do it, *they were in danger of being caſt into Hell, where their Worm dieth not, and the Fire is not quenched,* Mark ix. 43. *That they were condemned already, and that the Wrath of God did abide on them, ſo long as they continued in unbelief,* John iii. 18, 36. When St. *Paul* preached Repentance at *Athens*, his Argument to perſuade to it was, *becauſe God hath appointed a day in the which he will judge the World in Righteouſneſs,* Acts xvii. 30, 31. And no greater Argument can be uſed to awaken Mens Fears, and to haſten them out of an impenitent State, than to ſet before them the terror of that Day, and the Danger they are in every Hour of falling under it, ſo long as they remain unreformed. The Conſideration of which, while the Impreſſion was upon him, made *Felix* the *Roman* Governour on the Bench *to tremble*, when St. *Paul* at the Bar reaſoned of Righteouſneſs, Temperance, and *the Judgment to come*, Acts xxiv. 25.

And generally Men's Repentance takes its *firſt riſe* from their *Fears* of falling under the Wrath of Almighty God. Which doth very well accord with what was ſaid by *David* in the *Pſalms*, and twice by *Solomon* in his *Proverbs: The Fear of the Lord is the beginning of Wiſdom*, Pſal. cxi. 10. Prov. i. 7. and ix. 10. The beginning of Wiſdom, that is, of becoming truly wiſe, as Men are when they become truly religious, and never till then. And this uſually *begins*, as I ſay, in thoſe *Fears* which are raiſed in Men, out of a Senſe of their Obnoxiouſneſs to the Wrath and Diſpleaſure of God for ſin paſt. And from thence indeed it proceeds to a Fear of diſpleaſing him any farther for time to come, in hope of obtaining Pardon for what is paſt: And this is Wiſdom indeed (*there is Forgiveneſs with thee that thou mayſt be feared*, Pſal. cxxx. 4.) But *Fear* in this latter Senſe, hath its *riſe* and beginning from Fear in the former.

The Principle of Self-preſervation, which is deeply rooted in every Man's Nature, does naturally cauſe a Fear of God, as armed with Almighty Power to deſtroy them that have provoked him. But in Man's degenerate State, we cannot ſay it is ſo natural to fear diſpleaſing him, nor is attained to without ſome hope of Pardon for what is paſt. Fear in the former Senſe goes before Fear in the latter, as the Needle does before the Thread. It hath indeed, as godly Sorrow hath, a Tendency in it to work Repentance, though neither of them amount to ſaving Repentance it ſelf. Fear of Wrath *hath torment* in it, and that prepares a Man to hearken to that which will give him Eaſe, to wit, the Doctrine of Pardon through Chriſt; and to the Doctrine of Repentance, as the condition of obtaining it. As Rain and Moiſture are to the ground on which Weeds or Thorns grow, to prepare the way of tearing them up by the root, ſo is the Fear of God's Wrath to make way for the plucking up Men's Luſts by the root: It makes the Heart more ſoft and tender. For by how much ſin hath diſquieted and perplexed the Mind, with Fears of the Wrath of God (provided it be not to Exceſs, as in caſe of Deſpair) by ſo much the leſs grievous it will be to part with it, in hope of obtaining both Eaſe and Pardon thereby.

But here to prevent all Miſ-uſe of this Doctrine touching the neceſſity of a Senſe in each Sinner, of his Obnoxiouſneſs to the Wrath of God, to prepare him for ſuch a Repentance, Faith, and Obedience as is ſaving; let this be obſerved and remembred by way of Caution, to wit, That no greater a Senſe hereof is neceſſary to this end, than that which iſſues and ends in ſuch a Repentance, Faith and Obedience. We muſt not meaſure the Truth and Sincerity of Repentance, Faith and Obedience, by the meaſure or degree of the Senſe we have of our Liableneſs to God's Wrath, or our Fears of it; but, on the contrary, the Dueneſs or Sufficiency of ſuch a Senſe to prepare us, by the Truth and Sincerity of our Repentance, Faith and Obedience. It is not unlikely but that *Cain* and *Judas* might have a greater Senſe of their Obnoxiouſneſs to the Wrath and Diſpleaſure of God, than moſt of thoſe, who through a due Senſe of their Liableneſs to Wrath, have been prepared for a ſaving Repentance, Faith and Obedience. But yet we cannot judge by that, That they had any ſuch Repentance or Faith.

So much Senſe therefore of Mens Danger, by reaſon of their Guilt of ſin, is ſufficient, be it more or leſs, as does prevail with them ſincerely to repent of ſin paſt; to receive Chriſt Jeſus as Saviour, Lord, and Governour for time to come; to ſave them from ſin by his Death, and to be governed by his Precepts and Example for all times to come, whether peaceful and proſperous, or however adverſe or hazardous they may be. And the reaſon why ſuch a Senſe is ſufficient, be it more or leſs, is becauſe it reacheth its end, it hath done its Work for which it was raiſed by God, when once it hath thus drawn Men to Chriſt to become his true Diſciples, to believe in him, and to learn of him the Chriſtian Life. All means whatſoever are ſufficient in their kind, when they attain their end for which they were appointed, and ſo this of which we now ſpeak. This is a Truth ſeen by its own Light.

By this the great Miſtake of ſome good People appears, who have been afraid to apply Chriſt unto themſelves as a Saviour, and to lay hold of the gracious Promiſes of the Goſpel, as being in doubt with themſelves, whether they had been ſufficiently humbled, broken, and prepared by legal Terrors; when yet they had been zealouſly deſirous and induſtrious to approve themſelves to him in a good Life. When once Men are made willing to receive Chriſt as Lord and Saviour, and to walk in him as they have received him, there is no place left to queſtion whether their Humiliation hath been ſufficient or no. For our Saviour's *Invitation* of coming to him, is made to him that is *athirſt*, and his Promiſe to him that does come in good earneſt, is, That he will *by no means caſt him out*. The Promiſe of being received if they do come to Chriſt, is not made upon condition of being thus or thus humbled, but upon condition of their coming to him. Nor does any Degree of that Humiliation, which conſiſteth in Fear or Terror, avail any Man farther than it is an occaſion of his applying himſelf to the Remedy prepared by God againſt his Danger.

By what hath been ſaid to ſhew what Senſe of one's ſpiritual Danger is ſufficient in its kind, and for the end for which it ſerves, it may appear alſo, That ſuch Perſons as have by the advantage of a pious Education, drunk in operative Principles of Godlineſs in the early Days of their Lives; ſo that, like *Obadiah*, they have *feared God from their Youth*; or as *Timothy*, *have known the holy Scriptures from a Child*, need not be in doubt of their own good Eſtate God-ward, though they have not found in themſelves ſo tormenting a Senſe of their ſpiritual Danger, as ſome others have done, to prepare and diſpoſe them to repent and believe the Goſpel, if they can but find and feel in themſelves Repentance and Faith in the true Nature and Genuine Effects of them. No Man need much to be concerned about the Nature of the Means, as whether it be proportionate to the end; after he once ſees the end effected in himſelf. His Senſe of Danger is ſufficient, which cauſeth him to flie in due time to the place of Refuge.

There needs a greater Senſe of Danger, and more affecting Fears, to make one willing to part with thoſe ſins and evil ways he hath been long acccuſtomed to, and hath had a ſtrong Affection for, than there is to make another willing to forego thoſe Evils he never had much to do with, nor much Affection for. An ordinary blaſt may throw down a Plant before it hath taken rooting, when no leſs than a great Tempeſt and ſtrong Blaſt will tear up a Tree of long ſtanding and deep rooting.

Yet I muſt ſay, That the greater Senſe Men have of the greatneſs of the Danger they were in, and the more that Senſe hath afflicted that Soul with Fear and Grief, by ſo much the more they are likely to value and prize, to love and honour that Saviour by whom they find themſelves delivered from it. Hence it is that ſuch as have been greater ſinners than others before Converſion, have many times proved more eminent Saints than others after; fuller of Love to Chriſt, and Zeal for him. Thus it was with *Mary Magdalen*, *who loved much becauſe much was forgiven her*, as our Saviour ſaid. Whereas, as he obſerves likewiſe, that he to whom *but little is forgiven, the ſame loveth but little*, Luke xxvii. 47.

And thus I have diſpatched the firſt of the two things I propoſed to inſiſt on, and to explain, to wit, what is done by God by way of Preparation, to diſpoſe the Minds of Men to perform the Condition of the Promiſe. I ſhall now proceed to the ſecond, which is to ſhew, what is done by God to aſſiſt Men in the actual Performance of that Condition on which Pardon of Sin, and Eternal Life are promiſed.

CHAP. IV.

How by the very Nature of the Goſpel, God does aſſiſt Men in performing the Condition of the Promiſe.

IN ſhewing what God does in aſſiſting Men in the Performance of the Condition of the Promiſe of Pardon and Life, two things will come under Conſideration:

I. What Aſſiſtance is given by God, by his very giving us the Goſpel to this end; and

II. What by the Influence and Operation of his Spirit.

1. That Men are *aſſiſted* by the *Goſpel* in their performing the Condition of the Promiſe of Pardon and Life, is very evident. St. *Paul* ſaith, *It is the Power of God to*

Salvation to every one that believeth, Rom. i. 16. *That he had begotten the Chriſtian Corinthians through the Goſpel*, 1 Cor. iv. 15. And St. *James*, *That God of his own will begat the Chriſtians by the word of Truth*, Jam. i. 18. And St. *Peter*, *That they were born again, not of corruptible Seed, but of incorruptible, by the Word of God which liveth and abideth for ever*, 1 Pet. i. 23.

Suppoſing Men to be prepared by ſuch Teaching of God the Father, as hath been before deſcribed, the Goſpel it ſelf is of ſuch a *nature*, as makes it very apt to attract and draw ſuch Men to the belief of it, and obedience to it, when attended to, in which the performance of the Condition of the Promiſe doth conſiſt: And this in a double reſpect.

I. In reſpect of the Subject-matter of it, or things contained in it.

II. In reſpect of the Evidence by which it is confirmed to be from God, and undoubtedly true.

1. *In reſpect of the Subject-matter of it, or things contained in it.* As for inſtance: It contains a Declaration, who and what an one *Jeſus Chriſt* is, *viz.* the Son of God and Saviour of the World, and what he hath ſuffered to make Atonement for the Sin of the World, and to obtain Reconciliation between God and Men, after their Rebellion againſt him. And the Goſpel, as ſuch, cannot but facilitate its own way in the minds of ſuch Men as are burthened and pained with the ſenſe of their own guilt, and liableneſs to God's diſpleaſure. It being ſuited to their caſe, and contrived on purpoſe to give to ſuch eaſe and relief, it cannot but render it ſelf acceptable to them.

This is a faithful ſaying, and worthy of all acceptation, that Chriſt Jeſus came into the World to ſave Sinners, ſaith St. *Paul*, 1 *Tim.* i. 15. It is indeed a Saying, a Doctrine worthy of acceptation, if any thing is ſo which the World ever knew, yea worthy of all acceptation to the higheſt degree. And its being ſo, makes Sinners, which are ſenſible of their very great need of a Saviour, the more ready and willing to believe it, and to hearken to any thing that tends to ſtrengthen their belief of it. We have a ſaying which is found true upon common Obſervation, That Men are willing to believe that to be true, which they would fain have to prove ſo, and are inquiſitive after the Evidence of its Truth, that they may confidently believe it, and rejoice in it. I have ſhewed before with what Joy the Goſpel was entertained at its firſt going forth into the World, by ſuch as were to any conſiderable degree made ſenſible of the danger they were in by reaſon of Sin, and therefore I do not need to enlarge upon it farther here.

Again, the Goſpel contains great and precious Promiſes of Pardon of Sin and Eternal Life, upon condition of Repentance, Faith, and new Obedience; and moſt dreadful Threatnings againſt ſuch as reject thoſe Terms. Now the Goſpel in theſe reſpects is of a perſuaſive nature, and hath an aptneſs and fitneſs in it to prevail with Men to uſe their Endeavours of performing the Condition of eſcaping the Damnation of Hell, and of obtaining the Glory of Heaven.

Firſt, The terrible Threatnings denounced againſt ſuch as continue unreformed in their Lives, when theſe fall into Minds already diſquieted with Fears for what is paſt, are very apt to alienate Mens Minds from Sin, and ſo to help on the performance of that part of the Condition of the Promiſe, which conſiſteth in Repentance or Amendment of Life. The ſtronger ſenſe Men have of their danger, by reaſon of Sin formerly committed, and alſo of running into greater danger, if they continue in Sin, after Pardon is offered upon condition of Amendment, the more eaſily will they be perſuaded and prevailed upon to accept of the Condition of Pardon, and to put forth their Endeavour to perform it. The ſenſe of danger which Divine Threatnings do awake in Men, when any thing ſtrong, will cauſe them to enquire how they may eſcape it, to the end they may ſpeedily fall upon the uſe of ſuch means by which ſuch an eſcape may be obtained.

Thus thoſe *pricked in their hearts*, Acts ii. *cried out, Men and Brethren, what ſhall we do?* And the Gaoler, when once in a trembling Poſture, *Sirs, what ſhall I do to be ſaved?* Acts xvi. 30. Theſe affectionate Enquiries cauſed by a ſenſe of their danger, argued their willingneſs to do any thing they could to eſcape it; of which they gave proof by ſetting immediately, and without any delay, upon what they were directed to do to that end.

This ſenſe of danger, awakened by Divine Threatnings, ſo long as it laſteth, will take off that pleaſure which Men before were wont to find in ways of Sin and Wickedneſs, and make the taſte of them bitter, and by that means eſtrange their Minds from them. What is it that makes Men at any time to fall out with their Sins, and turn them off, but an awakened ſenſe in themſelves, by which they feel they have been betrayed by them into the ſnare of Death, into ſuch danger as that the very ſenſe and fear of it quite ſwallows up that pleaſure which they were wont to take in thoſe Sins. And under theſe Circumſtances, it will be a matter of far leſs difficulty for Men to perform the Condition of the Promiſe, ſo far as that ſtands in forſaking of Sin, than it would be to continue in it. For in this caſe they find the Fear and Trouble which ſtill is at the heels of Sin, is far greater than any pleaſure they can then find in it. *In vain is the Net ſpread in the ſight of any Bird*, ſaith *Solomon*, Prov. i. 17. Even ſo, while Men have their eye upon the preſent fear and future danger Sin expoſeth them to, it diſarms the Temptation to it of its Power, and renders it too weak to prevail with them to run themſelves into the Torments of preſent Fears, and into eternal Deſtruction for the future. A Dog will forbear his otherwiſe deſired morſel, while his Eye is upon the Cudgel which is held over him.

Secondly, The Promiſe through Chriſt of ſuch ineſtimable Benefits as the Pardon of Sin, and the Eternal Glory of Heaven, are upon condition, as of Faith, ſo of ſincere Obedience, hath a great tendency in it to reconcile our Minds to our Duty in particular Acts of Obedience. It is inſeparable from the Nature of Men to deſire the Happineſs of their own Being, in the general notion of it, and for perpetuity alſo. And the more deſirable any Object is, and the more there is in it to make our Happineſs great, the more powerfully are we drawn thereby to comply with the Condition, and to uſe the means of obtaining it, when we hope it to be attainable. The greater and more attractive the Object of Deſire is, by ſo much will the difficulty of the Condition and means of obtaining it ſeem the leſs. *Jacob*'s ſerving ſeven Years for *Rachel*, ſeemed to him but a few Days, for the Love wherewith he loved her.

All which ſhews, that the immenſe Greatneſs of the Benefits promis'd in the Goſpel does tend greatly to reconcile our Minds to the Condition of obtaining them, notwithſtanding ſome preſent difficulties do attend it. Juſt as we ſee in other things: Men would not cark and care, moil and toil as they do, nor undertake ſuch weariſome Journies and hazardous Voyages as Men commonly do, were it not that the benefit they expect to obtain thereby, does reconcile their Minds to theſe Difficulties. What enabled *Moſes* to forſake the Treaſures of *Egypt*, and the Honours of *Pharaoh*'s Court, and to unite himſelf with an oppreſſed People, when he could not otherwiſe avoid Sin and ſerve his God as he had a mind to do? Why, it was the *eye*, the *reſpect* he had therein *unto the Recompence of the Reward*, Heb. xi. 25, 26. The hope of the Recompence of Reward, made the Difficulties of God's Service, the Reproach of Chriſt, and Suffering with the People of God, more eligible and deſirable than the Pleaſures of Sin, which were but for a ſeaſon.

Hope of Benefit we ſee then is a great and powerful Principle of Action in Men: And if the Promiſe of the great things of the Goſpel does but affect, ſtir up, and quicken our hope, this will be enough to put thoſe endeavours into motion, by which the Condition of obtaining them will be performed. *It is by the exceeding great and precious Promiſes of the Goſpel that Men are made Partakers of a divine nature*, 2 Pet. i. 4. And the reaſon is, becauſe theſe Promiſes do affect their hope; this hope changeth the Thoughts and Purpoſes of Men, in order to the obtaining of the things promiſed and hoped for; by all which they become new Men, reſtored to the Image of God, which had been loſt by Sin, which is the Divine Nature.

The difficult part of performing the Condition of the Promiſe of Pardon and Life, lies in Mens forſaking the Sins to which they had been accuſtomed, and in practiſing the contrary Vertues from which they have been eſtranged. But the Goſpel we ſee enables Men to do both by working upon their Fears and hopes. For when two ſuch powerful Principles of Action concur and conſpire together to promote the ſame end, to produce the ſame effect, as they do in this, though in different reſpects, the Operation muſt needs be very great, powerful, and prevalent, and the Work like to go on with good ſucceſs. Fear and Hope are the two Handles of the Soul, by which it is taken hold of and drawn.

2. Having thus ſhewed how apt and fit the Goſpel is, in reſpect of the Subject-matter of it, to draw Men to ſuch a belief of it, and Obedience to it, as in which the performance of the Condition of the Promiſe of Pardon and Life doth conſiſt: I am now to ſhew in the next place its farther aptitude this way, in reſpect of that Evidence it hath of its Divinity, Truth, and Infallibility.

For indeed all the power it hath to work upon Mens Fears and Hopes by its Menaces and Promiſes, to the producing of their Effects in Mens Lives and Actions, depends wholly upon the Suppoſition of its Truth and Certainty. Men would not be moved neither by the Threatnings nor Promiſes of the Goſpel, how great ſoever they be, did they believe the Goſpel to be but fabulous. And therefore the All-wiſe God hath as much concerned himſelf to give ſufficient Atteſtation to the Truth of the Goſpel, as he hath, to acquaint Men with the things reported in it.

To this end the Almighty Father hath by a *Voice from Heaven* teſtified, that Jeſus Chriſt is his beloved Son, and that his Doctrine is to be attended to, as to one whom he had ſent into the World to declare his whole Mind touching Mens Salvation, *Matth.* iii. 17. and 17. 5. *This is my beloved Son, in whom I am well pleaſed; hear ye him.* To the ſame purpoſe is alſo ſerved thoſe numerous *Miracles* which he wrought. For theſe were ſigns to aſſure us that he was what he affirmed himſelf to be, *viz.* the Son of God, and conſequently that his Doctrine is of Divine Authority. *Many other ſigns truly did Jeſus in the Preſence of his Diſciples, which are not written in this Book. But theſe are written, that ye might believe, that Jeſus is the Chriſt the Son of God, and that believing ye might have Life through his Name*, John xx. 30, 31.

Theſe Miracles, in Conjunction with the Nature of our Saviour's Doctrine in nothing contrary to natural Religion, had certainly a very great Tendency in them to beget a Belief in him and of his Doctrine, or elſe he would never have marvelled as he did at the Unbelief of thoſe which ſaw them and heard him, *Mark* vi. 6. *He marvelled at their Unbelief.* Their Unbelief under ſuch Circumſtances, is mentioned again as matter of Wonder, *John* xii. 37. *But though he had done ſo many Miracles before them, yet they believed not on him.* But this would have been no matter of marvel to our Saviour, or wonder to his Diſciples, if there had not been a mighty Power in thoſe Miracles to convince Men, and to perſuade them to believe. To this end alſo ſerved the Reſurrection of Chriſt from the dead: For by that he was *mightily declared to be the Son of God*, Rom. i. 4.

And when the Apoſtles of our Lord were after his Reſurrection ſent forth to convert the World to Chriſtianity by preaching the Goſpel to them; as a means to make it efficacious to this end, and to procure it Credit and Authority in the Minds of Men; they were endued by the Lord with a power of working Miracles, and of ſpeaking with new Tongues, *Mark* xvi. 20. *They went forth and preached every where, the Lord working with them, and confirming the Word with ſigns following*, Heb. ii. 4. *God alſo bearing them witneſs both with Signs and Wonders, and divers Miracles and Gifts of the Holy Ghoſt, according to his own Will.*

And it was in reſpect of theſe powerful Confirmations of the Goſpel, I doubt not, that St. *Paul* ſays his *preaching was in Demonſtration of the Spirit and of Power*, and not with enticing or perſuaſible words of Man's Wiſdom, 1 *Cor.* ii. 4. It was by reaſon of this kind of Demonſtration of the Goſpel to be from God, which was made by the miraculous Operation of the Spirit by the Apoſtles, that the Goſpel was received as the Word of God, and not as the Word of Man; as all thoſe Diſcourſes of Philoſophers were, which had no other Confirmation, than what the Wit and Oratory of Men could derive from Principles of natural and humane Wiſdom. But the Apoſtle's Doctrine, as it was in the nature of it above humane pitch to find out, ſo their way of confirming of it was above all humane Power and Wiſdom alſo. As their Doctrine was known only by the Holy Spirits revealing, ſo the Arguments, Motives, and Reaſons by which they perſuaded Men to believe it to be from God, were fetched from the Spirit's own mighty Operations, which were viſible to Men, as well thoſe that did not, as thoſe which did believe. *They compared and ſuited ſpiritual things with ſpiritual*, ver. 13. The nature of their Arguments by which they perſuaded Men to believe their Doctrine, were ſuited to the nature of their Doctrine; both being from the Holy Spirit. The one by the Spirit's Revelation to the *Apoſtles*, the other by the Spirit's miraculous Operations *by the Apoſtles*. They proved their Doctrine was revealed to them by God, by the Teſtimony which he gave, that he had ſent them to preach what they did preach, by enabling them to do ſuch things, which none could do but by virtue of a Divine Power, which put forth it ſelf in them. God (as was ſaid) did bear them witneſs by Signs, Wonders, and by divers Miracles which he enabled them to do and to ſhew.

And being the Goſpel was upon the account of this Confirmation, received as the Word of God, and not of Man, as the Author of it; therefore it was that it did operate

rate ſo powerfully as it did in the Hearts and Lives of them that received it, to the transforming them in their Minds and Spirits, and in the Tenour of their Lives and Actions, into other manner of Men than they were before. By reaſon of which Tranſformation, the Scripture ſtiles them New Creatures, and the Man thus altered, the New Man. *When ye received the Word of God, which ye heard of us,* ſaith St. *Paul; ye received it not as the Word of Man, but as it is in Truth, the Word of God, which effectually worketh alſo in you that believe,* 1 Theſ. ii. 13.

The Goſpel then thus confirmed, as hath been repreſented, was and is ſo glorious an Object of Faith, and ſo every way fitted and prepared to command Mens Belief of it, that St. *Paul* ſuppoſeth it impoſſible but that Men ſhould believe it, unleſs the Devil hath ſtrangely blinded their Minds. And therefore he ſaith, 2 *Cor.* iv. 3, 4. *If our Goſpel be hid, it is hid to them that are loſt: In whom the God of this World hath blinded the minds of them which believe not, leſt the Light of the glorious Goſpel of Chriſt who is the Image of God, ſhould ſhine unto them.*

And thus we ſee what great Aſſiſtance God hath vouchſafed us for our performing the Condition of the Promiſe, by giving us his Goſpel.

The Lord by his Prophet, ſpeaking of how much he had done for his People of old, to enable them to be what he expected they ſhould be, in order to the Happineſs he deſigned them, ſaith *Iſa.* v. 4. *What could have been done more to my Vineyard that I have not done in it?* That is, What in reaſon could they expect he ſhould have done more to make them become obedient and fruitful, than he had done? And yet he hath done much more for us, who live under the Goſpel, than he did for them. For he hath ſent his own Son to reconcile us to himſelf, and himſelf to us by his Death. He hath ſent his own Son to perſuade Men, which is more than all the Prophets which he ſent before. And as he is greater himſelf, ſo he perſuades by greater Arguments than the Prophets were wont to do, both in reſpect of what hath been done for us already to oblige us, and in reſpect of what he will do, in rewarding if obedient, and in puniſhing if diſobedient. And all this lies fair before us in the Goſpel, by which Life and Immortality is brought to light; and which comes to us more gloriouſly atteſted alſo, than the Doctrine of *Moſes* and the Prophets did to them. And therefore the Lord may much more appeal to us than he did to them, and ſay, What could have been done more to engage you to believe and obey the Goſpel, and ſo to perform the Condition of the Promiſe, which I have not done? And if ſo, *How then ſhall we eſcape, if we neglect ſo great Salvation, which at the firſt began to be ſpoken by the Lord, and was confirmed unto us by them that heard him?* And yet behold he hath done and does more for us in another reſpect under the Goſpel, than he did in times paſt for his own peculiar People. For according to the various Predictions of the Prophets of old, we under the Goſpel have a more plentiful Effuſion of the Spirit to enable us to perform the Condition of the Promiſe of Pardon and Life, than ever they ordinarily had. Which brings me to the ſecond thing I propoſed to inſiſt on, which is, to ſhew what Aſſiſtance Men receive in performing the Condition of the Promiſe by the Influence and Operation of the Spirit of God.

CHAP. V.

How by the Holy Spirit's Operation upon the Mind and Will, Men are aſſiſted in performing the Condition of the Promiſe.

BUT before I proceed to ſhew this, to prevent miſunderſtanding in this matter, I muſt premiſe thus much by way of caution; to wit, That when I propoſe the Influence and Operation of the Holy Spirit, to be conſidered as an *Aid* diſtinct from that which is vouchſafed by the Goſpel it ſelf, I would not be underſtood thereby to deny that Aſſiſtance, which we receive by the Goſpel it ſelf, in performing the Condition of the Promiſe to be the *Aid and Aſſiſtance of the Spirit*; at leaſt, in ſome reſpect. I only ſuppoſe, That there is an Influence and Operation of the Holy Spirit upon the Hearts of Men, by which they are enabled to perform the Condition of the Promiſe, *over and above* what the Goſpel, in its own nature, abſtractedly conſidered, does contribute thereunto. Otherwiſe, as I have been now ſhewing, the Operations of the Goſpel it ſelf is of and from the Holy Spirit, both in reſpect of its Revelation and Confirmation. So that what is ſaid and done by the Goſpel, is, in a ſenſe, ſaid and done by the Holy Spirit. And they are led by the Spirit, and walk in the Spirit, that make the Goſpel their Guide.

All Scripture is given by inſpiration of God, 2 Tim. iii. 16. *And holy Men of God ſpake as they were moved by the Holy Ghoſt*, 2 Pet. i. 21. And the things ſpoken by the Prophets in the Old Teſtament, are ſaid in the New to be ſpoken by the Holy Ghoſt, *Acts* i. 16. and xxviii. 25. *Heb.* iii. 7. and x. 15. And it's ſeven times ſaid in *Revel.* ch. ii. and iii. *He that hath an ear, let him hear what the Spirit ſaith unto the Churches*; meaning what he ſaid to them in and by thoſe Epiſtles which St. *John* ſent to the ſeven Churches in *Aſia*. And God is ſaid to have *teſtified againſt the People of the Jews by his Spirit in his Prophets*, Neh. ix. 30. And St. *Stephen* ſaid to thoſe in his time for oppoſing the Goſpel; *Ye do always reſiſt the Holy Ghoſt, as your Fathers did, ſo do ye.* And St. *Paul* ſaid, touching ſuch as ſhould deſpiſe their Doctrine and Commands, *He that deſpiſeth, deſpiſeth not Man, but God, who alſo hath given unto us his Holy Spirit*, 1 *Theſſ.* iv. 8. By all this it appears, That what is done by the Doctrine of Men divinely inſpired, is done by the Spirit of God; and what is done againſt it, or againſt them for the ſake of it, is done againſt the Spirit of God. *He that heareth you, heareth me; and he that deſpiſeth you, deſpiſeth me*; ſaith our Saviour alſo, *Luke* x. 16.

But yet though the *aſſiſtance* Men receive by the Goſpel in performing the Condition of the Promiſe, be the *aſſiſtance* of the Holy Spirit, yet it is *not all the aſſiſtance* they receive from the Holy Spirit therein. For when the Holy Scripture ſpeaks of the *Goſpel's coming unto Men, not in Word only, but alſo in Power and in the Holy Ghoſt*, 1 Theſſ. i. 5. of their being *born of the Spirit*, John i. 13. and iii. 5. of the *waſhing of Regeneration, and renewing of the Holy Ghoſt*, Tit. iii. 5. of their *obeying the Truth through the Spirit*, 1 Pet. i. 22. of a being *built together for an habitation of God through the Spirit*, Eph. ii. 22. of the *ſupply of the Spirit of Jeſus Chriſt, and of God's working in them to will and to do of his good pleaſure*, Phil. ii. 13. and the like; there is no reaſon to reſtrain the ſenſe of ſuch Sayings unto the *alone* Operation of the Doctrine of the Goſpel, as having God, or the Spirit of God for its Author, and no more. The Prayers which our Saviour made, and taught his Diſciples to make for the ſucceſs of the Goſpel, and which the Apoſtles made and taught the Chriſtians to make for the like; do all of them imply likewiſe ſomething more to be done by God, for the renewing of Men unto himſelf, than only by his bare ſending his Goſpel among them.

Although Men can conſider matters diſcovered by the Goſpel when they hear them, as well as they can any other things ſet forth by Diſcourſes of another nature; (and indeed God expects they ſhould do ſo, at the peril of their own Deſtruction, if they do not) yet ſuch is the zeal of the Lord to promote and ſet forward the buſineſs of our Salvation, that he is *not willing to truſt the work only in our hands*, though he hath brought it to our hands by ſuch preparations wherein he hath prevented all Endeavours of ours. *He doth not only bring the Goſpel and our Minds together, and then leave them to operate upon each other in the ſtrength of their own nature only*; but is graciouſly pleaſed to accompany his Word, more or leſs, as he ſees good, with a ſecret Operation of his Spirit upon our Minds, both to incline and *diſpoſe* the internal Faculties to exerciſe and employ themſelves about matters of this high nature, and likewiſe to *aſſiſt them in it*.

There is doubtleſs a ſecret power and efficacy of the Divine Spirit goes along with the Goſpel into the Mind and Will, by means whereof the Goſpel does the more readily and effectually work upon the Mind and Will, to the renewing of them. When the Diſciples, ſcatter'd by occaſion of the Perſecution by *Saul*, preached the Goſpel to the *Grecians*, it is ſaid, *The hand of the Lord was with them, and that a great number believed, and turned to the Lord*, Acts xi. 21. Their believing and turning to the Lord, was the effect of the Lord's hand being with them in Preaching, as well as it was the effect of what was preached. *The Goſpel is the Power of God to Salvation to every one that believeth*, Rom. i. 16. Believing and Salvation are the effects of God's Power going along with the Goſpel, as well as of the Goſpel it ſelf. By that the Goſpel becomes more quick and powerful, and ſharper than a two-edged Sword. *It is the Sword of the Spirit*, as it is called, as well in reſpect of its being managed by the Spirit, as it is by being provided by the Spirit for Chriſtians to manage. The whole Succeſs of the Goſpel in producing thoſe happy Effects in Men, by which they become other manner of Men than they were before, is aſcribed unto the Grace and Bleſſing of God that goes along with the Goſpel. *I have planted, and Apollos watered, but God gave the Increaſe,* ſaith St. *Paul*. *So then neither is he that planteth any thing, neither he that watereth, but God that giveth the Increaſe,* 1 Cor. iii. 6, 7. Upon this account all that Appearance of the Vertues of Chriſt, which is in true Chriſtians, by which they give ſome good account unto the World what an one Chriſt is, and what manner of thing his Goſpel is, is aſcribed unto the Operation of his holy Spirit upon their Hearts, in that metaphorical way uſed by St. *Paul* when he told the Chriſtians at *Corinth, That they were the Epiſtle of Chriſt written by the Spirit of the living God upon the fleſhly Tables of their Hearts,* 2 Cor. iii. 3.

Thus much in general, to ſhew that there is an Aſſiſtance by the Operation of God's Spirit vouchſafed unto Men in performing the Condition of the Promiſe, *over and beſides* what Aſſiſtance they receive therein from the nature of the Goſpel. I ſhall now proceed to ſhew a little more particularly how Men are aſſiſted by the Operation and Influence of the Holy Spirit, in performing the Condition of the Promiſe of Pardon and Life. Not to undertake to deſcribe all thoſe ways by which God communicates his *Aids* unto Men in performing the Condition of the Promiſe, but only ſo much of thoſe Divine Methods as may give ſome light in the thing, and ſome Satisfaction to our Minds touching this great Affair of our Souls.

1. One of the firſt things is a procuring from Men, or God's working in them *a Fixedneſs of Thoughts* upon the things which concern their Salvation or Damnation, a keeping their Minds upon them. Before this is done, Men may have many *fluctuating* Thoughts about God and Chriſt, Heaven and Hell, and about the way of eſcaping the one, and of obtaining the other, and yet be little or nothing the better for them. For theſe being things out of ſight, and remote from the Senſes, there are a Multitude of other Thoughts which throng into the Mind, from external Objects that lie open to the Senſes, which ſcatter and divide, yea, and which in a great meaſure exclude and thruſt out of the Mind, thoſe other more neceſſary Thoughts. The Thoughts and Cares about the *Farm*, the *Merchandize*, the *Oxen*, and the *Marrying of a Wife*, ſpoken of in the Parable; yea, and worſe than theſe, about unlawful Pleaſures and undue ſeeking of Honours; theſe ſo entertain and take up Mens Minds, that Thoughts of God and another World, and the great Concerns of Religion, which have not the advantage of making their way into the Mind by the Senſes, have little or no room there Hence comes the ſin of forgetting God, ſo much ſpoken of in Scripture, which carries in it a forgetting our Accountableneſs to him, and conſequently a Forgetfulneſs of all thoſe things which depend upon our minding of theſe.

Now while Thoughts of this nature rule and bear ſway in the Mind, and other Thoughts are only now and then floating there without any ſetled abode, theſe latter can have no powerful Influence to alter the ſtanding Temper of the Mind, or to change the Motions and Operations of the Will, which yet are neceſſary to the performing of the Condition of the Promiſe.

And therefore one of the firſt things, as I ſay, which God does in aſſiſting Men in the Performance of the Condition of the Promiſe, is to ſtay and fix their Thoughts upon the things which concern their Salvation. Though their Thoughts are and muſt be exerciſed about the things of this preſent Life; yet their Thoughts about their Souls and another World, are ſo fixed by God in their Minds, when thus aſſiſted by him, that they are continually intermingling themſelves with their other Thoughts, and correcting their Extravagancy, and exerciſing a Power over them. Here now they dwell; though they muſt give ſome place to other neceſſary Thoughts, yet ſo as that they are never long abſent, but ſtill return into the Mind. Thus the good Ground-hearers, which bring forth Fruit with Patience, are ſaid to be ſuch as having heard the Word, *keep it*, (Luke viii. 15.) that is, they keep it on their Minds, ſo as that it is not ſtolen out of their Hearts by the evil one, by filling the Mind with other things, as it befals the High-way-ſide Hearers: Nor choaked, or ſtifled in its Operations by an over-powering Multitude of other Thoughts about things grateful to the Fleſh, as about Riches and Pleaſures, and Luſts of other things, as it is in the Thorny-ground Hearers. Not as if where God thus fixeth the Thoughts upon their principal Objects, that there he gives Memories to retain all they hear, that is not meant by their *keeping* the Word, but that ſuch keep upon their Minds the Scope and Subſtance of thoſe

Points of the Chriſtian Religion as are neceſſary to their Salvation, as the Fruit of all their hearing. It is the *ingrafted Word which is able to ſave the Soul*, James i. 21. that is, as it is ingrafted upon the Mind by ſetled Thoughts and fixed Conſideration, without which Men may hear all the Days of their Life, and yet be but as the *ſilly Women* St. *Paul* ſpeaks of, *laden with ſins, and led away with divers Luſts*, who were *always learning, and never able to come to the Knowledge of the Truth*, 2 Tim. iii. 6, 7. The Lord made *David* wiſe through his Word, but it was by keeping it and his Mind together. Thou, ſaith he, through thy Commandments, haſt made me wiſer than mine Enemies; *for they are ever with me*. I have more Underſtanding than all my Teachers: *For thy Teſtimonies are my Meditation*, Pſal. cxix. 98, 99. Thus when the Lord aſſiſted *Lydia* in the Buſineſs of her believing, *he opened her Heart ſo that ſhe attended to the things which were ſpoken by St.* Paul. *She held her ſelf to them*; ſo the *Dutch* Tranſlators render it: She kept her Mind ſtaid upon them by ſerious Conſideration. And this we ſee was the Effect of God's Operation upon her Mind; he opened her Heart ſo that ſhe attended, *Acts* xvi. 14. It is God that thus *puts his Law into Mens minds*, that pitcheth and terminateth their Thoughts upon the things contained in it, according to the Tenour of the New Covenant, *Heb.* viii. 10. This is one thing wherein the Divine Aſſiſtance doth conſiſt.

2. Another thing is, the Holy Spirit's Operation upon the Mind, enabling it by the Light of the Goſpel, to *diſcern the Nature, Tendency, and Uſefulneſs of the things diſcovered and revealed by the Goſpel*. By Man's Apoſtacy from God, and cuſtomary ſinning, the Mind is darkened, the Eye of the Underſtanding corrupted, and thereby to a great degree rendred impotent, and unable to diſcern things diſcovered by the Goſpel to be what they are, though ſet before it. Like the Man in the Goſpel, who while imperfectly cured of his Blindneſs, ſaw Men walking as Trees: They have and can have in that State but confuſed and indiſtinct Notions of ſpiritual things: *If the Eye be evil, the whole Body is full of Darkneſs*. This being Man's caſe, there is need of a Divine Power to work ſome Cure upon the Eye of the Mind to diſcern aright concerning the things of the Goſpel. *David* had ſome Senſe of this upon his Mind when he prayed thus unto God: *Open thou mine Eyes, that I may behold the wondrous things of thy* Law, Pſal. cxix. 18. The Diſciples had not right Notions of things revealed by the Scriptures concerning Chriſt, until our *Saviour opened their Underſtandings to underſtand the Scriptures*, Luke xxiv. 45. When the Veil is taken away, ſo that Men *with open Face behold the glorious things of the Lord in the Goſpel, it is by the Spirit of the Lord*, 2 Cor. iii. 18. Though *the Hope of the Chriſtian's calling, and the Riches of the Glory of God's Inheritance in the Saints* are revealed in the Goſpel, yet St. *Paul* knew for all that, that there was need of *having the Eyes of the Underſtanding enlightned, to know and diſcern what thoſe are*; and therefore prayed unto the God and Father of our Lord Jeſus Chriſt for it, in the behalf of the *Epheſians*, c. 1. 17, 18. And if theſe Chriſtians after they believed, ſtood in need to have the Eyes of their Underſtanding farther enlightned by God, in order to a more clear and full Proſpect of the Glorioufneſs of the Hope ſet before them, for the ſtrengthening and encouraging them to perſevere and hold out in their Obedience to the Goſpel, then doubtleſs they much more ſtood in need of ſome enlightning by God in this kind to enable them at firſt to begin to be ſincerely obedient.

In the dark Men are apt to miſtake one thing for another; ſo before this Illumination of the Mind by the Spirit of God, they are apt to call Evil Good, and Good Evil; to put bitter for ſweet, and ſweet for bitter; to chuſe Evil under the Notion of Good, and to refuſe Good under the Notion of Evil. But when the Light of the Law and Goſpel are let into the Mind, by which every thing is diſcovered and diſcerned in its true Shape and Colour, then Sin and Vertue appear to be what they are in their own Nature, Sin to be Sin indeed, and Virtue and Goodneſs to be Virtue and Goodneſs indeed. Then Sin appears in the Turpitude, Deformity and Malignity of its Nature, and in its Tendency to the Ruine of the Subject in which it dwells: And Righteouſneſs, Virtue, and Goodneſs appear in their Beauty and Uſefulneſs, and in their Tendency to the Happineſs of ſuch in whom they dwell. For inſtance, before this Illumination, Men are apt to miſtake the Doctrine of the Grace of God which brings Salvation, and to think they ſhall be ſaved becauſe Chriſt died for ſinners, and becauſe they believe he did ſo; eſpecially if they be but now and then troubled in their Minds, and ſorry for their ſins, and do pray God to pardon them, though they ſtill continue in them. But when the Eyes of their Underſtanding are opened to ſee things as they are, and are repreſented in the Goſpel; then they perceive none ſhall be ſaved by the Death of Chriſt, whatever their Belief may be, but ſuch as ſhall be perſuaded by the great Motives of the Goſpel, to be reconciled to God by being reconciled to their Duty, throwing down the Weapons of their Rebellion, and becoming univerſally ſincerely obedient to his Government, according to the Laws of Jeſus Chriſt.

This Illumination of the Mind by God, contributes ſo much towards Mens performing the Condition of the Promiſe, that the whole of their Converſion is ſometimes meant in Scripture, when but this only is mentioned, *Heb.* x. 32.

3. Another part of the Divine Aſſiſtance afforded unto Men in performing the Condition of the Promiſe, is the *Holy Spirit's Operation upon the Will*, to aſſiſt it in what is proper to it in performing of the Condition of the Promiſe. For whatever ſenſe there is begot in Men of the danger they are in by reaſon of Sin; or whatever illumination is wrought in the Mind touching the *way* and *method* laid down by God of eſcaping that danger; yet until the Will be changed, and wrought to a firm Reſolution of complying with the Terms on which the promiſe of Pardon and Life through Chriſt is made, the Work is not done, the Perſon is not regenerate, nor in a regular capacity of enjoying what is conditionally obtained by Chriſt, and conditionally promiſed through him. Men are not *begotten of God*, nor *born of God*, as the Scripture ſpeaks of ſome that are; they are not begotten by the Word of Truth, nor born again of the Immortal Seed of the Word, until the change be made in the Will, as well as in the Underſtanding: And when-ever it is made, it is the effect of a Divine Operation. *It is God that worketh in you both to will and to do of his good pleaſure*, Phil. ii. 13.

Now in that Aſſiſtance which is vouchſafed unto Men in renewing them in their Wills, in *working in them to will*, ſeveral things are to be conſidered.

1. The Holy Spirit diſpoſeth the Will to be *paſſive*, in reference to thoſe notices given by the enlightned Mind and Underſtanding touching thoſe things which have been diſcovered to it by the Goſpel, through the illuminating Operation of the Spirit upon it. The will having been accuſtomed to buſie and exerciſe it ſelf about other Objects, ſuch as the Senſes have preſented to it, things that concern only this preſent World and Life, it will hardly ſuffer any paſſage for Heavenly and Divine Things, which are ſtrangers to it, without ſome Divine Operation of the Spirit to incline the Will thereto, or to open a paſſage for them. Which is done (I conceive) by ſuſpending the Evil Influence which the Will had upon the Underſtanding, in keeping or withholding it from conſidering with any ſeriouſneſs and frequency the things that concerns the Soul and another Life. And if the Underſtanding be but at liberty ſeriouſly and frequently to conſider ſuch things, as well as thoſe that concern only this preſent Life, the Will then cannot but ſee and taſte them to be better, becauſe the Mind and Judgment in ſuch caſe cannot but repreſent them to the Will as much better, and as things wherein the happineſs of our Nature is much more concerned, than in any, than in all the things of this World.

God, in taking off the Will from the foreſaid bad influence it had upon the Conſiderative Faculty, *takes away the heart of ſtone* the Scripture ſpeaks of. For the *heart of ſtone*, which God ſaid he would take away, ſignifies the inflexible Temper of the Will, and the reſiſtance it makes againſt the Underſtanding's taking thoſe things into ſerious Conſideration which tend to perſuade the Will to alter its purpoſes, and to alter its choice of Objects.

Mens not conſidering things that concern their Souls and another Life, when yet they can and do conſider things that relate to the Animal Life, is juſtly imputed to the faultineſs of their Wills; they do not conſider them, becauſe they will not, not becauſe they cannot; it is becauſe they have no propenſion of Will to engage their conſiderative Faculties about thoſe things. *They turn back from God*; and why? but becauſe *they will not conſider any of his ways*, John xxxiv. 27. So that until God do take off this ſtrong Byas which is upon Mens Will, they will not conſider thoſe things, which if they did ſeriouſly conſider, would certainly change the bent and motion of their Wills.

Now, how Almighty God does take off this ſtrong influence which the Will hath upon the Mind to keep it from conſidering things of greateſt importance, I have ſhewed, at leaſt in great part, in Chap. I. of this Diſcourſe; to wit, by raiſing in the Mind ſuch *ſenſe* of Guilt and Danger in reference to the Soul, as does counterpoiſe the Prejudices which proceed from the Will againſt ſuch Conſideration. For when the Will cannot give eaſe to the Mind by putting it upon the Conſideration of any thing elſe than thoſe which concern the Soul and a future State, then in reference to the Man's own relief, it becomes content that the Mind ſhould ſeek its eaſe by Conſiderations of another nature than what it had been before accuſtomed to. And thus the Will becomes at the leaſt paſſive as to thoſe Conſiderations and Notices which proceed from an awakened and enlightned Mind.

2. By the Will's being made thus paſſive, it comes, together with the Underſtanding, to taſte and feel the goodneſs and ſweetneſs of thoſe things whereof the great Motives of the Goſpel are made, the uſefulneſs of them to make a Man happy, beyond any thing it ever taſted before. *The ear trieth words, as the mouth taſteth meat*, as *Elihu* ſpeaks, *Job* xxxiv. 3. The outward Senſe of the Body being put for the internal Senſe of the Mind touching thoſe things that come into it by the Ear. The Mind, by conſidering what a Man hears, taſteth whether it be good or bad, as he doth his Meat by his Palate. Thus the ſuperlative Goodneſs of the great things of the Goſpel come to be taſted both by the Underſtanding and the Will, by a diligent and due Conſideration of them, which is the Mind's chewing them. We read of Mens *taſting the heavenly gift*, their *taſting the good word of God, and of the powers of the world to come*, Heb. vi. 4, 5. of the *taſting that the Lord is gracious*, 1 Pet. ii. 3. of holy *David's* ſaying, that God's Word was *ſweeter to his taſte than Honey to his mouth*; and of *Job's* ſaying how he *eſteemed it more than his neceſſary food*; and of the Prophet *Jeremiah's eating of it*, and of his finding it thereupon *the joy and rejoycing of his heart*. However theſe, or ſome of theſe Sayings may be meant of a higher degree of this taſte, than Men meet with upon the firſt change that is made upon their Mind and Will, yet doubtleſs ſomething of this ſpiritual reliſh is found upon the Mind and Will of every true Convert, upon his firſt effectual turning, and does contribute to the forming of thoſe good Reſolutions which are taken hereupon; which brings me to the next thing:

3. The Will, by having received ſome taſte of the ſuperlative Goodneſs of the great and precious Promiſes of the Goſpel, touching Pardon of Sin and Eternal Life, comes thereby to be reconciled to the Terms or Condition on which thoſe great Benefits are promiſed, and to take up a Reſolution of endeavouring to perform thoſe Terms, or that Condition. Though it be a great thing for a Man to reſolve upon ſuch a thing as to turn his back upon his formerly beloved Vanities, and to betake himſelf to the ſtudy and practice of other kind of things, from which he hath been willingly and wilfully eſtranged, yet the ſenſe of the danger of refuſing to do ſo, and the hope of the greatneſs of the benefits he ſhall receive if he does, prevails with the Will to reſolve upon it, againſt all that which would draw it another way, God alſo *ſtrengthening him* thereunto, *with might by his Spirit in the inner Man*. And this he does, at leaſt in great part, by making the great Motives of the Goſpel preſent to his Mind, and by keeping them under his Conſideration, and drawing his Thoughts frequently upon them.

4. That which is yet more difficult, and wherein the Divine Aſſiſtance is greatly needful, is to *do* as well as to *will*, and *to put in execution* thoſe good Purpoſes when they have been raiſed and formed in the Will. *To will is preſent with me, but how to perform that which is good, I find not*, Rom. vii. 18. *The Spirit indeed is willing, but the Fleſh is weak*, Matth. xxvi. 41. Such Sayings as theſe ſhew it to be a harder matter to do indeed, than it is to purpoſe to do.

There are many good Purpoſes in Men which ſtick in the birth, prove abortive, and never come into act for want of ſtrength in the Will [in which they were conceived] to bring them forth. Few are ſo bad, but that at ſome times, and in ſome good mood they reſolve to amend and become better, when the Spirit of God is at work on their Minds and Conſciences to awaken them: But theſe Purpoſes wear off, and die within moſt Men, and never come to effect for want of ſtrength and firmneſs. Many would be better, that yet remain bad, if they could be ſo with wiſhing and deſiring, without reſolving to put themſelves to the trouble of croſſing their own corrupt Humour, and of denying the unreaſonable cravings of the Fleſh. And thoſe that do reſolve upon thoſe Labours and Endeavours which are neceſſary to a thorough Converſion of Soul, yet many times find a great ſtriſe within themſelves, between the taking up of ſuch Reſolutions, and the putting them in execution; they meet with great and ſtrong Sollicitations from the Fleſh, from the ſenſitive Appetites, to let fall ſuch Reſolutions, and great Diſcouragements ſet before them alſo to hedge up the Way with Thorns. *The Fleſh luſteth againſt the Spirit*, and the Devil aſſiſteth the Fleſh all he can with his Suggeſtions: So that it becomes a matter of great Difficulty, for Mens Purpoſes and Reſolutions in this kind, to hold out, and to make their way through all this Oppoſition. And whenever this Difficulty is overcome, and Mens Reſolutions become ſo ſtrong as to carry them through all this Oppoſition, it is to be attributed to God, it is becauſe God *worketh* in them to *will and to do* of his good Pleaſure, *Phil.* ii. 13.

The Spirit of God then we ſee worketh in Men to do, by working in them Strength of Reſolution in willing to do, thereby drawing that out into actual Performance which had been reſolved on. But I do not ſay, That the Spirit of God doth enable ſuch Mens Performance to anſwer their Reſolutions to the height preſently, and at the firſt. That which the Spirit of God does enable Men at firſt to do in this caſe, is honeſtly, really, and ſincerely to ſet upon the Work reſolved on; that is, ſincerely to endeavour to reform, amend, and to become new Men; to ſtrive againſt all known ſin, and to endeavour to do all known Duty as well as they can; but the Victory is got but by degrees.

There is a great difference between a Man's getting the Victory over thoſe Oppoſitions of Fleſh, World, and Devil, which withſtood him in his beginning, when he was ſetting upon the Work of Amendment of Life, and his deſtroying thoſe Enemies of his Soul, ſo as that they ſhall no more annoy him, or endanger his falling ſhort of the Happineſs he ſeeks: (which to be ſure they will, notwithſtanding his firſt Victory, unleſs he purſue that Victory, by ſeeking the utter Ruine and Deſtruction of them, by keeping up a continual War againſt them.) The former Victory, I reckon, is perfectly obtained, when Men are not prevailed upon by any Oppoſition whatſoever, but that they will, and do ſeriouſly, and ſincerely, and actually engage in a conſcientious Obſervation of the ſeveral Duties of Chriſtianity, enjoyned by our Saviour, both in abſtaining from Evil, and in doing good.

But the latter Victory is obtained but by degrees, as the new Man grows ſtronger and ſtronger, and the old Man weaker and weaker, like the Houſe of *Saul* and *David*. A Man, I conceive, does commence ſincere Chriſtian, and real Diſciple of Chriſt, when he has obtained the firſt Victory; but cannot approve himſelf to God, and his own Conſcience to be, and to continue ſuch, farther than he follows his enterprize, and purſues that Victory, by endeavouring the *Deſtruction of the whole body of ſin*, and by aſpiring after a *ſtanding compleat in all the Will of God.*

When our Saviour ſaid (*Luke* xii. 47.) *That Servant which knew his Lord's Will, and prepared not himſelf, neither did according to his Will, ſhall be beaten with many Stripes:* We ſee the leaſt that will ſecure a Man from this threatning of our Lord, is a Man's preparing himſelf to do according to his Lord's Will. And if by preparing himſelf be meant a putting himſelf in the beſt Poſture he can to do it, by uſing the beſt means and Helps he can, in order to it, and then doing it as well as he can, though not ſo well as he would; then it ſeems very probable, That for a Man to prepare himſelf to do his Lord's Will, will not only ſecure him from being beaten as a diſobedient Servant, but alſo render him acceptable to his Lord in ſuch his Preparation to pleaſe him.

And I think the Apoſtle's Rule will hold in reference to this, though mentioned but upon a particular occaſion; that of Almſ-giving, 2 *Cor.* viii. 12. *If there be firſt a willing Mind, it is accepted according to that a Man hath, and not according to that he hath not.* So long as a Man's doing his Lord's Will as well as his Alms, does but anſwer his Ability and Capacity, and proceeds from a *willing Mind*, a Mind inclined and bent to do better, as he to give a better Alms if he could; this Man's Endeavour and Service will be no more rejected becauſe it is ſo mean, than the poor Widow's two Mites were, but be accepted, becauſe it holds ſome proportion with his Ability, and proceeds from a Mind and Will, that would have put the Man upon doing more, if he could have done it. And this indeed is, in a favourable Senſe, a Man's ſerving his Lord and Maſter *with all his might*, with all that little Strength which he hath.

And yet, in this, Almighty God does not, I conceive, weigh Men in reference to their Performance or Endeavours to perform, by Grains and Scruples. For he *knows whereof we are made, and how we are but Duſt*, as the *Pſalmiſt* ſpeaks. He conſiders the Compoſition of our Nature, Fleſh as well as Spirit, and the Conſtitution and Complexion thereof, and how the Motions and Activity of the Spirit are limited and ſtraitned by the Body to which it is united. He conſiders all the Diſadvantages we are under from without us, as of times and places where the Providence of God hath caſt us, and of Education, Company, and Acquaintance, and the like; he conſiders all a Man's Circumſtances, and then, according to the Goodneſs and Benignity of his Nature, makes Allowances in eſtimating a Man according to his Endeavours and Performances. He is not extream in marking what is done amiſs. *He pities us as a Father pities his Children, and ſpares us as a Man ſpares his own Son that ſerves him*, if the Biaſs of our Will and conſtant Endeavours do but ſtand right towards him, and if our Endeavours do but hold ſome good Proportion to that Aſſiſtance we receive from him; an Inſtance of all which we have in the Character which the Scripture gives of *David*, when it ſaith, *He turned not aſide from any thing commanded by God, all his days, except in the Matter of* Uriah, 1 Kings xv. 5.

Theſe things I note by the way, to the end we might be the better able to make ſome Judgment, not only of what Aſſiſtance Men receive from God, when he worketh in them both to will and to do, but alſo *what that willing and doing is*, which we may hope will, through Grace, be accepted for a Performance of that Condition, to which the Promiſe of Pardon and Life is made.

And thus we have ſeen, in ſome meaſure, how Almighty God, by the Aſſiſtance of his Grace, brings about that Change both in the Mind and Manners of Men, by which the Condition of his Promiſe of Pardon and Life is performed. He awakens Mens Fears, by making them ſenſible of their danger by reaſon of ſin. And theſe *Fears*, eſpecially when they grow any thing ſtrong, *prevail* againſt thoſe *Prejudices*, which make Men unwilling to conſider the Concernments of their Souls, and things relating to another Life. And by conſidering, Men come through God's farther Aſſiſtance, to have new Apprehenſions of things, to ſee and to judge of things as they are, and then to chuſe or refuſe them according to that Judgment.

God does not give Men new Faculties of Underſtanding and Will: He only aſſiſts thoſe Faculties to throw off that Burthen which oppreſſed them, to break thoſe Fetters by which they were bound, and ſo to reſtore them by degrees to their Native Liberty of acting regularly. Hence the Scripture calls this Work of God upon the Soul, a being *renewed in Knowledge after the Image of him that created him*, Col. iii. 10. that is, to a right Judgment of things, wherein the Soul of Man reſembled its Maker. It is termed *a being renewed in the Spirit of the Mind*, Epheſ. iv. 23. *a being transformed by the renewing of the Mind*, Rom. xii. 2. *and the renewing of the Holy Ghoſt*, Tit. iii. 5.

That which is moſt connatural to the Will in Man, is to chuſe his Happineſs. It is not in Man's Power to chuſe to be miſerable under that Notion, but whenever he does ſo, it's under the Notion of Good. And this is the Corruption that cleaves to Man in his degenerate State, to chuſe that which is evil under the Notion of Good; and likewiſe to chuſe an inferiour Good with a greater degree of *Volition* than a Good that is ſuperiour. As when a temporal Good, and the Good of the Body, is choſen with a greater Strength, and Power of willing, than an Eternal Good, and the Good of the Soul.

Now that which God does in regenerating Man, is the vouchſafing him ſuch *Aſſiſtance*, as by which his *Mind is reſtored* to a Power and Liberty of making *right Judgment* of things, to judge that to be good which is ſo, and that to be evil which is ſo. And then to make a right Judgment between an inferiour and a ſuperiour Good, which the Apoſtle calls a *proving or trying things that differ, and the approving of things that are excellent*, Phil. i. 9. That which he does therein in reference to the *Will*, is to enable it in its Election and Rejection of things to *be governed* by the rectified *Judgment of the Mind*, to be no longer impoſed upon by the Irregularity of the ſenſitive Appetites unto which it had been in Bondage, while they uſurped the Throne, the Place and Office of the Underſtanding and Judgment in giving Laws to the Will, what it ſhould chuſe, and what it ſhould refuſe. For ſo far as the Will is renewed, it chuſes and refuſes, according to the Laws and Dictates of an enlightned Mind and rectified Judgment, and no longer by the blind Appetites and Propenſions of Senſe. Whenever an inferiour and ſuperiour Good come in Competition, the Will, ſo far as renewed, will ſtill chuſe that which is ſuperiour. And when two Evils come in Competition, a greater and a leſs, the Evil of ſinning, and the Evil of ſuffering, the Will, as renewed, chuſes the leſs.

But in all this Change made in the Mind and Will, there is *no unnatural Force* put upon the Faculties; but, on the contrary, they are thereby *relieved* againſt an unnatural Force which had been put upon them. They had, by an unnatural Force, been turned aſide from acting regularly to the making of wrong Judgment of things, and wrong Elections of them. It was an unnatural force, which put the ſenſual Appetites and Paſſions into the place of governing the Will in her Reſolutions and Elections. And God's Work in transforming and renewing the Soul, is but his relieving and freeing it from theſe tyrannical Impoſitions, and reſtoring the Faculties in their ſeveral Operations to their priſtine liberty and order: The Mind, to judge of things as they are; and the Will, to ſubmit her ſelf in her Reſolutions and Elections to the Government of the Judgment now rectified; and the Appetites and Paſſions, to conform themſelves to the Elections and Reſolutions of the Will, under the Conduct of ſuch a rectified Judgment. And when things are thus right in the Soul, which is the fountain and ſpring of external Actions, the Life and Converſation cannot, in the main, and in the general courſe of it, but be regular alſo.

The doing of all this, the working ſo great a change in the Soul, will indeed require, not only the Operation of God's Word, but the Operation of the Hand of his Power alſo, to bring every thing into its right place, and each Faculty to do its own work. For the Faculties of the Soul, Mind and Will, are enfeebled by Sin, which is the Sickneſs of the Soul, as Mens Limbs are by Sickneſs of the Body; ſo that they cannot do that which otherwiſe would be natural, eaſie and pleaſant to them, until God himſelf is pleaſed to convey ſtrength into them, to *ſtrengthen Men with ſtrength in their Souls*, as the *Pſalmiſt* ſpeaks.

Yet it muſt be confeſſed, That God does not, to effect this cure, give this ſtrength in ſo miraculous a manner, as ſtrength and *perfect ſoundneſs* was given to the Cripple, *Acts* iii. which was done in an inſtant, but in a more leiſurely and gradual way; the Seed which he ſows in the Soul comes to perfection by degrees, *firſt the Blade, then the Ear, after that the full Corn in the Ear*, Mark iv. The Work of thorow Converſion is not begun and finiſhed all in an inſtant ordinarily, but is uſually carried on in ſuch a ſlow and regular proceſs, as if it were wholly contrived and wrought by the power of our own Reaſon, as a late judicious Author well expreſſeth it.

CHAP. VI.

Of God's Aſſiſting thoſe that periſh, towards their performing the Condition of the Promiſe of Salvation: And of their refuſing to make uſe of that Aſſiſtance; and of their periſhing for that reaſon. Of God's not hindering Men from refuſing his Aſſiſtance, and of the Reaſon why.

IT is of no ſmall Concernment to ſatisfie our Minds in this, to wit, that it is not for want of Mercy and Goodneſs in God towards thoſe that periſh, that yet they do periſh. And if we conſider how that God does aſſiſt even thoſe that periſh, towards their performing the Condition on which Salvation is promiſed, until that aſſiſtance is rejected, and that their periſhing proceeds from their refuſing to uſe that aſſiſtance, and the reaſon why God does not hinder them by the irreſiſtibleneſs of his Grace from refuſing that aſſiſtance, it will go far toward ſuch a ſatisfaction.

1. I ſhall begin with the firſt of theſe, and ſhew that God does aſſiſt thoſe that periſh, towards their performing the Condition on which Salvation is promiſed. This I ſuppoſe will appear more than probable when theſe things following ſhall be conſidered.

1. The holy Scriptures acquaint us, that *God would have all Men to be ſaved, and come to the knowledge of the Truth*, 1 Tim. ii. 4. *That he is not willing that any ſhould periſh, but that all ſhould come to repentance*, 2 Pet. iii. 9. Now ſince neither of theſe can be attained without God's aſſiſtance, how can it be ſaid that he would have *all Men* to come to Repentance, if he did not afford them his aſſiſtance towards it? How can his willingneſs on this behalf be known or diſcerned, if he ſhould with-hold that

aſſiſtance from any of them, without which that cannot be done, which yet he ſays he would have done?

2. The ſame Mercy and Grace which inclined God the Father to give his Son, and the Son to give himſelf a Ranſom *for all*, cannot, as we may well conceive, but incline him to afford unto *all* his *preparatory aſſiſtance* towards performing that Condition, without which his giving of Chriſt for all would be ineffectual to their Salvation. His giving his Son for all, which is the greater Gift, infers his willingneſs to vouchſafe to all the leſs alſo, ſo long as his end in giving the greater will be loſt, unleſs he give the leſſer alſo.

3. If God did not begin to aſſiſt even thoſe that periſh, to perform the Condition of the Promiſe, until that Aſſiſtance has been refuſed and oppoſed, I would fain know how they can be left *without excuſe* when they come to be condemned for not repenting, unleſs we could ſuppoſe them able of themſelves to repent without Divine Aſſiſtance, which yet the Scriptures will not ſuffer us to ſuppoſe. For if they could as well plead that Divine Aſſiſtance had *never* been afforded them, but *always with-held* from them, as they may plead the *impoſſibility* of their performing the Condition of the Promiſe without Divine Aſſiſtance, it would be an excuſe, why they did not repent and believe, and a great one too.

4. How can it be ſaid, which yet is uſually and generally affirmed, that under the New Covenant, Salvation is granted to all Men that do not wilfully refuſe it, if aſſiſtance to perform the Condition were not afforded unto all, as well as the Promiſe of it is on that Condition; until they wilfully refuſe to make uſe of that aſſiſtance? For Men can no more perform the Condition on which Salvation is promiſed without Divine Aſſiſtance, than they can be ſaved without performing that Condition: And conſequently Salvation cannot be ſaid to be offered to all, unleſs Divine Aſſiſtance be afforded to all likewiſe.

5. It is no ways probable, that God ſhould require and expect Repentance from *all Men*, which yet he does, *Acts* xvii. 30. or that he ſhould account them culpable if they do not repent, if he did not afford unto *all* ſuch means and aſſiſtance as by which they may be able to repent. No wiſe or good Man will require ſuch Work to be done by his Servants, without furniſhing them with ſuch Tools, without which it cannot be done: Much leſs will God require Repentance from all Men, unleſs he had vouchſafed ſuch aſſiſtance unto all, as by which Repentance might be no impoſſible thing to them.

6. It is no ways likely that ſince Chriſt died for all, but that it was that all might have the benefit of his Death upon one Condition or other: Nor is it any whit more probable that God ſhould promiſe this benefit upon an *impoſſible Condition.* For Men to promiſe any thing to Men upon impoſſible Conditions, is but *trifling*, and who dare faſten any thing like it on God? And yet for God to promiſe the benefit of Chriſt's Death unto all upon Condition of Repentance, would be to promiſe it upon an impoſſible Condition, unleſs he did afford unto all his aſſiſtance towards it.

7. In the Days of the Old World, the Spirit of God by the preaching of *Noah*, by his Long-ſuffering, and by his Operations on Mens Minds, did *ſtrive* with the then whole World to bring them to Repentance, and even with the *Spirits* which afterward were *in Priſon for their Diſobedience*, Gen. vi. 3. compared with 1 *Pet.* iii. 19, 20. which *ſtriving* with them by the *Spirit of God*, was his *aſſiſting* of them towards their Repentance. And if God did afford his aſſiſtance unto all before the Flood to bring them to Repentance, it is no ways likely but that he hath done, and does ſo to all likewiſe after the Flood.

8. Our Saviour in his Diſcourſe, wherein he ſhewed that no Man *could come to him*, except he were *prepared* by the Father, ſaid, *It is written in the Prophets, and they ſhall be all taught of God*, John vi. 45. And it no ways follows that all are not taught of God, becauſe all do not learn, as is ſhewed in another place. Many are taught when but few learn, as many are called when but few are choſen. And if all are taught of God, then all have a preparatory aſſiſtance from him.

9. We cannot reaſonably think, but that God, who is the lover of Souls, is more ready to apply himſelf to the Minds of all Men, to diſpoſe them to what tends to their Salvation, till by their often oppoſition they provoke him to leave them as incurable, than the Devil, the Evil Spirit, is to diſpoſe them to what tends to their Deſtruction; and yet this Evil Spirit, which works in the Children of Diſobedience, is, as we have reaſon to believe, buſie with the Minds of all Men for their hurt.

10. When it is ſaid by St. *Stephen* concerning the diſobedient Jews, *Ye have always reſiſted the Holy Ghoſt, as your Fathers did, ſo do ye*, Acts vii. 51. it is evident that the Holy Ghoſt had been attempting and making many Eſſays upon their Minds, as bad as they were, in order to the reclaiming them; otherwiſe the Holy Ghoſt could not be ſaid to have been reſiſted by them. The Holy Ghoſt doubtleſs did often ſuggeſt to them that the way in which they walked, was *evil in the nature of it, and deſtructive in its tendency*, ſuch as was altogether unſafe for them, and tending to their ruine. For ſo much is ſignified in reference to their Fathers, by that in *Nehem.* ix. 30. *Many Years didſt thou forbear them, and teſtifiedſt againſt them by the Spirit in thy Prophets. Thou teſtifiedſt againſt them, that thou mighteſt bring them again unto thy Law*, as it is in *ver.* 29. and ſo eſcape the miſery they were otherwiſe bringing upon themſelves. And this the Spirit of God did out of *Compaſſion* to them; *He ſent to them by his Meſſengers, riſing up betimes and ſending; becauſe he had compaſſion on his People, and on his Dwelling-place*, 2 Chron. xxxvi. 15.

11. *The Goodneſs and Long-ſuffering of God*; which he exerciſeth towards the worſt of Men, carries in it *the nature of Divine Aſſiſtance* towards their repenting. *It leads to Repentance*, according to that of St. *Paul*, *Rom.* ii. 4. And God's leading Men to Repentance, is certainly his aſſiſting them towards it. By his Long-ſuffering he gives them opportunity to bethink themſelves, and upon ſecond Thoughts to repent; and not only ſo, but by it he invites them to repent: For that is the Language of God's Forbearance, if Men would but conſider that they might underſtand it.

For, for what other end can Men think that God forbears to cut them off, after they have once deſerved it? Surely, it is not that they might ſin the more, and that ſo their Puniſhment might be the greater; I believe hardly any wicked Men can think ſo. And if not for that, for what elſe can they think it to be, but that they might have time to repent? But whether they apprehend it and conſider it or no, it is ſo, he ſpares them for that very reaſon. *He is long-ſuffering to us-ward, not willing that any ſhould periſh, but that all ſhould come to repentance*, 2 Pet. iii. 9. And is it likely that God, who ſpares them that they may repent, will deny them his Grace, without which he knows they cannot? To what purpoſe ſhould he ſpare them to repent, when he knows they cannot, if he were reſolved not to enable them to it?

And as the *forbearance*, ſo the *goodneſs of God leadeth to Repentance*. For when Sinners, obnoxious to God, are not only ſpared by him, but alſo made Partakers of the effects of his Goodneſs and Kindneſs, (according to that of our Saviour, *he is kind to the unthankful and to the evil*, Luke vi. 35.) they muſt needs conclude, if they conſider it, that he does not delight in their Miſery as ſuch, though they have deſerved evil and not good at his hands, but that by his kindneſs he would gain upon them and draw them to better Thoughts of him, and to a better Behaviour towards him. *He left not himſelf without witneſs (viz.* of his ſeeking *to draw all Nations from walking in their own ways) in that he did good, and gave them Rain from Heaven, and fruitful Seaſons, filling their Hearts with Food and Gladneſs*, Acts xiv. 17.

If any conclude from God's forbearance and goodneſs to wicked Men, that he is not diſpleaſed with their *evil ways*, no more than they themſelves are; like thoſe, *Pſal.* l. 20. *Theſe things thou haſt done, and I kept ſilence*, ſaith God, *thou thoughteſt that I was altogether ſuch an one as thy ſelf:* I ſay, if any can perſuade themſelves thus to conclude, it muſt be only profligate Wretches, Sinners of no ordinary rank. For very Heathens, and ſuch as the Apoſtles brands with a very black Character, thought otherwiſe. *Their Thoughts did not only accuſe them, but they knew the Judgment of God*, as he ſays, *that they which commit ſuch things are worthy of Death*; and therefore ſought to appeaſe God by their Sacrifices. And this is Evidence enough, that ſuch as they, as bad as they were, did not think God was not diſpleaſed with their evil Ways, or that he did forbear them upon that account.

Now this Long-ſuffering and this Goodneſs of God, is a piece of Divine Aſſiſtance towards Repentance, which God vouchſafeth even to the Heathen and barbarous Nations. And however this Aſſiſtance may be much *inferiour* to what is vouchſafed them who have the *Oracles of God* among them; yet this, with the ſecret Operation of God, by impreſſing Principles of natural Religion upon the Minds of ſuch, have, as I have ſhewed, ſo far prevailed upon many of them, as that they have been thereby prepared to receive and believe the Goſpel, as ſoon as it hath been ſufficiently revealed and made known to them: And ſo far alſo as in the mean time to become *morally Religious* in Devotion towards God, and in Juſtice and Charity towards Men.

This ſeems very evident in thoſe uncircumciſed Gentiles, which are ſtiled *Religious Proſelytes*, Acts xiii. 43. *Men fearing God*, ver. 16, 26. *devout Men*, Acts x. 7. as Dr. *Hammond* hath obſerved in his Notes upon *Acts* x. 2. Of which ſort were *Cornelius* and the *Eunuch*. And when the Lord ſaid to St. *Paul*, in a Viſion at *Corinth*, *I have much People in this City*, as a reaſon why he would have him continue preaching there, notwithſtanding the Jews in that place oppoſed themſelves and blaſphemed, *Acts* xviii. 10. I queſtion not but he meant it of ſuch Gentiles as were in the firſt degree morally religiouſly diſpoſed, and ſo were prepared to receive the Faith of the Goſpel, as other ſuch ſo prepared had done before them. And of ſuch as theſe, only farther improved in Morality, I ſuppoſe St. *Paul* ſpeaks, *Rom.* ii. 26. when he ſaith, *If the Uncircumciſion keep the Righteouſneſs of the Law, ſhall not his Uncircumciſion be counted for Circumciſion?* And in reference to ſuch it was that St. *Peter* alſo ſaid, *I perceive of a Truth, that God is no reſpecter of Perſons, but in every Nation he that feareth God and worketh Righteouſneſs, is accepted with him*, Acts x. 34, 35.

Theſe ſeveral Conſiderations tend, you ſee, to evince, that God does not deny his preparatory Aſſiſtance to any of thoſe that periſh: And that therefore their periſhing is not for want of ſo much Mercy in God towards them, as by which their periſhing might have been prevented, had they not refuſed and oppoſed the Mercy of God it ſelf towards them, in that way and Method of ſaving, in which he ſaves others that are ſaved. *God hath concluded all in unbelief, that he might have Mercy upon all*, Rom. xi. 32. And thoſe who will not be ſaved by the Mercy of God in that *Way and Method* of his Mercy in which he ſaves thoſe that are ſaved; nor unleſs they can be ſaved by God's Mercy in a way of their *own chuſing*, in Oppoſition to God's, muſt ſit down with their own Choice, and go without that Salvation which they might have had if they would, and which God of his Compaſſion, did more than barely offer them, while his Spirit did ſtrive with them, as it did with them of the Old World. Theſe are they that *receive the Grace of God in vain*, againſt whoſe Folly St. *Paul* does with great Seriouſneſs and Earneſtneſs beſeech and admoniſh Men, 2 *Cor.* vi. 1. And truly they are Men of a ſtrange Preſumption, that can promiſe themſelves that which God never promiſed them; as if God ſhould for their ſakes, alter his ordinary Method of his Mercy in ſaving Men, to ſave them, when he hath many and many times peremptorily declared the contrary in the Scriptures of Truth. They doubtleſs that can do thus, are the Men the Scripture ſpeaks of, *that deſpiſe their own Souls*, that ſet little by them, and concern themſelves little about them.

By the Reaſons given to induce a Perſuaſion that God affords his preparatory Aſſiſtance unto all, I do not ſay, nor mean, that he does vouchſafe it to all equally and alike. For the ſcope of our Saviour's Parable, I conceive, doth intimate the contrary, when he ſaid, *To one is delivered one Talent, to another two, and to another five*, *Matth.* xxv. But then if he which hath but the leaſt, doth but uſe that for the end for which he received it, he ſeems by Parity of Reaſon to be capable of being dealt with as a faithful Servant in Oppoſition to him who is doomed as ſlothful, though he does not do ſo much as he does who hath received more. He that gained but two Talents by uſing the two which he had received, was pronounced a faithful Servant, and dealt with as ſuch, as well as he who gained five with uſing the five which were delivered him. So that we ſee a Man's Faithfulneſs and Unfaithfulneſs is eſtimated by his uſing or not uſing what is afforded him, for the end for which it is vouchſafed him. If he that hath but one Talent, gain though it be but one, with uſing that one he hath received, he, we may ſuppoſe, will be dealt with as a faithful Servant, as well as he that gains two with two, or five with five. If a Man's Repentance, Faith, and Uſefulneſs in the World, do but hold ſome good Proportion to the meaſure and degree of Aſſiſtance he hath from God in Means and Helps external and internal, though both the one and the other be but of the leſſer ſize, yet we cannot deny ſuch to be capable of better Uſage from God, than ſuch as are, and will be ſentenced for Impenitent, Unfaithful, and Unprofitable. We cannot ſay that ſo little will make a Man which hath more Means and Helps, capable of the Reward of a faithful Servant, as will another which hath not ſo much. For *to whom much is given, much will be required; and to whom Men commit much, of him they aſk the more*, ſaith our Saviour, *Luke* xii. 48. That probably will not be ſufficient to ſave a Man who enjoys the Goſpel, which may be ſufficient to ſave ſuch a one as *Cornelius* was before the Goſpel was made known to him. *God is a God of Knowledge and Judgment, by him Actions are weighed*, and all Circumſtances of a Man's caſe conſidered. And doubtleſs, God makes larger Allowances in eſtimating the Goodneſs of a Man's Performances that hath leſs Aſſiſtance, than he doth in eſtimating his for Good that hath more.

This I have here noted the rather, to the end that we who have the Goſpel, may have the more charitable Opinion concerning the State and Condition of ſome of them which have it not: And likewiſe to put them in mind who *enjoy more means*, and therein more Aſſiſtance from God than others, how abſolutely neceſſary it is for them to *do more than others*, to the obtaining from God, the Approbation of good and faithful Servants, and ſuch as have performed the Condition of the Promiſe.

2. Having now made out the firſt of the things propoſed, *viz.* That God doth aſſiſt even thoſe that periſh, towards their performing the Condition on which Pardon and Life are promiſed, until that Aſſiſtance is rejected; I proceed now to the ſecond: Which is to ſhew, that the *Reaſon* why Men are deprived of the Pardon and Salvation purchaſed by our Saviour, is *founded in* their *refuſing to make uſe of God's aſſiſting Grace*, through which otherwiſe they might have been enabled to have performed the Condition, on which Pardon and Life are promiſed.

Whatever means God uſeth, tending to awaken, direct, or perſuade Men to repent, reform, and amend, are his *Aids* and *Aſſiſtances* vouchſafed them to that end. And ſuch are his Reproofs, Inſtructions, Commands, Counſels, Threatnings, and Promiſes, when *applied by his Spirit unto the Minds of Men.*

Now then, Mens *refuſing* to hearken to, and conſider theſe things, or to comply with them, and their endeavouring not to be affected with them, or moved by them, is their *refuſing to be aſſiſted by God* to perform the Condition of the Promiſe.

And upon this very thing is both the Wickedneſs of Men and their Deſtruction charged in Scripture, and that under a great Variety of Expreſſion. Sometimes it is termed, a *not enclining the Ear to hear*, a *not hearkneing*, a *refuſing to hear*, *a refuſing, to return*, a *ſtopping the Ears that they might not hear*, a *cloſing the Eyes that they may not ſee*, a *rejecting of the Word of the Lord, and of the Counſel of God againſt themſelves.*

Theſe things which are ſpoken of the outward Senſes, do ſignifie and repreſent the Poſture of bad Mens Minds, when they refuſe to ſet *their Hearts* to what God ſays or does to them. *They ſeeing ſee not, and hearing they hear not*, as our Saviour expreſſeth it, *Matth.* xiii. 13. as Men are ſaid to do, when their Minds are not at all buſied or concerned with the things they hear or ſee. And when it is ſo with them, they are no more moved or affected with the things they ſee or hear, than as if they had not ſeen nor heard them at all.

And when the Scripture ſaith, that they *ſtop their Ears, that they may not hear*, this ſignifies ſomewhat more, to wit, the *arming* themſelves againſt what is ſaid, ſo that the things ſpoken may not enter their Souls, nor at all affect them, and is much what the ſame thing, which the Scripture means by Mens hardening themſelves, and ſtiffening their Necks. Theſe are ſo far from endeavouring to comply with God's Applications to them, for the altering their way and courſe of Life, that they are afraid of being affected with, or converted by any thing that may be ſpoken, or done to them. *Their Ears are dull of hearing, and their Eyes they have cloſed, leſt at any time they ſhould ſee with their Eyes, and hear with their Ears, and ſhould underſtand with their Hearts, and ſhould be converted, and I ſhould heal them*, ſaith our Lord concerning them, *Matth.* xiii. 15.

It is true indeed, *No Man can come to the Son, except it be given him of the Father, and except the Father draw him*, John vi. 44, 65. But then the *Reaſon* why Men are not drawn ſo, as to be *prepared* to come to the Son, ſo ſoon as he is ſufficiently revealed to them, is becauſe they *refuſe* to be ſo. The Wiſdom of God ſpeaks after this manner: *I have called and ye refuſed, I have ſtretched out my hand and no Man regarded, they would none of my Counſel, they deſpiſed all my Reproof, the turning away of the ſimple ſhall ſlay them*, Prov. i. 24. God, we ſee, calls and ſtretcheth out his hands to Sinners; he reproves, he counſels and perſuades; *and this is his drawing.* But many of thoſe whom he thus draws, they we ſee refuſe, they regard not, they deſpiſe, they turn away: And this is their *refuſing and rejecting God's Aſſiſtance*, it is their refuſing to be drawn; and it is this their refuſing and turning away that *ſlays them. See that ye refuſe not him that ſpeaketh: For if they eſcaped not who refuſed him that ſpake on Earth; much more ſhall not we eſcape, if we turn away from him that ſpeaketh from Heaven*, Heb. xii. 25. *How oft would I have gathered you, and ye would not?* ſaith our Saviour, *Mat.* xxiii. 37. And again, *Ye will not come to me that ye might have life*, Joh. v. 40.

3. We may perceive by all this, That God's method of drawing Men, is not to work upon them in an *irreſiſtible* manner; for if it were, there would be no place left to draw back or to refuſe: Which yet, by the Scriptures, and experimental Obſervation, we ſee there is.

But this will farther appear, when we conſider, That the ſame preparatory Grace and Aſſiſtance from God, which will diſpoſe ſome to Repentance, proves ineffectual to others, which could not be, if Repentance were wrought in an irreſiſtible manner and way, Our Saviour hath told us, for inſtance, That if *Tyre* and *Sidon* had but had the ſame means of Repentance vouchſafed unto them, which *Corazin* and *Bethſaida* had, they would have repented, when yet *Corazin* and *Bethſaida* did not: *Mat.* xi. 21. *Wo unto thee Corazin, wo unto thee Bethſaida: for if the mighty Works which were done in you, had been done in Tyre and Sidon, they would have repented long ago in ſackcloth and aſhes.* Nay, a leſs degree and proportion of means will work Repentance in ſome, when a greater will not in others. Which is an evident proof, That Repentance may be wrought by a leſs proportion of means than that which is irreſiſtible; otherwiſe that which is irreſiſtible in its operation may be reſiſted, which is a Contradiction in Terms. The Men of *Nineveh* repented at the Preaching of *Jonas*, when the obſtinate Jews did not repent, though they had more powerful means vouchſafed them to bring them to it, than the Men of *Nineveh* had, to wit, the Preaching and many mighty Miracles of our Saviour; which was the reaſon why our Saviour ſaid, the Men of *Nineveh* ſhould riſe in Judgment againſt them, and condemn them, *Matth.* xii. 41. *The Men of Nineveh ſhall riſe in Judgment with this Generation, and ſhall condemn it, becauſe they repented at the preaching of Jonas, and behold a greater than Jonas is here.* That which is or may be made ineffectual to its end, is not irreſiſtible in its operation: But the means of Repentance vouchſafed the unbelieving Jews was made ineffectual by them, as to their Repentance, though more and greater than the Men of *Nineveh* had, by which Repentance was wrought in them. By which it is manifeſt, That the Repentance of the *Ninevites* was not wrought by an irreſiſtible operation; becauſe the means uſed to bring the unbelieving Jews to Repentance was greater than that the *Ninevites* had, and yet was reſiſted.

Though I do not ſay or think, That God doth always give the ſame degree of aſſiſtance to all Perſons in like caſes, (he doth what he will with his own) it is enough he gives ſufficient to all; yet the *reaſon of the different event* of the *ſame* means of Grace vouchſafed to thoſe that do not repent, and to thoſe that do, ordinarily ſo far as we can judge, lies in the *greater degree of untractableneſs* and *unteachableneſs* which is found in the one than is found in the other, by means whereof the ſame Applications and Aſſiſtances from God are render'd ineffectual to the one, which are not ſo to the other. But if the method and manner of God's Operation in working Repentance and Faith were irreſiſtible, no degree of Obſtinacy in Men could withſtand it, or render it ineffectual.

There is an Opinion indeed much different from this, and which hath obtained even among many good and worthy Men, which does ſuppoſe the reaſon of the different event of God's Applications to Men, to lie in the different manner of his applying himſelf to them. As when we are invited by it to conceive, That the reaſon why ſome repent, and others do not, is becauſe God works it *irreſiſtibly* in the one, when he refuſes to do ſo in the other. The ill Conſequents of which Opinion we may well ſuppoſe they were no whit aware of, who were the firſt Promoters of it, and were far enough from owning them, though they held faſt the Opinion which does infer them. But yet if the things neceſſarily conſequent upon this Opinion, prove it to be bad, it can be no breach of any Rule of Charity or Modeſty to mention them upon ſo fair an occaſion as this now before us, but rather the contrary if I ſhould not, and may conſiſt well enough with that Veneration I have for the Memory of many of thoſe who have embraced it.

This Opinion renders the Damnation of ſuch as periſh, impoſſible for them ever to have eſcaped after they had once ſinned. For if nothing leſs than God's *irreſiſtible* Operation be ſufficient to bring Sinners to Repentance, then would it have been impoſſible for any that periſh to have prevented it, becauſe no ſuch means of Repentance was ever vouchſafed them; for if it had, they could not but have repented as well as any. This Opinion therefore tends to leſſen the Grace and Mercy of God, in that proviſion which he hath made for the Redemption of the World, as if it were not ſufficient for the Salvation of any, but ſuch as are, and ſhall be actually and eventually ſaved. It implies and ſuppoſes, that the reaſon why ſuch as periſh are not ſaved by the Death of Chriſt as well as others, is for want of ſo much Compaſſion in God towards them, as to aſſiſt them to perform the Condition on which ſuch Salvation is purchaſed and promiſed. Whereas Almighty God hath not only given his Son to be a Propitiation for the Sin of the whole World, but hath alſo afforded ſuch aſſiſtance unto all, as by which they might have come to perform that Condition upon which the Promiſe of Salvation is made, as I have before endeavoured to ſhew. It does not conſiſt with the plain and obvious ſenſe of ſuch Scriptures as tell us, That *God is not willing that any ſhould periſh, but that all ſhould come to repentance.* For how can we conceive any ſuch willingneſs in God, concerning thoſe who yet do periſh, if he ſhould wholly have refuſed them that aſſiſtance, without which it was impoſſible they ſhould repent, and eſcape periſhing?

An Opinion it ſeems to be, if it were true, which would render all God's Applications to thoſe that periſh, to have prevented their periſhing, uſeleſs and inſignificant. For to what end ſhould other means be uſed to bring thoſe to Repentance, who, in the iſſue, do not repent, if no other means be ſufficient to effect it in them, but ſuch an irreſiſtible Operation of God as he never intended them? And how ill a Repreſentation would it make of God, if he, according to the tenour of this Opinion, ſhould at laſt condemn Men for not repenting, and for not believing and obeying the Goſpel, when it was impoſſible they ſhould, ſo long as God refuſed to work theſe Graces irreſiſtibly in them.

And truly if thoſe that periſh had ſo much to plead in *excuſe* for themſelves, why they did not repent under all the mighty Motives they had to *perſuade* them to it, and other means to *aſſiſt* them in it, it would abate, or rather quite take away a great part of the Torments of the Damned, which do ariſe from a ſenſe of their groſs, wilful, and obſtinate neglect to hearken to thoſe powerful Motives they once had to perſuade them to repent, and to make uſe of thoſe helps and means they once had to aſſiſt them in it. If they could but plead the impoſſibility of their repenting upon the account of God's not vouchſafing them the irreſiſtible Operations of his Grace and Spirit, which was granted to all others that eſcape periſhing, it would, in a great meaſure at leaſt, abate the tormenting gnawing of the Worm that never dieth. For then it would leave no place for thoſe gripes of Conſcience, fierce Self-accuſations and intolerable Self-reflections, which proceed from the Remembrance and Conſideration of the loſs of the opportunity they once had given them from God, of eſcaping the miſery they have brought upon themſelves, wherewith they are perpetually racked. For if they could believe that all they could have done here in this Life towards the eſcaping of that miſerable State, would have availed them nothing, but that it depended wholly upon the irreſiſtible Operation of God upon them, which was altogether out of their power, they might perhaps turn their Rage againſt Almighty God, for not affording them the ſame means of eſcaping as he had done others that were Sinners as well as themſelves; but would hardly reflect upon themſelves for not doing that which was impoſſible for them to have done. This ill Conſequence alone, of the Opinion under Conſideration, if there were no other, were enough, one would think, to detect the crookedneſs and deformity of it, which yet, as I have ſaid, hath obtained ſo long as it hath done, among many good Men as well as others. And indeed ſhould this Opinion generally obtain among bad Men, it would, in all probability, be a dangerous Temptation upon them, to neglect doing what they might do to *flee from the Wrath to come*, and to expect, That if God intends to ſave them, that, one time or other, he ſhould come with ſuch power upon them to convert them, as that they ſhould not be able to withſtand it.

4. But if this ſhould run in the Mind of any, That God could, if he would, hinder Men from refuſing his Aſſiſtance, and prevent the periſhing of any, by working Repentance in all by the irreſiſtible Operations of his Grace: I ſhall anſwer ſuch a Thought thus, That it is poſſible for God to do whatever it is poſſible for him to will ſhould be done. God's Power hath no other bounds ſet to it, but his own Will. *Whatever the Lord pleaſeth, that did he in Heaven and in Earth, in the Seas, and in all deep places*, Pſal. cxxxv. 6. But then it is impoſſible for him to will any thing, or to do any thing which is not perfectly agreeable to his own infinite Wiſdom, by which he *regulates his Will and all the exertions of his Power*, For *he worketh all things according to the counſel of his own will*, Epheſ. i. 11. Not according to the Prerogative or Abſoluteneſs of his Will, ſimply conſidered, but according to his Will regulated and governed

by infinite Wiſdom and Counſel. *The King's Strength loveth Judgment*, ſaith the *Pſalmiſt*, ſpeaking of God, *Pſal.* xcix. 4.

So that we may truly ſay, that God can no more do that which doth not agree with his Wiſdom, than he can that which doth not agree with his Truth, or with his Righteouſneſs. As it is impoſſible for God to lie, ſo it is impoſſible for him to do any thing that does not become his Wiſdom.

Why could not God have done more for his Vineyard than he had done? *Iſa.* v. 4. It was not, doubtleſs, becauſe he had already acted therein to the utmoſt extent of his Power ſimply and abſolutely conſidered, but becauſe he had done as much, all things conſidered, as became a wiſe God to do toward ſuch a People to make them good, as there he means by his Vineyard.

St. *Mark*, ch. vi. 5. ſpeaking of our Saviour, ſaith, *that he could do no mighty work there*, to wit, in his own Country, *ſave that he laid his hands upon a few ſick Folk, and healed them.* But why could he not do as mighty Works, and as many of them in his own Country as he did in other places? Doubtleſs it was not for want of Power, but conſidering the ill Temper of the People there, and the vehement Prejudice they had againſt him, he did not think it fit for him, meet or convenient to do ſo many, and ſo mighty Works there, as he did elſewhere. St. *Matthew* ſaith, *he did not many mighty Works there, becauſe of their Unbelief*, Chap. xiii. 58. Lo here we ſee the Wiſdom of our Saviour, reſtraining the acting of his Power in things tending to work Faith and Repentance in Men.

Every one knows that it is matter of *Wiſdom* in a Governour to try Men by committing to them leſſer Truſts at firſt. And if they quit themſelves well under thoſe, then to commit greater Truſts to them, and ſo to prefer them by degrees. But if they miſcarry under thoſe leſſer Truſts, they do not only forbear committing to them greater, but alſo withdraw from them thoſe leſſer Truſts which had been committed to them. And this they do upon that rational Principle mentioned by our Saviour, Luke xvi. 10. *He that is faithful in that which is leaſt, will be faithful alſo in much; and he which is unfaithful in the leaſt, will be unfaithful in much.*

And according to this Rule of Wiſdom, God himſelf proceeds ordinarily, in vouchſafing his Aſſiſtances unto Men, in order to their performing the Condition of the Promiſe, as our Saviour hath told us, *Matth.* xiii. 12. and repeated the ſame, *chap.* xxv. 29. in that Saying; *To every one that hath ſhall be given, and he ſhall have abundance; and from him that hath not, ſhall be taken away even that which he hath.* God begins with Men by awakening their Natural Principles of Religion, in cauſing Thoughts to ariſe in their Minds about their future State, and what may become of their Souls when this Life is over, and about the Tendency of good and evil ways. And when this Operation of God upon their Minds is not ſlighted but attended to, and Thoughts of this nature revolved in their Minds, ſo that they do but *incline* to amend their Lives, and to take ſome care of their Souls, then God comes in with more and farther Aſſiſtance, and ſo on, if that be attended to alſo, until he hath wrought thoſe firſt *Inclinations into Reſolutions, and then thoſe Reſolutions into actual Endeavours*, till at laſt he brings them up to a Performance of the Condition of the Promiſe.

But if Men make no uſe of theſe leſſer beginnings of God with them in thoſe preparatory Aſſiſtances, to the ends aforeſaid, but neglect and ſlight them, and at laſt oppoſe them, and harden themſelves againſt them, ſo that they grow worſe rather than better under them; then Almighty God, after he hath thus ſtriven with them as long as he thinks fit, at laſt leaves them to themſelves, by withdrawing thoſe Aſſiſtances which he had before afforded them; and ſo *takes away from them that which they had*, becauſe they did not make any Uſe of it to the end for which it was given them.

Now this Method of God's proceeding with Men, is repreſented in Scripture as a thing which is *meet* and *worthy*; that is, which *becomes* the Wiſdom and Righteouſneſs of God as Governour of the World. Thus, for inſtance, in the loweſt kind; when God had begun with the Gentiles to operate upon their Minds by Principles of natural Religion, and to work in them ſo much Knowledge and Senſe of himſelf by his Works and otherwiſe, as to leave them *without excuſe*, and yet *they did not retain God in Acknowledgment, nor glorifie him as God, nor were thankful* for his undeſerved Favours; made no good uſe of theſe lower beginnings of God with them; then *God gave them up to a reprobate Mind, and to vile Affections*, took off and withdrew that reſtraint which his beginning Aſſiſtances put upon them. And this dealing of God with them, St. *Paul* calls a *Recompence* which was *meet*, ſuch as was fit and becoming the Wiſdom, the Righteouſneſs and Goodneſs of God the Governour of the World, and ſuch as was unexceptionable upon all accounts whatſoever, *Rom.* i. 27.

Thoſe in the Parable of our Saviour, who were invited to the Wedding-Feaſt, and yet would not come, but ſlighted it, though they were told what Preparations were made for their Entertainment, are ſaid to be *unworthy*, Matth. xxii. 8. There would have been no *Decorum* or Comelineſs in forcing the Wedding-Feaſt upon ſuch, whether they would or no. The Invitation ſignifies God's Application to the Minds of Men, to draw them to do that by which they might become Partakers of the Bleſſings by Chriſt held forth in the Goſpel. Their obſtinate refuſing to do which, is that which makes them *unworthy* of thoſe Benefits, and of God's *farther Applications* to them to make them capable of them. Thus the contumacious Jews, when they put the Goſpel away from them, when it brought a tender of Salvation to them, they thereby judged themſelves *unworthy* of everlaſting Life, and *unworthy* alſo of God's farther Applications to them: For thereupon the Apoſtles left them, *Acts* xiii. 46.

It is remarkable, that our bleſſed Saviour himſelf gives Thanks unto his Father for *hiding* thoſe things from the wiſe and prudent, which he *revealed* unto Babes: Which is an Argument of the Wiſdom and Comelineſs of God's proceeding thus with Men, in denying them the *After-aſſiſtances* of his Grace, that have hardened themſelves againſt *his firſt*: And our Saviour's words imply ſo much when he ſays, *Even ſo Father, for ſo it ſeemed good in thy ſight*, Matth. xi. 25, 26.

But beſides theſe Teſtimonies from Scripture, the Nature and Reaſon of the thing ſhews it to be ſeemly and a becoming thing in God, and agreeable to the higheſt Wiſdom, for him as Governour of the World, not irreſiſtibly to work Grace in thoſe that oppoſe it to the uttermoſt in all other Applications which God makes to them. It becomes the Wiſdom of God to govern his Creatures according to the Frame and Conſtitution of thoſe Natures he hath given them. Man then being made an intelligent and free Agent, endued with Reaſon and Judgment, and Liberty of Will to chuſe or refuſe according to the Dictates of his Mind and Judgment, it muſt needs be moſt congruous and becoming the Wiſdom of God, in governing this kind of Creature, to give him ſuch Laws as by which he might know what is fit for him to chuſe and what to refuſe. And God having given him ſuch a Nature, and ſuch Laws as are ſuitable to it, it is moſt congruous to leave him to the Freedom of his own Choice, and finally to determine him to the end of the way he makes Choice of, whether it be Life or Death. And it is ſo more eſpecially when Death is not awarded unto any, until they have firſt ſlighted and withſtood thoſe Applications which God hath made to them to warn them of their Danger, and to take them off from proceeding in ſuch ways as inevitably tend to their Deſtruction. Now when God hath many and many a time over-done thus with Men, and yet they will take no warning, nor be perſuaded to concern themſelves for their Souls, what can be done to give ſuch Men Grace, and to ſave them? Unleſs God ſhould depart from his own Rules of Government, and the Terms he hath fixed of giving and with-holding Grace, of rewarding and puniſhing Men. And this in Wiſdom he cannot do, ſince they were eſtabliſhed by himſelf in Wiſdom and Counſel at the firſt.

When our Saviour hath ſaid it as the Law of Heaven, and the Will of the Almighty, *That from him that hath not ſhall be taken away that which he hath*, meaning that which he had, but did not uſe; how can ſuch Men as have had Aſſiſtance from God afforded them, but have made no uſe of it, ever hope that God ſhould give them Grace and ſave them. Unleſs they could promiſe themſelves that he is ſo fond of them, as for their ſakes to wave his own eſtabliſhed Laws and Rules, and to do it for them in a way of Prerogative above his own Law? A thing which they can never with any colour of reaſon expect, unleſs they could ſuppoſe their caſe *compaſſionable*: For none elſe but a *compaſſionable caſe* is ſo much as an *Object of Mercy*. But for ſuch as theſe who harden themſelves againſt all Terms of Mercy, when ſuch Terms have often and long been afforded them, together with great Motives to perſuade them to accept of them, and Aſſiſtance to enable them to do ſo; how can it poſſibly be imagined that their Caſe can be compaſſionable? May they not as well think the Caſe of the Devils themſelves compaſſionable? Yea, much better, who never had ſuch Tenders of Mercy and Recovery made them, nor rejected ſuch Terms as themſelves have done.

Beſides, the Adminiſtration of Juſtice in puniſhing obſtinate Criminals, becomes a good and wiſe Governour, as well as Mercy towards thoſe whoſe Caſe is truly compaſſionable;

paſſionable; and ſo it doth God in the Adminiſtration of his Government. And if ſuch Criminals as thoſe I have now mentioned, be not the Objects of God's Severity, I think there will none be found throughout the whole Race of Mankind.

Theſe things I have noted to ſhew for what reaſon we may conceive God in his Wiſdom doth not [though we ſhould ſuppoſe that he could] cauſe the mighty Motives of Religion to operate effectually upon the moſt refractory Sinners, in a way of perſuaſion, without deſtroying that liberty which is eſſential to the Will, ſo as thereby to bring them to Repentance.

But though I need not ſuch an Argument, nor to lay any ſtreſs upon it, yet it is thought by ſome impoſſible in the nature of the thing, for that liberty which is eſſential to the Will as ſuch, to be preſerved, and at the ſame time for the Will to be irreſiſtibly conſtrained; theſe being things inconſiſtent. And if ſo, then the Will cannot be irreſiſtibly forced, without altering the Humane Species by that very Act. And if this ſhould be true (and I cannot ſee how it can fairly be denied) it would be reaſon enough of it ſelf to ſatisfie any Man, why God hath not thought fit to work Grace in Men by an irreſiſtible Operation.

For if God ſhould deprive Man of all liberty of Will to chuſe or refuſe in things of a moral nature, and govern him meerly by his Power, he would thereby take him from under his Government by Laws, and then there would be no place left either for Virtue or Vice, future Rewards or Puniſhments, as there is not among irrational Creatures, who are under no ſuch Laws as Man is, having no ſuch nature as Man hath. It is the *ſpontaneouſneſs*, the *voluntarineſs* of an Action, as referring to a Law, that makes it virtuous or vicious, and ſo rewardable or puniſhable in another World. *If I do it willingly, I have a reward*, ſaith St. *Paul*: *Every Man is tempted when he is drawn away of his own luſt, and enticed*, ſaith St. *James*. It was no Virtue in *Balaam* to bleſs *Iſrael*, ſo long as he did it only by conſtraint, no more than it was in his Aſs to reprove him. If you can ſuppoſe a Man to do any thing meerly by virtue of an extrinſical power without him, without the leaſt conſent of his own Will, that in a *moral ſenſe* is not the Act of the Man, but is wholly owing to that Power by which it was neceſſitated to be done.

Men are too too apt to preſume unduly upon the Goodneſs and Mercy of God to their own hurt, and to think it inconſiſtent with his *natural Goodneſs*, being infinite, not to ſave them if he can. And therefore to undeceive Men in this matter, I have inſiſted the more on theſe things, and to ſhew how agreeable it is to the Divine Wiſdom, for God to withdraw his aſſiſtance from Men, after they have obſtinately perſiſted in refuſing and oppoſing it in its deſign upon them. And if it be agreeable to his Wiſdom, it cannot be diſagreeable to his Goodneſs: For it is as well goodneſs in God to controul Vice, as it is for him to encourage Virtue, in what way and by what methods ſeem beſt unto him.

There is a great deal of difference between true Love and Goodneſs, and *Fondneſs*. Men by Fondneſs love many times without reaſon, and beſtow their Favours more than becomes them. But true and generous Goodneſs governs it ſelf by Wiſdom and Prudence, and ſo it doth in God. The Wiſdom of God will not ſuffer his Goodneſs to throw away his ſaving Benefits upon thoſe who by incapacitating themſelves to enjoy them, have rendred themſelves altogether unworthy of them. For it would diſparage the Wiſdom, and ſo the Goodneſs of God the Donor, in caſe he ſhould confer them upon ſuch, becauſe his different Affection to evil and good would be thereby in a great meaſure obſcured, and the Sinews of his Government weakned. *Honour is not ſeemly for a Fool*, ſaith the Wiſe Man, *Prov.* xxvi. 1. As it will not become the Fool himſelf, ſo neither will it become the Wiſdom of him that confers it, to place it on one ſo incapable of it as a Fool is.

CHAP. VII.

Of the after-aſſiſtance of the Holy Spirit, which thoſe receive, who have been aſſiſted already to perform the Condition of the Promiſe, as new beginners in doing ſo.

THoſe who have been aſſiſted by God to repent, believe and obey, and therein to begin their performance of the Condition of the Promiſe of Pardon and Life, do ſtill ſtand in need of his farther aſſiſtance to *perſevere*, and to continue to do ſo to their Lives end, and to do it more and more *excellently*. For as Believers hold their Title in the Benefits promiſed no longer than they continue to perform the Condition on which the Promiſe of them is made; ſo neither do they continue in the performance of that Condition longer than they are aſſiſted by God ſo to do. Now to perſevere in performing the Condition of the Promiſe, is as neceſſary for Men to continue their Title to the Benefits promiſed, as their performance of that Condition at the firſt was to begin it.

For the Promiſe runs thus: *He that ſhall endure to the end, the ſame ſhall be ſaved*, Matth. xxiv. 13. *And to him that overcometh, and keepeth my works unto the end, will I give power over the Nations*, Rev. ii. 26. *But when the righteous turneth away from his righteouſneſs, and committeth iniquity, all the righteouſneſs which he hath done ſhall not be mentioned: In the treſpaſs which he hath treſpaſſed, and in the ſin which he hath ſinned, in them he ſhall die*, Ezek. xviii. 24.

And as this Perſeverance is neceſſary for the Reaſon and End aforeſaid, ſo is *a conſtant and continual aſſiſtance from God* to enable the Diſciples of Chriſt ſo to perſevere. As the ſame power is neceſſary to continue the natural Life, which firſt gave being to it, ſo is it in the ſpiritual Life and State alſo. *Ye are kept by the Power of God through Faith unto Salvation*, 1 Pet. i. 5. *Being confident of this very thing, that he which hath begun a good work in you, will perform it until the day of Jeſus Chriſt*, Phil. i. 6.

And that which is very remarkable touching this After-aſſiſtance, of which I ſpeak, is, That a greater Preſence and more conſtant Aſſiſtance of the Spirit of God is promiſed and vouchſafed unto Men after they believe, than they had before. This appears by having the *Holy Spirit given them after*, in ſuch a degree which they had not before; and by *God's dwelling, and the Spirit's abiding in them after*, who did not do ſo before.

Firſt, Thoſe who have believed the Goſpel, and ſincerely delivered up themſelves to the Conduct of it in their Lives, do thereby come under that ſpecial Privilege of having the *Holy Spirit given them*, to aſſiſt, influence, and quicken them, and to carry on the Work of Sanctification in them. This our Saviour promiſed, *John* vii. 38, 39. *Jeſus cryed, ſaying, He that believeth on me, out of his Belly ſhall flow Rivers of living Water: This*, ſaith the Evangeliſt, *he ſpake of the Spirit, which they that believe on him ſhould receive*. Acts ii. 38. *Repent and be baptized for the Remiſſion of Sins, and ye ſhall receive the Gift of the Holy Ghoſt*. Which Promiſes we find made good afterwards in ſeveral Inſtances. Of the Believers it is ſaid, *Acts* iv. 31. *That they were all filled with the Holy Ghoſt*. And *Acts* v. 32. *We*, ſaith St. *Peter*, *are witneſſes of theſe things, and ſo is the Holy Ghoſt, whom God hath given to them that obey him*. And St. *Paul* to the *Epheſians* ſaith, *After ye believed, ye were ſealed with the Holy Spirit of Promiſe*, chap. i. 13. That is, they were marked for his, and diſtinguiſhed from thoſe that were not, by his giving them the Spirit. *For if any Man have not the Spirit of Chriſt, he is none of his*, Rom. viii. 9. *Senſual not having the Spirit*, Jude 19.

It is true indeed, thoſe firſt Chriſtians, and others after for ſome time, did receive the Holy Spirit in a ſenſe that was peculiar to thoſe times, for the Confirmation and Propagation of the Chriſtian Religion, until it was well ſettled, and had taken ſome rooting in the World. As when they were in an extraordinary way enabled by the Spirit to ſpeak with other Tongues, and to perform other miraculous Operations, as our Saviour had foretold they ſhould. *For theſe ſigns*, ſaid he, *ſhall follow them that* *believe in my Name; in my Name they ſhall caſt out Devils, they ſhall ſpeak with new Tongues*, &c. *Mark* xvi. 17. A more full and particular Enumeration of which extraordinary Gifts of the Spirit ſcattered among the Believers of thoſe times, we have in 1 *Cor.* xii.

But beſides theſe, the Believers then received in receiving the Holy Spirit, an Increaſe of gracious Qualifications, called the *Fruit of the Spirit*, ſuch *as Love, Joy, Peace, Long-ſuffering, Gentleneſs, Goodneſs, Faith, Meekneſs, and Temperance*, as the Apoſtle reckons them up, *Gal.* v. 22. And in this Senſe the Holy Spirit hath been given to all true Believers ever ſince, and is now. *For if any Man have not the Spirit of Chriſt, he is none of his*, he is no true Chriſtian, *Rom.* viii. 9.

By Mens having the Spirit then, and by the Spirit's being given them after they believe, is meant, I conceive, a more *conſtant*, and a more *plentiful* Influence and Effuſion of the Spirit to change and renew them, to reſtore them to the Likeneſs of God, to the Spirit and Temper of Jeſus Chriſt, than ever was vouchſafed them towards their believing, or by enabling them to believe at firſt. Before Men repent, believe, or begin to obey, they have the Spirit at work in their Minds indeed, to ſuggeſt to their Thoughts and Conſiderations, things of higheſt Concernment to them, and to incline them to look after them in time, and before the Day of Grace and Salvation is over and gone. He then at times ſtands at the Door and knocks, and ſtrives with every Man, and vouchſafes to ſuch more and more of his Aſſiſtance, until they are enabled to believe, who do not make faſt the Door againſt him, but rather open to him and refuſe not to be led on by degrees. The more they attended to the teaching of the Father by his Spirit, and the nearer they came to believe indeed, the more frequent Viſits they had from him, and the more Aſſiſtance. But after they have followed on ſo far, and become ſo teachable as to believe indeed, and ſincerely to give up themſelves to his Conduct, then he communicates himſelf more freely and more conſtantly to them than ever before, in Divine Influence and Aſſiſtance to root and eſtabliſh them in the Chriſtian Faith and Life, and to carry them on farther and farther towards Perfection.

This, Secondly, is ſet out to us in another Vein of Scriptures, *viz.* ſuch as ſpeak of *God's dwelling in true Believers*, and ſincere Chriſtians, and of their being *the Temple of the Holy Ghoſt*, of which Nature are many Texts, *Rom.* viii. 11. 1 *Cor.* iii. 16. *Know ye not that ye are the Temple of God, and that the Spirit of God dwelleth in you?* 1 Cor. vi. 19. 2 Cor. vi. 16. Eph. 2. 22. 1 John iii. 24. and iv. 13, 16. By all which is ſignified the *more conſtant Reſidence of the Holy Spirit* in and with Men after they believe and become true Chriſtians, to aſſiſt them in their great Affairs for their Souls and another World, as one that is never long abſent from them, but ready at hand at all times to help them in doing their Duty, and to overcome Temptations, unleſs by grieving him, they cauſe him to withdraw himſelf. *If a Man love me, he will keep my words: And my Father will love him, and we will come unto him, and make our abode with him*, John xiv. 23.

This giving of the Holy Spirit to ſincere Chriſtians to be *always with them* as his *dwelling in them* implies, is not only to help and aſſiſt them to perſevere in doing only ſo much as will entitle them to Pardon and Life *barely*, as their performing the Condition of the Promiſe, though but in the loweſt Senſe of Performance will do: But God's deſign in giving his Spirit to them after they have perform'd the Condition in the loweſt Senſe, is to fit and prepare them for *greater Degrees* of Bleſſedneſs and Glory, for a higher and more glorious Exaltation therein, than a bare Performance of the Condition of the Promiſe in ſimple Conſideration, and in the loweſt degree of Performance will well bear.

Our Saviour came, as he ſays, *that we might have Life, and that we might have it in abundance*, John x. 10. not barely to ſave us, but to exalt us to ſuch a height of Glory, that the Glory and Bleſſedneſs of his Body, the Church, might hold ſome good Proportion with his own Glory and Bleſſedneſs, as Head of it. And to encourage true Chriſtians to endeavour to excel in Holineſs and Goodneſs, in order to this, there are other conditional Promiſes made, beſides that of Pardon and Life upon condition of Faith and Repentance ſimply conſidered. To ſuch as *give all Diligence* in *adding* to their Faith, Vertue, Knowledge, Temperance, Patience, Godlineſs, Brotherly Kindneſs and Charity; ſo that theſe things be in them and *abound*, the Promiſes of an *abundant Entrance* into the everlaſting Kingdom of our Lord and Saviour Jeſus Chriſt, 2 *Pet.* i. And he that *ſoweth bountifully ſhall reap bountifully*, 2 Cor. ix. 6. *And he* *that humbleth himſelf as a little Child, the ſame is greateſt in the Kingdom of Heaven*, Matth. xviii. 4.

Beſides, the *Veſſels of Mercy* will hold more or leſs Glory, according to their different Capacities in Grace and Service, as they are made larger or leſſer. By how much the more near Chriſtians come to Chriſt in Goodneſs, by ſo much they are qualified to be the more near to him in Happineſs and Glory. But ſtill, as I ſay, this greater and more conſtant Preſence of the Spirit is given to true Chriſtians after they believe, to carry on this great and glorious Deſign of Grace towards them, to take them out of the Spirit of this World, and to lift them up in Holineſs and Goodneſs, thereby to make them capable of the greater Glory and Happineſs.

To make this plain and familiar to our Thoughts, let it be conſidered, that upon Men's unfeigned believing, follows immediately their *Adoption. As many as received him, to them he gave Power*, (*Right, or Privilege*) *to become the Sons of God, even to them that believe on his Name*, John i. 12. This is a very great Advancement indeed, and holds ſome Proportion to that deep Humiliation our Saviour underwent to prepare our way to it. Now thoſe whom God adopts to be *Sons*, thoſe he adopts to be *Heirs* alſo to his great *Inheritance* and glorious Eſtate: So ſaith the Apoſtle, *if Children then Heirs, Heirs of God, yea Joint-heirs with Chriſt*, Rom. viii. 17.

This being their happy Caſe, the bleſſed God and Father, who hath adopted the Believers for his Children and Heirs, gives them his Holy Spirit to be always with them, puts his Spirit within them to tutor and diſcipline them, and to give them thereby ſuch Breeding as may fit and prepare them for ſo high a Relation, and for ſo glorious an Inheritance as that is which he intends to ſettle upon them. *Becauſe ye are Sons, God hath ſent forth the Spirit of his Son into your Hearts*, ſaith the Apoſtle, *Gal.* iv. 6. St. *Paul* having ſpoken of the happy State which he, with other the Believers, expect and long for after the Diſſolution of this Earthly Tabernacle in which the Soul now dwells, 2 *Cor.* v. ſaith in *Verſe* 5. *Now he that hath wrought us for the ſelf-ſame thing, is God, who alſo hath given unto us the earneſt of the Spirit.* His giving them his Spirit to fit them for that Inheritance, is an *Earneſt* or Pledge that he does really intend to beſtow it upon them. When he ſaith, He that hath wrought us for the ſelf-ſame thing is God, we hereby ſee that it is the Work of God by his Spirit to frame and faſhion the Believers for that magnificent Eſtate in the next World which is prepared for them, and to which they are adopted. This Work of God upon them, is *to make them meet to be Partakers of the Inheritance of the Saints in Light*, Gal. i. 12. Theſe Believers are thoſe *Veſſels of Mercy whom he thus afore prepares unto Glory*, Rom. ix. 23. It is the benevolent Work and Buſineſs of our Lord and Saviour by his Spirit, ſo *to ſanctifie and cleanſe* the whole Society of Believers, *that he may preſent them to himſelf a glorious Church, not having Spot or Wrinkle, or any ſuch thing*, and to beautifie and adorn them as a Bride for ſuch a Husband as Jeſus Chriſt is, and will appear to be in the Day of the Manifeſtation of all his Glory, that he may not be aſhamed to own them for ſuch.

And thus we ſee another of the ends for which Chriſtians receive a greater and more conſtant Preſence and Aſſiſtance of the Holy Spirit after they believe than they did before, is to fit and prepare them for greater Glory and Happineſs than the loweſt degree of performing the Condition of the Promiſe as at the firſt will make them capable of. We will now a little conſider in what, or wherein the Holy Spirit doth aſſiſt the Believers, when they grow up thereby unto more Perfection in the Chriſtian Life.

One of the firſt things, I conceive, he does is, to *ſtir* them up *to*, and to *aſſiſt* them *in* making Prayers, and Supplications unto Almighty God, for the working in them that which is well-pleaſing in his ſight. For although God be ready to bleſs them with all ſpiritual Bleſſings in Chriſt, yet not without being ſought unto to do it for them. And accordingly they are promiſed but upon that Condition; *Ask and it ſhall be given you, ſeek and ye ſhall find*, Matth. vii. 7. Otherwiſe it will fare with them as it did with thoſe St. *James* ſpeaks to, *James* iv. 2. *Ye have not becauſe ye ask not.*

Now to the end therefore that Believers may receive ſuch an Increaſe and Growth in all Divine Vertues, as by means whereof they may live as becomes the Goſpel, and be made meet for the Celeſtial Glory, the Holy Spirit doth aſſiſt them to make *Requeſts according to the Will of God, and helpeth their Infirmities*, when otherwiſe *they know not how to pray as they ought*, Rom. viii. 26, 27. *Almighty God poureth* *on them the Spirit of Grace and Supplication*, as the Prophet ſpeaks, *Zech.* xii. 10. He helps them not only to pray for ſuch things as they ought, but alſo in ſuch a manner as they ſhould, to wit, with a great ſenſe of their own wants, and of their own unworthineſs to obtain, and of the worth and excellency, and deſirableneſs of thoſe ſpiritual Bleſſings they pray for. He helps them to pray with ſeriouſneſs and devotion of Soul, and with an humble Fervency, accompanied with Sighs and Groans, which cannot well be uttered by them many times. He helps them alſo to pray in Faith concerning the goodneſs of the Nature of God, and his readineſs to give and to forgive; and concerning the prevailing Interceſſion of Jeſus Chriſt our bleſſed Advocate. God ſends forth the Spirit of his Son into their Hearts, crying *Abba Father*, enabling them in their Addreſſes to God to depend upon him as their Father, and humbly to expect to be uſed and dealt with by him in all reſpects as a Father, while they reſolve and endeavour to carry it toward him as his Children.

And when the Holy Spirit enables them to pray thus, they may be ſaid *to pray in the Holy Ghoſt*, as Jude xx. *To make Prayers and Supplications in the Spirit*, as *Epheſ.* vi. 18.

And when the Holy Spirit hath thus holpen the Believers to ſeek thoſe things of God which pertain to Life and Godlineſs, Grace, Strength and Ability to overcome Corruptions and Temptations, and to live a ſober, righteous and a godly Life; then the Holy Spirit, in way of return to ſuch Prayers, doth *aſſiſt* them in their Endeavours in the *uſe of means*, to attain thoſe things they have begged of God. This we are well aſſured of by our Saviour himſelf, when we compare his ſaying as related by St. *Matthew*, with the ſame as related by St. *Luke*. In *Matth.* vii. 11. he ſaith, *If ye then being evil, know how to give good gifts unto your Children, how much more ſhall your Father which is in Heaven give good things to them that ask him?* Or how much more ſhall your heavenly Father *give his Holy Spirit to them that ask him?* ſaith St. *Luke*, xi. 13. From both which compared, we learn, that God is moſt ready and willing to give thoſe that ſeriouſly ask them out of a ſenſe of their want of them, all Graces and gracious Qualifications and Diſpoſitions of the Soul, neceſſary to their pleaſing of God, by giving them his Holy Spirit to work them in them: Or that by giving them his Holy Spirit, he gives them all thoſe good things; becauſe when the Spirit is given unto Men, it is to work thoſe good things in them by way of aſſiſtance.

This might be ſhewed in particular Inſtances; I ſhall mention ſome. When we *crucifie the Fleſh with the Affections and Luſts*; when we *cleanſe our ſelves from all filthineſs of Fleſh and Spirit*; when we *mortifie the Deeds of the Body*; it is ſtill by the help and aſſiſtance of God's Spirit that it is done. *Rom.* viii. 13. *If ye through the Spirit do mortifie the Deeds of the Body, ye ſhall live.* God's Spirit in his Servants *luſteth againſt the Fleſh*, as the Fleſh doth againſt the Spirit: It draws a contrary way, and therein prevails againſt the Fleſh. The Fleſh calls upon Men to be gratified in this and that, in things either unlawful in themſelves, or in that degree which is unlawful. But the Spirit calls upon us, by exciting Thoughts in us, to mind and regard our Souls, and by no means to wrong them by diſturbing their Peace, or hazarding their Safety, to gratifie the Fleſh with momentany Pleaſures, which will leave guilt and trouble upon the Mind, when they are vaniſhed and gone themſelves. And the Spirit, by frequent prevailing herein, comes at laſt to kill this Itch in the Fleſh.

Again, When the Believers Minds and Wills become more and more *reconciled to their Duty*, and to be in love with it, in all the Inſtances of it, both towards God and towards Men, it is ſtill through the help of the Holy Spirit that they are ſo, 1 *Pet.* ii. 22. *Ye have purified your Souls in obeying the Truth through the Spirit.* That they obey the Truth in what it requires, it is through the Spirit ſtrengthening and quickning them thereto, by making the Motives thereto preſent to their Thoughts. In 2 *Chron.* xxx. 12. it is ſaid, *That in Juda the hand of God was to give them one Heart to do the Commandment of the King and of the Princes by the Word of the Lord.* The Hand of God upon the Heart, as well as the Word of the Lord by the Miniſtry of Men, is that by which Mens Wills are bowed and inclined to what God commands. *He that keepeth his Commandments, dwelleth in him, and he in him*, ſaith the Apoſtle, 1 *John* iii. 24. Our keeping the Commandments is an Evidence of God's dwelling in us, becauſe it is the Effect of his Preſence with us to aſſiſt us therein; he argues from the Effect to the Cauſe.

Again, It is the Effect of the Holy Spirit's Preſence with Believers, and of his Operation in them, when their Minds and Spirits become purified and refined from Inordinateneſs of Affection and Unrulineſs of Paſſion, until by degrees they are brought in ſome good meaſure unto *a likeneſs and conformity to the Spirit and Temper of Jeſus Chriſt*, whoſe Scholars they are. *They that are joined to the Lord are one Spirit.* They mind, love, hate and deſign the ſame things which our Saviour doth. They participate of that Love, Gentleneſs, Benignity and Goodneſs which was ſo eminent in him (*the fruit of the Spirit is in all goodneſs, righteouſneſs, and truth*, Epheſ. v. 9.) by which means they come to *be in the World as he was in the World*, as St. *John*'s Phraſe is: *Hereby*, ſaith St. *John*, *we know that he abideth in us, by the Spirit which he hath given us*, John iii. 24. It is ſo like him, that it muſt needs come from him; and if it be in us, it is becauſe he dwells in us. *If we love one another, God dwelleth in us, and his love is perfected in us*, 1 John iv. 12. When we love one another, as Chriſt hath loved us; when we are merciful, as our Heavenly Father is merciful; his Love and Goodneſs is ſo reſembled by us, as that it is perfectly diſcernible in us.

Moreover, the Holy Spirit is given to the Believers, to be with them, to ſtrengthen them with Reſolution and Courage to hold on their courſe of Holy Living, and cleaving faithfully to Chriſt, notwithſtanding all oppoſition and diſcouragement they may meet with from the World in doing ſo. To this end they are *ſtrengthened with might by his Spirit in the inner Man*, Epheſ. iii. 16. *For God hath not given them the Spirit of Fear, but of Power and Love, and of a ſound Mind*, 2 Tim. i. 7.

And not only ſo, but the Holy Spirit is given to the Believers, to be always with them, to maintain and uphold in them *a comfortable and cheerful frame of Spirit*, and ſo to keep them *from fainting*, when they are *called to ſuffer* for the ſake of our Saviour, or his Truth or Doctrine. And it is doubtleſs from this effect, among others, of the Spirit's abiding with the Believers, that he is ſtiled *the Comforter*. And for the ſame reaſon principally, the Joy which they have amidſt their Sufferings for Righteouſneſs ſake, is called *the Joy of the Holy Ghoſt*, 1 Theſſ. i. 6. *Having received the Word in much affliction, with joy of the Holy Ghoſt.* And well may it be called the *Joy of the Holy Ghoſt*, becauſe ſolid Joy under ſuch Circumſtances can proceed from no other cauſe but the Holy Spirit's Operation. It is not the manner of the World, as it is with Believers, to rejoice in Affliction, in Wrongs and Injuries, and hard Uſage from Men; but the contrary, becauſe they have no Principle in them out of which ſuch a thing ſhould proceed. And therefore our Saviour ſaith to his Diſciples, *My Peace I give unto you, not as the World giveth, give I unto you*, John xiv. 27. The Holy Spirit can raiſe Joy, yea great Joy in the Souls of the Followers of Chriſt when they ſuffer never ſo hard meaſure from the hands of Men, ſo long as they know it is for their faithfulneſs to their bleſſed Lord and Maſter, who hath ſuffered and done ſo much for them as he hath done. The Spirit of God can ſo order their Thoughts within them, that they ſhall not look upon themſelves as diſgraced thereby, but as highly honoured by their Maſter, by giving them both opportunity and courage to do him that honour, when his Adverſaries would caſt reproach and ſhame upon him and his Cauſe, and all that appear for it. And thus the Apoſtles *when they had been beaten, departed from the Council, rejoicing that they were counted worthy to ſuffer ſhame for the Name of Jeſus their Lord*, Acts v. 41. The Holy Ghoſt can ſuggeſt to them alſo, that a great deal of good by ſuch Sufferings may be done to others, in cauſing them to think the more and the better of the Chriſtian Religion, when they ſee with what cheerfulneſs the Profeſſors of it can ſuffer for its ſake. When the *Theſſalonians* received the Word in much Affliction, and yet with Joy of the Holy Ghoſt, they became thereby *enſamples to all that believed in Macedonia and Achaia*; and from them and their deportment in ſuffering for the Goſpel, *the Word of the Lord ſounded out, not only in Macedonia and Achaia, but alſo in every place, their Faith was ſpread abroad and talked of*, 1 Theſſ. i. 6, 7, 8. It was this joyous Deportment of the Primitive Martyrs in their Sufferings that tended ſo greatly to the increaſe and enlargement of the Church, as Hiſtory relates it did.

The Chriſtians then were enabled *to glory in Tribulation* of this kind, in as much as they were guided to conſider that this *patient enduring* without repining, would give them *experience* of their ſincerity and fidelity in cleaving to Chriſt; and then this *experience* would give them *hope*, ſuch as ſhould not make them *aſhamed* through any diſappointment, but great confidence towards God of being accepted, *Rom.* v. 3, 4.

And not only ſo, but alſo touching the greatneſs of the Reward which is laid up in Heaven for ſuch; *a far more exceeding and eternal weight of Glory.* Upon account whereof our Saviour bids them to *rejoice and to be exceeding glad, yea to leap for joy* *in that day*, when they ſhould be perſecuted for Righteouſneſs ſake, and have their Name caſt out as evil, and the like. When the Chriſtians were enabled *to ſuffer the ſpoiling of their Goods*, yea, and of their Lives too, not only with Patience, but alſo with *Joyfulneſs:* When they were *as ſorrowing, and yet always rejoycing*; whence was this? And how can it be imagined, that they ſhould ever be able to do, and to be ſo, but that they *were ſtrengthened with all might according to God's glorious Power, unto all Patience and Long-ſuffering with Joyfulneſs*, as St. *Paul* ſpeaks, *Col.* i. 11. *The Spirit of God and of Glory, then reſted upon them*, as the other Apoſtle ſaith, 1 *Pet.* iv. 14. How came St. *Stephen* to ſtand with ſuch an undaunted Courage before the Council, as if his Face had been the Face of an Angel? Why it was becauſe *he was full of the Holy Ghoſt*, he had a mighty Preſence of the Spirit with him to enable him thereunto.

St. *Paul* learned by Experience, that as his Sufferings did abound for Chriſt, ſo *his Conſolations by Chriſt did abound alſo*, (2 Cor. i. 5.) that *when he was weak, then he was ſtrong*; that he had a mightier Preſence, a more powerful and comfortable Influence of the Holy Spirit in times of great Tryals and Sufferings for Chriſt, than he had at other times. And this Experience of his made him ſo far from being afraid of ſuffering, that for the ſake of that wonderful Comfort which was wont to come along with ſuffering, he was rather glad when ſuffering came, than any way dejected and caſt down for it, 2 *Cor.* xii. 9, 10. *Moſt gladly therefore will I rather glory in my Infirmities, that the Power of Chriſt may reſt upon me. Therefore I take pleaſure in Infirmities, in Reproaches, in Neceſſities, in Perſecutions, in Diſtreſſes for Chriſt's ſake: For when I am weak, then am I ſtrong.* Their hope that God would make good to them his exceeding great and precious Promiſes, was at ſuch time raiſed very high, made lively, vigorous and ſtrong, by the Spirit of God. *Rejoycing in Hope*, ſaith St. *Paul* in one place; *abounding in Hope through the Power of the Holy Ghoſt*, in another, *Rom.* xii. 12. and xv. 13. When the Holy Ghoſt did put forth himſelf, did exert his Power in raiſing the Chriſtian's Hope, it is no marvel then if they did abound therein; that is, that their Expectations roſe very high, were vigorous and ſtrong, and very affecting, filling them with ſuch Joy as overtopp'd, and in a great meaſure ſwallowed up the Senſe of their Sufferings.

And thus I have endeavoured to ſhew how the Spirit of God doth aſſiſt the Believers to do more than merely to perſevere and hold out in performing the Condition of the Promiſe under the ſoreſt Trials and greateſt Temptations to the contrary; for it enables them to glory and rejoice under them, and ſo to be more than Conquerours, to fight the good Fight of Faith, to finiſh their Courſe, to keep the Faith, and all in order to their laying hold of Eternal Life.

To conclude then this Matter: All theſe, and other like Aſſiſtances, Influences, and Conſolations of the good Spirit of God, by which the Believers are prepared for Glory, are, I conceive, the things meant by St. *Paul* by that *Communion*, or rather *Communication of the Holy Ghoſt*, which he in his Apoſtolical Benediction ſeriouſly deſired and invoked in the behalf of the Chriſtians when he diſmiſſed them thus; *The Grace of our Lord Jeſus Chriſt, the Love of God, and the Communion* or Communication *of the Holy Ghoſt, be with you all. Amen.* 2 Cor. xiii. 14. For as he wiſhed them the Comfort and Benefit that flows from the Grace or Charity of our Lord Jeſus Chriſt, expreſſed in his Mediatorial Performance, and from the Love of God, from which that did proceed: So he did likewiſe the Communication of thoſe Aſſiſtances and Graces of the Holy Spirit, by which they might be enabled to do their part in performing what was required of themſelves in order thereunto.

CHAP. VIII.

Cautions againſt Mens depriving themſelves of Divine Aſſiſtance, by running into two contrary Extreams.

HAving thus far ſhewed, as well as I could, what Aſſiſtance Men receive from God, in performing the Condition of the Promiſe of Pardon and Life: It will be neceſſary now to add ſomething by way of Caution.

1. To take heed not to *deprive our ſelves* of thoſe Benefits for the attaining of which, theſe Aſſiſtances are granted, nor of thoſe *Aſſiſtances themſelves*, by *neglecting to do* what God expects we ſhould do towards the working out our own Salvation (as we ſhall if we neglect to fall in with theſe Aſſiſtances) by endeavouring to do thoſe things for the accompliſhing of which, theſe Aſſiſtances are afforded us.

The very *Notion of Aſſiſtance* implies in it, That thoſe who are aſſiſted by God, are *not meerly paſſive* in performing the Condition of the Promiſe, for the Performance whereof theſe Aſſiſtances are vouchſafed us, but ſome way *active in that Performance.*

God, doubtleſs, does expect, when he hath awakened in Men a Senſe of their Danger, by reaſon of Sin; and hath ſet before them what he hath done, and Chriſt hath done to reſcue and deliver them from it; and what muſt be done by themſelves, to make them capable of the bleſſed Effects of our Saviour's Performance in obtaining Pardon and Life; and what Aſſiſtance they ſhall have to that end, if they will but truly endeavour to do what they can do towards it: I ſay, when God hath ſet all this before them, he expects, That they ſhould put forth themſelves in Endeavours tending towards the Performance of the Condition of the Promiſe. He expects they ſhould think on, and conſider thoſe things which he ſets before them, and at leaſt out of regard to their own Safety, to be moved thereby to make uſe of the means tending to enable them to perform the Condition of obtaining Pardon and Life, and to be doing what they well can do towards that Performance.

Doubtleſs ſuch Expreſſions in Scripture, as I ſhall now ſet before you, cannot ſignifie leſs than this. Ezek xiv. 6. *Thus ſaith the Lord God, repent and turn your ſelves from your Idols.* Ezek. xviii. 30. *Repent and turn your ſelves from all your Tranſgreſſions, ſo Iniquity ſhall not be your Ruine.* Verſe 31. *Caſt away from you all your Tranſgreſſions whereby ye have tranſgreſſed, and make you a new Heart and a new Spirit, for why will ye die, O Houſe of Iſrael?* Verſe 32. *I have no pleaſure in the Death of him that dieth, ſaith the Lord God: Wherefore turn your ſelves and live.* Can all theſe Expreſſions, can Mens repenting and turning themſelves, and their making them a new Heart, poſſibly ſignifie leſs than *real Endeavours* to do ſo? Again, Jer. iv. 4. *Circumciſe your ſelves unto the Lord, and take away the Foreskin of your Hearts.* Acts ii. 40. *Save your ſelves from this untoward Generation.* And all the Precepts, Exhortations, and Perſuaſions in Scripture to repent, to believe, to obey, are of the ſame Signification. Such, for inſtance, as Acts xvii. 30. *But now God commandeth all Men every where to repent.* Chap. ii. 38. *Repent and be baptized.* Chap. iii. 19. *Repent ye therefore and be converted*, and the like. Theſe Scriptures imply, and ſuppoſe that Men can do ſomething towards repenting, towards turning themſelves and making them a new Heart, or elſe we muſt ſuppoſe, That God commandeth, preſſeth, and perſuadeth Men to do that, towards which he knows they can do nothing. The latter of which to ſuppoſe, would be to ſuppoſe the Scriptures to make the ſame bad Repreſentation of God with the ſlothful Servant in the Parable, *viz.* That he is *a hard Maſter, expecting to reap where he hath not ſown, and to gather where he hath not ſcattered.* And who would not abhor to faſten that upon God, which is not conſiſtent with the Goodneſs of a Man? We know what is ſignified in *Pharaoh* to require the full Tale of Brick, when he did not give the People Straw wherewith to make them. And God forbid we ſhould repreſent the good God to our ſelves in the Likeneſs of *Pharaoh.*

Beſides, for any to ſay, That Men are wholly *paſſive* in performing the Condition of the Promiſe, is to lay a Temptation upon themſelves and others, not to endeavour to perform it, nor to do any thing towards it. For who will attempt to do, or endeavour to do that which they believe impoſſible to be done by them? And for Men not to endeavour to do what they can towards the performance of that Condition, is the *directeſt courſe* they can take to *deprive* themſelves of that Aſſiſtance from God, by which they might have performed it. For, *from him that hath not, ſhall be taken away that which he hath*, ſaith our Saviour, *Matth.* xiii. 12. *Him that hath not*; that is, him that hath not uſed what he had; as we may ſee by him that had the one Talent, and had it taken away, becauſe he did not uſe it. And that this is the meaning of thoſe words, *From him that hath not, ſhall be taken away that which he hath*, appears by our Saviour's next words, *ver.* 13. by which he explains that ſaying of his: *Therefore ſpeak I to them in Parables, becauſe they ſeeing, ſee not; and hearing, they hear not:* Meaning, that they had as it were Eyes, but did not ſee with them; and Ears, but did not hear with them: That is, They had means by which they might have ſeen and heard, and underſtood ſo much as would have made them capable of farther Diſcoveries and Aſſiſtances, but did not make uſe of them, and therefore thoſe farther Diſcoveries and Aſſiſtances were with-held from them, which yet were granted to the Diſciples.

What our Saviour here ſaid in this matter, was in anſwer to a Queſtion of the Diſciples, who asked him, ſaying, *Why ſpeakeſt thou to them in Parables?* ver. 10. And his anſwer was, *Becauſe it was not given unto them* (the diſobedient Jews) *to know the Myſteries of the Kingdom of Heaven*, as it was to the Diſciples. And the reaſon why it was not given, was, as he ſhews, becauſe *they ſeeing, ſaw not; and hearing, heard not.* They had Eyes and Ears to ſee and hear with, but did not uſe them for the ends for which they received them. They had not heard and learned of the Father, by attending to, or regarding his methods of preparing Men for the Faith of the Goſpel. They had not attended unto thoſe things which Natural Religion it ſelf would have taught them, and which they might have ſeen by the natural Light of their Minds, as well as they ſaw external Objects with the Eyes of their Bodies, if they had not ſhut them: Nor had they learned by his teaching them by *Moſes* and the Prophets. And becauſe they did not uſe what they had before, therefore it was that more Aſſiſtance was not given them to know the Myſteries of the Kingdom of Heaven. That this is the reaſon of it, is yet farther confirmed by what our Saviour ſaid on the other hand, John vii. 17. *If any Man will do his Will,* (i. e. the Father's Will) *he ſhall know of the Doctrine, whether it be of God, or whether I ſpeak of my ſelf.* For by this we ſee, That if theſe Jews, to whom it was not given to know the Myſteries of the Kingdom, had been inclined and diſpoſed in their own Minds by former motives to have done the Will of God, which they already knew, as others of them were, it would have been given unto them, as well as it was to the Diſciples, to have known thoſe Myſteries. The reaſon therefore why this farther Knowledge was not given them, was, Becauſe they had no mind to do what they had been taught by God; by a teaching antecedent to his teaching them by Chriſt.

By all which we may ſee, that Men cannot take a more direct courſe, as I ſay, to deprive themſelves of that Aſſiſtance from God, by which they might perform the Condition of the Promiſe, than by neglecting to do what they may and can do, through God's preventing Grace, towards that performance. And if ſo, then that Opinion muſt needs be of a very dangerous nature, that does incline Men to ſuch a neglect: And yet ſuch is the Opinion, that Men are wholly *paſſive* in performing the Condition of the Promiſe. For what can be a greater check (as I have ſaid) to Mens Endeavours to effect any thing, than an Opinion, That they can do nothing towards it. Men are very prone to govern themſelves, in acting or forbearing to act, by their Principles, and the Notions they have of things: If theſe be corrupt, that which is the conſequence of them cannot be ſound. Mens error in Practice is very much owing to the error of their Minds, and wrong Notions of things; *They do alway err in their heart, for they have not known my ways*, ſaith the Holy Ghoſt, *Heb.* iii. 10. There the error in Life and Practice begins. If Men have wrong Notions in their Minds of God's ways and methods of proceeding with Men, in reference to their Salvation, it can hardly be avoided but they will more or leſs err in point of ſuch Practice alſo, as is any way influenced by thoſe Notions. *If the Light which is in you be Darkneſs, how great is that Darkneſs!* Matth. vi. 23.

Almighty God gives to every Man, from whom he requires Repentance and Faith, Ability to do ſomething towards it, though not compleatly to repent and believe without farther Aſſiſtance than that which he gives at the firſt. When Men therefore do but improve that little which they have, in doing that little which they can do towards their repenting and believing, God will vouchſafe them farther Aſſiſtance and Ability to do yet more towards it; and if they do but improve that additional Ability to the doing yet more towards the ſame end, God will, doubtleſs, vouchſafe to ſuch farther and farther Aſſiſtance, until they acquire thereby that true Faith and Repentance on which Pardon and Life are promiſed. For ſo ſaith our Saviour, *Whoſoever hath, to him ſhall be given, and he ſhall have abundance*, Matth. xiii. 12. *And to you that have, more ſhall be given.* And again, *With what meaſure ye mete, it ſhall be meaſured to you*, Mark iv. 24. All which Sayings ſeem to ſignifie, That, according to God's ordinary method of proceeding with Men, they ſhall have more or leſs Aſſiſtance from him, as they do with more or leſs Care and Diligence uſe what they have received already.

And as there is need for Men to be cautioned againſt neglecting to uſe what Power they have towards performing the Condition of the Promiſe, in repenting and believing before they do repent and believe; ſo there is need likewiſe of cautioning others againſt neglecting to improve their Repentance, Faith and Obedience, from a lower to a higher degree, from the State of Babes to a Manly Stature in Chriſtianity. For there is a danger of abuſing this comfortable Doctrine of Divine Aſſiſtance, to a ſpiritual Sloth, Idleneſs and Negligence, and that under pretence of honouring God, and glorifying Free-Grace; as by leaving all to be done by him, that he may have the honour of all. As if Men were not in confidence of God's Aſſiſtance, and ſo in the ſtrength of the Lord, to run the Race that is ſet before them, but to be taken up into Arms, and carried all the way to Heaven, without their running or going.

Whereas when Men truly enter into the Chriſtian State, and ſeriouſly ſet their Faces for Heaven, they then enter into a ſpiritual Warfare againſt the Fleſh, World, and Devil; and they, as the *Iſraelites*, muſt fight for the promiſed Land before they enter it, though they receive it by promiſe as they did: They muſt firſt *fight the good fight of Faith*, and then *lay hold of Eternal Life.* It is *he that overcometh that ſhall inherit all things*, Rev. xxi. 7. For Men not to ſtir up themſelves, not to gird up the Loins of their Minds to fight their way through to Heaven, but to reſolve to be *only paſſive*, under pretence that the Captain of our Salvation might have all the honour of the Victory, would be much what as ridiculous as it would be for Soldiers in an Army to ſay they would leave it wholly to their Captain General to fight for them, while they ſit ſtill, that he might have all the honour of the Victory. The Ability of God and our Saviour to ſave, hath no other limits, ſave what his Will, directed by his infinite Wiſdom, hath put upon it: But the Divine Will hath ſo limited this power, that the *promiſe of Crowning* is not made, but to ſuch as through ſtriving *overcome.*

All the Promiſes and Aſſurances we have of Divine Aſſiſtance, are to encourage our Diligence and Induſtry in working out, and carrying quite through the buſineſs of our Salvation, and to overcome all that doth oppoſe us, or which any way tends to hinder us in it. Of this nature is that of St. *Paul*, Phil. ii. 12, 13. *Work out your own Salvation with fear and trembling: for it is God that worketh in you to will and to do of his good pleaſure.* God's working in us, his readineſs to aſſiſt us, is given as the Motive and Argument to perſuade us to work out our own Salvation. If we do but put forth our ſelves to do what we can in doing our Duty, though it be with fear and trembling, when we conſider our own weakneſs, and the ſtrength of the Enemies we are to encounter and overcome in doing ſo, we are aſſured of this for our encouragement, That if we do ſo, we ſhall find an inward and ſecret Aſſiſtance from God to fortifie our Reſolutions, and to bring the ſame to good effect, ſo that all our ſpiritual Enemies ſhall not be able to hinder us, but that we ſhall ſtill hold on our way, and grow ſtronger and ſtronger, as *Job* ſpeaks of the *righteous*, and he that hath *clean hands*. God will not fail to add more ſtrength to our willing and doing, in carrying on the Work of Grace, and ſo of Salvation, to a greater height and more perfection, if we are but faithful in endeavouring it our ſelves. *Be of good courage, and God ſhall ſtrengthen thine heart*, ſaith the Pſalmiſt, *Pſal.* xxvii. 14. The motive wherewith to perſuade Men to be of good Courage and firm Reſolution in the way of their Duty, is, we ſee, becauſe then God will ſtrengthen their Hearts; that is, will yield them more and farther Aſſiſtance, and by that means make their Duty more and more eaſie to them, as it muſt needs be, to the ſame degree their ſtrength is increaſed, by which it is to be done.

The Lord is ſo ready, nay, ſo certain to aſſiſt his Servants in their faithful Endeavours to do their Duty, that they may be as ſure of it, and as much depend upon it, as if they had it in their own Power. And therefore St. *Paul* exhorted the Chriſtians *to be ſtrong in the Lord, and in the power of his might*, Epheſ. vi. 10. As if they might reckon themſelves armed with his Strength, while they depend upon him for it in doing their Duty. Which made St. *Paul* ſpeak ſo confidently, *I can do all things through Chriſt that ſtrengthens me*, Phil. iv. 13. And again, *If ye through the Spirit do mortifie the Deeds of the Body, ye ſhall live.* He accounted, That if they had any mind to mortifie the Deeds of the Body, they might be ſure of help from the Spirit wherewith to do it, whenever in good earneſt they went about it.

But when Men think themſelves ſo ſure of being kept by the Power of God, as that they grow careleſs and remiſs, as to their own Endeavours of doing their Duty, and ſtanding upon their guard againſt Temptations, they many times ſlip into ſuch ways, and doings, by which the Spirit of God is *grieved*, and withdraws from them, and with-holds his quickning Influences, and then they grow dry and flat, and unſavoury too, and fall even then when they thought they ſtood ſure.

2. And the like may be ſaid, touching the Danger on the other hand alſo. *For when Men have ſuch an Opinion of their own Power and Ability to perform the Condition of the Promiſe, as that they are not mindful of the Holy Spirit's Aſſiſtance, nor ſenſible of their need of it, but are negligent in addreſſing to God for it, and in their dependance upon him for the Supplies of it*, it cannot be expected, That the Holy Spirit ſhould take any ſuch pleaſure in ſuch Men, as to take up his Reſidence, and make his abode with them. And if not, the Communication of his Aſſiſtance to ſuch Men muſt needs be more rare and more ſparing, and his Viſits leſs frequent. And when they are ſo, it will be viſible in the Dulneſs, Dead heartedneſs, and Barrenneſs of ſuch Chriſtians, though then they may retain a Form of Godlineſs.

For the Holy Spirit will not vouchſafe to ſuch his ſpecial Preſence and Aſſiſtance, who do not know their need of it, nor how to prize it. And accordingly our Saviour, ſpeaking of the *Spirit of Truth*, ſaith, *whom the World cannot receive, becauſe it ſeeth him not, neither knoweth him*, John xiv. 17. So that, it ſeems, Mens receiving the Spirit depends very much upon their knowing him in the Uſefulneſs and Benefits of his Communications, and valuing him accordingly.

So that we ſee there is Danger of running into Extreams on both hands; either in Mens pretending ſo much Dependence upon Divine Aſſiſtance, as to neglect to do what they can do, towards performing the Condition of the Promiſe: Or elſe in having ſuch an Opinion of their own Power and Ability to perform it, as to over-look, and neglect the Divine Aſſiſtance, as if they had little or no need of it.

Such as this latter ſort are far from the Mind of St. *Paul*, who was ſtill careful to attribute his after, as well as his firſt Chriſtian Performances to Divine Aſſiſtance. *I live, yet not I, but Chriſt liveth in me*, Gal. ii. 20. *I laboured more than they all; yet not I, but the Grace of God which was with me*, 1 Cor. xv. 10. And again, *I will not dare to ſpeak of any of thoſe things which Chriſt hath not wrought by me*, Rom. xv. 18. *Not that we are ſufficient of our ſelves to think any thing as of our ſelves, but our Sufficiency is of God*, 2 Cor. iii. 5. And our Saviour taught his Diſciples to be of the ſame Mind, when he ſaid, *Without me ye can do nothing*, John xv. 5.

And where Chriſtians are full of the Senſe of their need of Divine Aſſiſtance, and accordingly highly prize it, ſeek it, and depend on God for it, and yet are withal as careful and diligent in their own Endeavours, as if all the work lay wholly on their hands. Theſe are they the Holy Spirit delights in, and delights to ſpiritualize, to influence, quicken, and ſtrengthen, and to lift them up near unto Heaven, in preparing them for it. For thus ſaith our Saviour to his Diſciples, ſpeaking to them of the Spirit of Truth, whom the World cannot receive, becauſe it doth not know him; *but ye know him*, (ſaith he) *therefore he abideth with you, and ſhall be among you:* For ſo Dr. *Hammond* reads the place, *John* xiv. 17. As if he had ſaid, becauſe ye know how to value his Preſence and Aſſiſtance, therefore you ſhall have it.

CHAP. IX.

Something of the Grounds of Encouragement, which ſuch have to expect Aſſiſtance fully to perform the Condition of the Promiſe, as have not refuſed to make uſe of God's preparatory Aſſiſtance towards it.

THAT God doth prevent all Endeavours on our part of returning to him, by his Applications to us to make us ſenſible of the Badneſs and Danger of our ſinful State, to diſpoſe us thereby to hearken to his merciful Terms of being delivered from it, before we our ſelves make any one ſtep towards it; I have ſhewed before. Now thoſe who have made ſo much uſe of God's preparatory Aſſiſtance, as thereupon to become inquiſitive what they ſhould do to be ſaved, and deſirous to be taught. Theſe I reckon have Encouragement to expect and hope to be farther and farther aſſiſted, until they are enabled fully to perform the Condition of the Promiſe.

1. For firſt our Saviour hath poſitively aſſerted, and that more than once, *that to him that hath, more ſhall be given, and he ſhall have abundance,* Matth. xiii. 12. and xxv. 29. Which can be underſtood, I conceive, of nothing more properly than of Divine Aſſiſtance: And ſo he, whoſoever he be that hath had Aſſiſtance from God towards performing the Condition of the Goſpel-Covenant, and hath made uſe of it by uſing Endeavours towards ſuch a Performance, to him more ſhall be given; to wit, more Aſſiſtance, until he have abundance of it, and of Grace proportionably.

2. Thoſe who have made uſe of God's preparatory Aſſiſtance, *are given* by the Father to his Son Chriſt Jeſus, to be aſſiſted by him fully to perform the Condition of the Promiſe in believing and obeying the Goſpel. And thoſe that are given by the Father to the Son to be thus aſſiſted, have great reaſon to be confidently perſuaded they ſhall. For our Saviour hath ſaid of ſuch, *that he will in no wiſe caſt them out,* but receive them as Diſciples, and treat them as becomes ſuch a Maſter.

That thoſe who are given by the Father to the Son, are ſuch as have made uſe of God's preparatory Aſſiſtance, appears by comparing our Saviour's Words in *John* vi. 37. with thoſe in the 44. and 45. Verſes. *All that the Father giveth me, ſhall come unto me,* ſaith he, Verſe 37. And in Verſe 44. he ſaith, *No Man can come unto me, except the Father which hath ſent me, draw him:* And Verſe 45. *Every Man that hath heard and learned of the Father, cometh unto me.* Now if thoſe, and only thoſe come to Chriſt, whom the Father giveth him, then thoſe muſt needs be the Perſons which are given to Chriſt, which are prepared by the Father; becauſe all theſe, and none but theſe come to Chriſt, according to our Saviour's words expreſly.

Now that the Father gives theſe to the Son for that end that they may be aſſiſted by him to perform the Condition of the Promiſe, will (I conceive) appear by what will follow by and by. The Father's giving theſe to the Son, doth not ſuppoſe them to have believed in the Son, when he gives them to him, but the contrary. For the Father's giving them to the Son, is antecedent to their coming to him: For Chriſt ſaith, all that the Father giveth me, *ſhall* come unto me, not *are* come unto me. And to what end do they come to him, but to learn of him, and be taught by him how to be ſaved? *i. e.* to perform the Condition on which Salvation is promiſed.

For that I take to be the meaning of the Father's giving theſe to the Son, *viz.* his committing them to him to be made Diſciples by him, to be taught and enabled to do that on which Salvation is promiſed.

Not that the Father's thus giving theſe to the Son to be aſſiſted by him, is ſo to be underſtood, as if the Father did wholly remit them to the Son, and did not ſtill continue to aſſiſt them by the ſame Spirit by which he prepared them for him at the firſt. For that *Faith* by which they perform the Condition of the Promiſe, is *the Gift of God,* and thoſe who are regenerated, *are born of God*; and *it is God that worketh in them both to will and to do,* even when they perform the Condition of the Promiſe in the beſt manner that ever it is performed. And accordingly we are to direct our Prayers to the Father for the Holy Spirit, and for all the Aſſiſtances and Fruits of it. But thoſe prepared by the Father, are ſaid to be given to the Son, in order to their being brought by him to believe the Goſpel; becauſe the diſpenſing of all Evangelical Aſſiſtances, and of all Goſpel-grace, is committed to the Son; but yet ſo as that the Father gives this by the Son, as the Son alſo does by the Holy Ghoſt.

For the better Underſtanding of this Matter we muſt know, that after our Saviour's Humiliation, came his Exaltation by the Father, who gave unto him as Mediatour God-Man, a Kingdom, Glory and Greatneſs, all Power in Heaven and Earth, *he gave all things into his hands*, John iii. 35. *committed all Judgment to the Son*, John v. 22. The Father committed to the Son the whole Evangelical Oeconomy, the power of managing all Affairs belonging to the being and well-being of the Church which he had purchaſed with his own Blood, over which he made him Head; yea, Head alſo over all things to the Church; for he made him Prince of the Kings of the Earth, the only Potentate, as the Scripture ſpeaks.

This Authority and Power is ſaid to be given to Chriſt, *becauſe he is the Son of Man*, *John* v. 27. that is, I conceive, becauſe he is the Meſſiah, to whom ſuch a Kingdom and Regal Power was promiſed and foretold in the Prophets, under that Denomination of the *Son of Man*. Thus *Daniel* ſaw in a Viſion *one like the Son of Man, to whom the Ancient of Days gave Dominion, Glory, and a Kingdom, that all People, Nations, and Languages might ſerve him.* Dan. vii. 13, 14. And *Son of Man* is the Appellation which our Saviour as the Meſſiah, doth frequently give unto himſelf, as is recorded in the Evangelical Hiſtory, and which St. *John* in his Book of *Revelations*, doth alſo more than once give him. And *Iſaias* foretold concerning a *Child that ſhould be born, that the Government ſhould be upon his Shoulders, upon the Throne of David, and upon his Kingdom to order and eſtabliſh it for ever*, Chap. ix. 6, 7. To which agrees that of the Angel to the Mother of our Lord, *Luke* i. 33, 34. *The Lord God ſhall give unto him the Throne of his Father David, and he ſhall reign over the Houſe of Jacob for ever, and of his Kingdom there ſhall be no end.* All agreeing that this Kingdom, Government, and Power, ſhould be adminiſtred by the Son of God in humane Nature, and becauſe he is the Son of Man.

Now in this Gift of the Father, the giving ſuch to his Son as he had prepared to become his Diſciples, and to be made ſo by him, is included; they are part of the *all* things which the Father hath put into his hand. In giving him a Kingdom, he gives him a People to be his Subjects, whoſe good Behaviour, and whoſe Happineſs he is to provide for, and to promote by his ſpiritual Government. When the Prophet had ſpoken of God's ſetting his Son upon this holy Hill of *Zion*, Pſal. ii. 6. in *v.* 8. he brings in God ſpeaking thus to him; *Ask of me, and I ſhall give thee the Heathen for thine Inheritance, and the uttermoſt parts of the Earth for thy Poſſeſſion.* Theſe are prepared by the Father to become Subjects to the Son then when he gives them to him; but are actually made ſubject to his ſpiritual Government by the Son himſelf, by his *going forth conquering and to conquer* by his Goſpel, it *is by his arrows the People fall under him.*

Now the Father's thus committing to his Son the Power of managing all Matters that concern the forming and perfecting one Chriſtian Church throughout the World, and ſo of diſpenſing all Aids and Aſſiſtances to that end, doth not imply or ſuppoſe the Father's relinquiſhing this Power, but his doing all by his Son, as deſigning to intereſs the Man Chriſt Jeſus in all theſe great Affairs. And thus when the Father ſends the Holy Spirit, by whoſe Influences we receive our Aſſiſtances, he then ſends him in the Name of the Son, as being concerned with him in ſuch ſending; *John* xiv. 26. *The Comforter which is the Holy Ghoſt, whom the Father will ſend in my Name*, ſaith our Saviour. And on the other hand, the Son when he ſends the Holy Spirit, he ſends him as from the Father who is always concerned alſo in ſuch ſending, *John* xv. 26. *When the Comforter is come, whom I will ſend unto you from the Father, even the Spirit of Truth, which proceedeth from the Father, he ſhall teſtifie of me.*

But as I ſay, the Father diſpenſeth the Influences and Aſſiſtances of the Spirit *by the Son*, as God-Man, now in the time of this Kingdom of his which the Father hath given him. St. *Paul* ſpeaking of God's ſaving us by the waſhing of Regeneration, and renewing of the Holy Ghoſt, which, ſaith he, he ſhed on us abundantly, *through* Jeſus Chriſt our Saviour, *Tit.* iii. 6. I thank my God always on your behalf, for *the Grace of God which is given you by Jeſus Chriſt; that in every thing ye are enriched by him*, 1 Cor. i. 4, 5. And becauſe theſe Aids are thus diſpenſed by the Son, though from the Father, and by the Holy Ghoſt, they are called *the Supplies of the Spirit of*

Jeſus Chriſt, Phil. i. 19. *And it is God that ſupplies all our need, according to his Riches in Glory*, but it is *by Jeſus Chriſt*, Phil. iv. 19. And the Holy Spirit is ſtiled the *Spirit of the Son*, even then when he is ſent into our Hearts by the Father, for the reaſon aforeſaid, *Gal.* iv. 6. And ſo for the Gifts and Graces of the Spirit, they are all diſpenſed by Jeſus Chriſt. *To every one of us* (ſaith St. *Paul*) *is given Grace, according to the meaſure of the Gift of Chriſt*, Epheſ. iv. 7.

All this I have noted, that we might the better underſtand for what reaſon and in what reſpect thoſe prepared to receive the Faith of the Goſpel, are ſaid to be given by the Father to the Son to work that Faith in them: And it is becauſe in giving him the Mediatory Kingdom, he gives him the power of diſpenſing all thoſe Aids and Aſſiſtances, by which Men are made true and ſincere Chriſtians.

But to proceed yet a little farther in this Matter, the uſe of which, as to the principal Scope of this Chapter, will be better diſcerned afterward: The reaſon why the Father confers this Regal Dignity and Authority upon the Son, and the power of ſending the Spirit, and of diſpenſing Aids and Gifts, is not only that *all Men ſhould honour the Son even as they honour the Father*, which yet is one reaſon of it, *John* v. 23; Nor yet only as a Reward of his deep Humiliation, Suffering, and Obedience unto Death, which is another, *Phil.* ii. 9, 10. but alſo that God's great Deſign of reforming the World by ſending his Son into it, and of converting ſinners to the Faith and Obedience of the Goſpel, might by that means be facilitated, as tending to render Chriſt the more glorious, and the more attractive an Object of Faith. It is by his being thus exalted, that Men are more eſpecially brought to believe in him. It is *by him that we do believe in God that raiſed him from the dead, and gave him Glory that our Faith and Hope might be in God*, 1 Pet. i. 21. So that we ſee this glorious Advancement of Chriſt, hath the nature of an *Aid* in it to help us to believe.

The Meanneſs of our Saviour's Appearance in the World while he was in it, and his Crucifixion at the laſt, was that which prejudiced Men againſt both him and his Doctrine; it was their ſtumbling Block, and that at which they were offended, and all through a Miſtake of the nature of Chriſt's Kingdom and Government: So that he had but very few Diſciples at laſt, notwithſtanding all his mighty Miracles and gracious Words. But when he was raiſed from the dead, and exalted in his Kingdom and Glory, and had given a powerful Demonſtration of it by ſending the Holy Ghoſt, as he had promiſed he would, to enable thoſe that preached in his Name, and thoſe that believed in his Name, to do ſo many wonderful things in his Name as they did: This Proof of his Exaltation, in a ſhort time filled a great part of the World with Diſciples to him, and made Men flock by Multitudes into his Church and Kingdom.

This Effect of his glorious Exaltation, was foretold by the Prophets. *Thy People ſhall be willing in the Day of thy Power, more than the Womb of the Morning*, according to the marginal reading, *Pſal.* cx. 3. Theſe words *more than the Womb of the Morning*, ſeem to be Hyperbolical, to ſhew the vaſt numbers of Diſciples and Subjects, the Day of Chriſt's Power and glorious Exaltation, ſhould procure him, even like the Drops of the Morning-dew for Multitude. The Prophet *Iſaiah* ſpeaking as it were to the Meſſiah, of whom he propheſied, ſaid, *Nations that knew thee not ſhall run unto thee, becauſe of the Lord thy God, and for the Holy One of Iſrael, for he hath glorified thee*, Iſa. lv. 5. That is the reaſon we ſee of the Nations running in unto him; it is becauſe Almighty God hath *glorified* him, *exalted, extolled, and made him very high*, as the ſame Prophet ſpeaks, *Chap.* lii. 13.

When Men perceived that the God of Heaven ſo far approved of what Chriſt had taught, done, and ſuffered in the World, as to reward him for it with ſuch Power and Glory, this procured from them a Belief of his Doctrine, and put a great Reputation upon it: It raiſed in Men alſo a great Expectation from him as from one that was very well able to prefer and reward his Friends and Followers, as he had promiſed he would.

We find that the ſending of the Holy Ghoſt, the pouring out of the Spirit in thoſe greater meaſures foretold by the Prophets, was deferred unto this time of the glorious Exaltation of Chriſt. So ſaith the Evangeliſt St. *John* vii. 39. *The Holy Ghoſt was not yet given, becauſe that Jeſus was not yet glorified.* And the reaſon hereof was, that he might have the Honour of ſending him, and of diſpenſing the Aſſiſtances and manifold Gifts of the Spirit, and thereby convince Men that he was the ſame which he always declared himſelf to be, the Son of God ſent down from Heaven. *If I go not away, the Comforter will not come unto you; but if I depart, I will ſend him unto* *you. And when he is come, he ſhall convince the World of Righteouſneſs, becauſe I go to the Father, and ye ſee me no more,* John xvi. 7, 8, 10. Convince the World of Righteouſneſs, that is, he ſhould convince them that Chriſt was no Deceiver, as they accuſed him to be here on Earth, but the true Meſſiah, Son of God and Saviour of the World, as he had declared himſelf to be while he was here in the World. And this our Saviour ſays the Holy Ghoſt ſhould convince the World of, becauſe of his going to the Father: That is, by the Father's receiving him up into Glory after his Reſurrection and placing him there in Royal Majeſty. This our Saviour ſays the Spirit ſhould convince the World of when he was come from him; and the Event plainly declares how.

For within a few Days after our Saviour's Aſcenſion into Heaven, and his Enthronation there, he ſends down the Holy Ghoſt upon his Apoſtles that preached in his Name, and were his Witneſſes, and upon others alſo that believed in his Name, enabling them by the Holy Ghoſt to ſpeak and do ſuch things, as by hearing and ſeeing of which, great Multitudes were preſently convinced that Jeſus was the Chriſt, the true Meſſiah and Saviour of the World, about three thouſand of them being baptized into this Faith the very ſame Day in which the Holy Ghoſt was thus ſent by Chriſt.

For St. *Peter* diſcourſed to them of this wonderful Event thus, *Acts* ii. 32, 33. *This Jeſus* (of whom he had been ſpeaking) *hath God raiſed up, whereof we all are Witneſſes. Therefore being by the right hand of God exalted, and having received from the Father the Promiſe of the Holy Ghoſt, he hath ſhed forth this which ye now ſee and hear.* The end and deſign of all which, was to convince Men that Jeſus is the Chriſt of God; which was done by convincing them that God had thus exalted him and given this Power of doing theſe Wonders by the Spirit he had ſent. For that is the uſe St. *Peter* drew it to, *Verſe* 36. *Therefore let all the Houſe of Iſrael know aſſuredly, that God hath made that ſame Jeſus whom ye have crucified, both Lord and Chriſt.*

Now this ſending of the Holy Ghoſt was ſo neceſſary to qualifie the Apoſtles for the great Work of converting the World by preaching Chriſt and his Doctrine, and for the procuring Credit to be given to it, that our Saviour would not have them ſo much as ſet upon it, or go about it, *but commanded them to tarry at Jeruſalem until they were endued with this power from on high,* Luke xxiv. 49. And the preaching of the Goſpel under this Qualification, was doubtleſs the preaching it *in Demonſtration of the Spirit and of Power,* which St. *Paul* ſpeaks of, 1 *Cor.* ii. 4.

Now by this we ſee how thoſe Aſſiſtances which Men receive in believing, and ſo in performing the Condition of the Promiſe, do depend upon the Father's giving all things into the hands of the Son: And how for that reaſon the Father gives ſuch as have been preparatively aſſiſted by him, unto the Son to be compleatly aſſiſted to perform the Condition of the Promiſe. And indeed the reaſon why ſo many turned to God in ſo little a time after Chriſt's Exaltation, than ever was known before, was becauſe thoſe Aſſiſtances then diſpenſed by him, were more and greater than ever were vouchſafed the World before.

And leſt any ſhould be diſcouraged, or think their Condition worſe than indeed it is, for that we have no ſuch external Aſſiſtances by the ſending of the Holy Ghoſt, as Men in thoſe primitive times had, let this one thing be conſidered; That the Chriſtians now are as really aſſiſted by that ſending of the Holy Ghoſt which was in thoſe times, as thoſe were who lived then; ſuppoſing the Truth of the Hiſtory of it, of which there is no cauſe to doubt. For we have the ſame Goſpel as they had, and and that under the ſame Evidence by which it was demonſtrated to them to be from Heaven, and that the then glorified Jeſus was the Author of it. And we may as truly be ſaid to have Chriſt and his Apoſtles now in reſpect of external Aſſiſtance, as the Jews in thoſe times were to have *Moſes* and the Prophets. For we have the ſame Doctrine which Chriſt and his Apoſtles preached, and many of the ſame Miracles which they wrought to confirm it, tranſmitted down to us by their Writings and unqueſtionable Tradition; and the Jews had *Moſes* and the Prophets no otherwiſe in our Saviour's time, when he ſaid they had *Moſes* and the Prophets. The Miracles of the Apoſtles then, wrought the ſame effect, procured the ſame Belief of their Doctrine, in many that only heard of them by credible Teſtimony, as they did in them that ſaw them done. We ſee our Saviour upbraided his Diſciples for not believing Matter of Fact, when teſtified to them by credible Eye-witneſſes. *Mark* xvi. 14. *And he ſaid to Thomas, bleſſed are they which have not ſeen, and yet have believed.* And when St. *John* had written a Hiſtory of ſome of the Signs or Miracles which our Saviour did, he ſays, *Theſe are written that Men might believe*, John xx. 30, 31. By this he ſuppoſed his written Teſtimony, of what he had ſeen and heard, to be a competent ground of Faith in others. And St. *Paul* ſaith, *Hold faſt the Tradition which ye have been taught, whether by Word or our Epiſtle*, 2 Theſſ. ii. 15.

But although it is not neceſſary, That the ſame miraculous Operations of the Holy Spirit, ſhould be repeated in every Age, to convince Men, That Chriſt, who was firſt crucified, is now advanced to the Throne of his Glory, and hath the Power of ſending the Holy Ghoſt to confirm the Doctrine which was preached in his Name, by them who proved their Miſſion from him by Signs and Wonders, and mighty Deeds which were done in his Name: Though, as I ſay, the Repetition of theſe be not neceſſary in every Age, this having been done *once for all* in one Age, as St. *Jude* ſpeaks of the Faith *once delivered to the Saints*; yet the inward Aſſiſtance by the Spirit, to cauſe the external Aſſiſtances to operate the more effectually upon the Mind, is ſtill neceſſary, and is ſtill continued in the Church. For in this reſpect our Saviour by his Spirit as well as by his Word, is with his People always to the end of the World, as he promiſed he would, and as he promiſed his Spirit likewiſe ſhould. *I will pray the Father, and he ſhall give you another Comforter, that he may abide with you for ever, even the Spirit of Truth*, John xiv. 16. It was this Preſence of Chriſt, I conceive, which St. *Paul* deſired might be and continue with *Timothy*'s Spirit, 2 *Tim.* iv. 22. *The Lord Jeſus Chriſt be with thy Spirit.*

In this part of my Diſcourſe concerning Divine Aſſiſtance, I have endeavoured to ſhew, That our Lord and Saviour hath the Power of diſpenſing Evangelical and Spiritual Aſſiſtances committed to him by the Father, and that that is the reaſon, why the Father is ſaid to give ſuch to the Son as have heard and learned of the Father. And now this high Advancement of the Son, and his having all Power in Heaven and Earth given to him, leaves no place for us to doubt of his Ability to aſſiſt thoſe to the uttermoſt, who do not make themſelves uncapable of it, by refuſing to make uſe of it, and of the Father's preparatory Aſſiſtance. And truly all ſuch have no more reaſon neither to doubt of our Saviour's Willingneſs to aſſiſt them, than they have of his Power, if theſe few things following be but duly conſidered.

1. That Kingdom, Glory, and Greatneſs fore-mentioned, and the Power of diſpenſing Aids and Aſſiſtances is given by the Father to the Son for this very end among others, that he might uſe and manage all for the bringing Men, ſuch as the Father hath given him, to perform the Condition of the Promiſe, in repenting, in believing and obeying the Goſpel, *Acts* v. 31. *Him hath God exalted with his own right hand, to be a Prince and a Saviour, to give Repentance and Remiſſion of Sins.* The Father advanced him to that high Honour and Dignity, that he might be a publick Good to Mankind, in aſſiſting them to perform the Condition of the Promiſe, as he had been before by his Humiliation, for the obtaining of the Promiſe upon that Condition, That ſo he might be a compleat Saviour in ſaving us as well from Sin in the Power and Pollution of it, as from the Guilt of it. *He aſcended far above all Heavens, that he might fill*, or fulfil, *all things*, Eph. iv. 10. That he might fully diſpenſe and beſtow what-ever is neceſſary to the perfecting of the Saints, and Edification of the Body of Chriſt. The Apoſtle having ſaid, *Chap.* i. 20, 21. *that God having raiſed Chriſt from the dead, ſet him at his own right hand in the heavenly places, far above all Principality and Power, Might and Dominion, and every Name that is named, not only in this World, but alſo in that which is to come; and having put all things under his Feet*; then in *Verſe* 22, and 23. he ſays, *he gave him to be Head over all things to the Church, which is his Body, the Fulneſs of him that filleth all in all.* He did not only give him to be the Head of his Church, but to be Head over all things to the Church to the Uſe and Benefit of the Church; for the Fulneſs of this Power of his in the Iſſue and Benefit of it, runs in to his Church, for whom he received it, and in reſpect whereof, the Church is his Fulneſs in a paſſive Senſe: For it is he *that filleth all in all*, as St. *John* ſaith, *of his Fulneſs we have all received, and Grace for Grace*, John i. 16. ſuch a Fulneſs as holds ſome Proportion with the Fulneſs of ſuch a Head: All the Fulneſs wherewith all and every one of his Church are filled, is derived from him, it is all of his filling, and that as he is Head of the Church, and Head over all things to the Church.

For he is not only a political Head to the Church to govern it by Laws, but ſuch a Head alſo as reſembles a natural Head by way of Influence, conveying, by his Spirit, a vital and quickning Power unto all the Members, to enable them to obey thoſe Laws.

The whole Body hath *from this Head nouriſhment miniſtred*, as St. *Paul* ſhews, *Col.* ii. 19. Upon which account St. *Paul* could ſay, *I am able to do all things through Chriſt which ſtrengtheneth me. But without him* (as our Saviour told his Diſciples) *ye can do nothing.*

Now if all this Fulneſs, all this Power we have been ſpeaking of, was given to the Son, was put into his hands for that end, that he ſhould uſe it, and manage it in aiding and aſſiſting thoſe whom the Father hath given him, to perform the Condition on which Pardon and Eternal Life are promiſed, there is no queſtion to be made of his willingneſs to uſe it to that end, eſpecially when we farther conſider that which follows.

2. For, in the ſecond place, he is as faithful as he is able, faithful to uſe the fulneſs of his Sufficiency for the ends and uſes for which he received it, *He is faithful to him that appointed him in all his houſe*, Heb. iii. 2. *Faithful is he that calleth you, who alſo will do it*, 1 Theſſ. v. 24. *All*, ſaith our Saviour, *that the Father giveth me, ſhall come unto me; and him that cometh to me, I will in no wiſe caſt out*, John vi. 37. When he was leaving the World, he could with all confidence ſay unto his Father, *I have finiſhed the Work which thou gaveſt me to do*, John xvii. And if he did thus in the day of his Humiliation and Temptation, it cannot be thought but that he will likewiſe finiſh what the Father hath given him to do now in the day of his Exaltation and Power. Why do the holy Angels ſing, *Worthy is the Lamb that was ſlain, to receive Power, and Riches, and Wiſdom, and Strength*, but becauſe he faithfully uſeth them for thoſe noble and worthy ends for which he received them? Rev. v. *When he aſcended up on high, he led Captivity captive, and received Gifts for Men*, ſaith the Pſalmiſt, *Pſal.* lxviii. 18. He then *gave Gifts unto Men*, ſaith the Apoſtle, *Epheſ.* iv. 10. When upon his glorious Exaltation he had received the Promiſe of the Father, to wit, the Power of ſending the Holy Ghoſt, he preſently pours it out upon his Diſciples, *Acts* ii. 33. what he receives for us, he will be ſure to communicate to us. *If the Clouds be full of Rain, they empty themſelves upon the Earth*, ſaith the Wiſe Man, *Eccleſ.* xi. 3. for that is the end of their being ſo filled, to ſupply the Neceſſities of the Inhabitants of the Earth. They indeed do thus by a natural neceſſity; but our Saviour out of his Fulneſs ſupplies the ſpiritual Wants of Men ſpontaneouſly. Never was the kindeſt Mother more willing that her full Breaſts ſhould be drawn by her tender Infant, than our bleſſed Saviour is that we ſhould draw and derive from his Fulneſs to the relief and ſupply of all our ſpiritual Wants to make us good and happy.

To think or to ſuſpect that our Saviour ſhould with-hold any of that *aid* from Men which he hath received for them, and which is neceſſary to enable them to perform the Condition of the Promiſe, ſuppoſing them capable of it, would be highly to diſhonour him. It is a grievous thing among Men to with-hold from the People that which their extream Neceſſity calls for, when it is in one's power to relieve them, without injury to himſelf or to his, or to the publick. *He that with-holdeth Corn, the People ſhall curſe him*, ſaith *Solomon*, *Prov.* xi. 26. The Reverence which we owe to our bleſſed Saviour, and the aſſurance we have of his Goodneſs and Good-will towards Men, will not ſuffer us once to think there is in him any thing of like nature. And if he himſelf threatned that unprofitable Servant in the Goſpel, as he did, for not uſing the Talent committed to him, to the end and purpoſe for which he received it, we may be ſure he himſelf will be very far from not diſcharging the Truſt he hath received from his Father.

3. We have no reaſon to fear or to doubt, but that that Compaſſion and Love towards us, and the longing deſire our Saviour had after our Salvation, which made him willing to ſuffer ſo much as he hath to obtain a Conditional Pardon for us, and a Conditional Promiſe of it; doth and will make him willing to *aſſiſt* all thoſe in the Performance of that Condition, who have not, or do not make themſelves uncapable of it, by not uſing but oppoſing ſuch preparatory Aids as have been afforded them. He who hath laid ſo coſtly a foundation in his own Blood to make us good and happy, cannot, as we may well think, be wanting to build upon that Foundation what is neceſſary on his part to compleat his deſign of Grace and Favour towards us. We cannot think he will be willing to loſe all the coſt he hath already expended towards the procuring of Pardon and Life for us, for want of doing that farther for us which he can with far more eaſe do (if we have not made our ſelves uncapable of it) than what he hath done already.

Hath our bleſſed Saviour any thing to give us which is better than himſelf, or more dear to him? And if not, as doubtleſs he hath not, then we may confidently conclude, that that which put him upon giving himſelf for us, will not ſuffer him to keep back from us that which he can give us without any detriment to himſelf, or diſparagement to his Wiſdom, unleſs we have made our ſelves uncapable of it. As St. *Paul* ſaith of God the Father, *He that ſpared not his own Son, but delivered him up for us all, how ſhall he not with him freely give us all things?* So we may ſay of God the Son; he that ſpared not himſelf when we ſtood in need of a Saviour, but gave himſelf to death for us; how ſhall he not give us that alſo, which though it be leſs for him to give, yet is ſuch which in ſome ſort we ſtand in as much need of as we did of a Saviour, his Aſſiſtance I mean. *If when we were Enemies we were reconciled to God by the Death of his Son, much more being reconciled, we ſhall be ſaved by his Life*, as the Apoſtle infers, *Rom.* v. 10. "If meerly by Chriſt's dying for our Sins, we were thus far " reſtored to God's Favour, as that he was pleaſed to propoſe to us free and eaſie " Conditions of Mercy and Pardon; much more eaſie will it be, and moſt agreeable " to that former Eſſay of his Goodneſs, now he hath gone ſo far with us, to beſtow " on us alſo Ability to perform thoſe Conditions, (unleſs we have made our ſelves un- " capable of it) ſince without ſuch Aſſiſtance all the reſt would ſignifie no more to us, " than as if Chriſt had never died for us, nor than as if ſuch Conditions had never " been obtained for us, or propoſed to us.

4. That Plenitude of Power and Sufficiency lodged in our Saviour, to anſwer and to ſupply all the ſpiritual Wants and Neceſſities of Men, on whoſe behalf our Saviour took on him the great Office of Mediator, will never turn to ſuch an account of Glory, Honour, and Praiſe to God the Father of all Mercies, while it is reſtrained and kept back only within himſelf, as it will when communicated and given forth in the effects of it, to them for whoſe benefit he received it: Nor will it till then neither redound ſo much to his own honour as God the Father deſigned it ſhould. And if not, how can we poſſibly think there ſhould be any thing of unwillingneſs in him to afford all thoſe his Aſſiſtance to perform the Condition of the Promiſe, who do not refuſe to make uſe of it?

For as it was the deſign of our Saviour in all the good he did to Men while he was in the World, to gain glory thereby unto his Father, ſo it was a great inducement to him to do that good, when he knew it would turn to ſuch an account. *Whatſoever ye ſhall ask the Father in my Name, that will I do, that the Father may be glorified in the Son*, John xiv. 13. It was matter of great ſatisfaction to our Saviour, when he was upon leaving the World, that he could ſay to his Father, *I have glorified thee on Earth, I have finiſhed the Work which thou gaveſt me to do*, John xvii. 4. He took pleaſure in doing that Work for that reaſon, becauſe he glorified the Father thereby. And we cannot think he is leſs zealous for the honour of his Father, now he is ſo highly exalted by him, than he was in the day of his Humiliation and Temptation.

Conſidering then that our Saviour's aſſiſting us to perform the Condition of the Promiſe, will in ſeveral reſpects bring in a great Revenue of Glory to God, as well as it will of Good to Men, we may be confident that he will rather be grieved for that Men are no more forward to make uſe of his Aſſiſtance, than any way backward to afford it them.

St. *Paul* thought it a prevailing Argument to obtain a liberal Contribution for the relief of Fellow-Chriſtians, when he could ſay, it would both *ſupply the Neceſſities of the Saints, and cauſe many Thankſgivings unto God*, 2 Cor. ix. 12. Now our Saviour's aſſiſting Men to perform the Condition of the Promiſe, will not only make them happy, but will alſo fill their Hearts and Mouths with many and many Thankſgivings unto God, for his Grace beſtowed on them by Jeſus Chriſt. And if ſo, we cannot doubt of our Saviour's willingneſs to aſſiſt all thoſe who are any whit willing to be aſſiſted. Charity in good Men will make them willing to engage in ſuch an Action, as will both relieve Men, and procure many Thankſgivings unto God, though they do thereby to a degree empty themſelves, and diminiſh of their own Store. How much more then will that Goodneſs in our Saviour, which is infinitely greater, diſpoſe him to yield us his aſſiſtance to become good in performing the Condition of the Promiſe, when he ſhall thereby both glorifie his Father, and make us happy, and procure to himſelf the ſatisfaction of doing all this good, and everlaſting Love and Praiſe from thoſe that are made happy by it; and all this too without any more diminiſhing of his own Riches, than when by a Word of his Mouth he healed the Diſeaſed Bodies of Men.

5. The pleaſure which our Saviour takes in Mens becoming good, as they do by performing the Condition of the Promiſe, is a ground of great aſſurance, that nothing ſhall be wanting on his part, fully to aſſiſt them to perform that Condition, that will conſiſt with his Wiſdom, and with the Terms on which the Father will have Men to be ſo aſſiſted. The Prophet ſpeaking of the *Meſſiah*, ſaith, *He ſhall ſee his Seed, and he ſhall ſee of the travel of his Soul, and be ſatisfied*, Iſai. liii. To ſee the fruit of his Mediatory performance in Mens being recovered from being bad to become good, from Rebels to become obedient Subjects, yea, dutiful Children to his Father, and ſo Heirs of Salvation, is and needs muſt be matter of great ſatisfaction to the Soul of our Saviour, becauſe it is the very Prize for which he ran, the deſign of his whole Undertaking, as Mediator. And therefore he cannot poſſibly be wanting in any thing that is but fit for him to do to help Men to become good, or to perform the Condition of the Promiſe, which is the ſame. We ſee by his weeping over *Jeruſalem*, how he is grieved when Men refuſe to make uſe of thoſe helps and means of Deliverance which he hath obtained for them at a coſtly rate; when they refuſe to be holpen out of the Pit of Deſtruction, when help is offered them. By which we may eaſily judge how acceptable it is to him to *help* and *aſſiſt* them to get out of a ſinful State, who have any mind to be ſo *aſſiſted* by him.

Theſe Conſiderations are enough and ſufficient, I conceive, to ſatisfie us touching our Saviour's willingneſs to *aſſiſt* thoſe to perform the Condition of the Promiſe, who do not remain unwilling to be ſo *aſſiſted* by him, after what God has been doing in their Souls to make them willing: And greatly tend likewiſe to ſtrengthen their Faith in Chriſt, and to encourage their dependence upon him for all neceſſary Supplies of *Aſſiſtance* and *Grace*, who have any mind to become good, or to increaſe in goodneſs and to put forth their endeavours to that end.

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A
Practical Diſcourſe
OF
HUMILITY.

BRITISH MUSEUM

TO THE

READER.

Reader,

THeſe Papers having lain by me for ſome time, which were at firſt drawn up for my own private uſe, I have now at laſt been enclined to expoſe to common view: And that becauſe the Humility, which is the Subject diſcourſed of in them, if it might take place, tends greatly to heal thoſe Wounds which the Church of God in this Nation hath received by her own Diviſions and Contentions. And I think I may ſay, there was never more need of preſſing upon Mens Conſciences the great Duties of Humility, Meekneſs and Gentleneſs, by Diſcourſes both publick and private, than now in theſe Times, in which Mens Minds and Paſſions are wonderfully heated one againſt another, and their Tongues ſet on fire, and Flames break out at their Lips. And indeed abundance of Men are ſo far loſt, and become degenerate, as to a true Chriſtian Temper, as that it makes Diſcourſes of Humility and Meekneſs both as needful and ſeaſonable, as plenty of Water is when a Town is on fire. And becauſe the uſefulneſs and neceſſity of Humility and Meekneſs, in reference to the compoſing of our Differences, has not been touch'd upon in the following Diſcourſe, I ſhall a little ſupply that Omiſſion in this Preface.

I am ſufficiently ſatisfied, that the greatneſs and height of our Church-Differences and Diviſions do not proceed ſo much from the Nature of the Things about which we differ, as from the Diſtemper of their Spirits who are engaged in them, and from the immoderate manner of proceeding in thoſe Endeavours which have been uſed for the obtaining a removal or alteration of thoſe things which are ſaid to be the original Cauſe of theſe our Differences. For, from whence elſe can it come to paſs, that the withdrawing from Parochial Communion, and the erecting ſeparate Aſſemblies for publick Worſhip, which was counted by the Nonconformiſts themſelves, before our late Troubles, to be a great Sin, ſhould yet now be eſteemed a Duty? It is not becauſe more is made neceſſary to Parochial Communion now than was then. Nor can we reaſonably think that it is becauſe the Nonconformiſts heretofore were leſs tender in Conſcience, or leſs careful to pleaſe God, than the Diſſenters are now. Neither is it likely that Men have been better able to diſcern what is Sin, and what is Duty, in theſe matters now, after their Paſſions have been more ſtirr'd by greater Provocations mutually given, than they were before this ſo unhappily fell out. And therefore ſince our Differences are grown greater, and Breaches ſo very much wider than they were before, I know not what it can be owing to, but the exorbitant Paſſions of Men.

Men have not confin'd themſelves to a ſober and diſpaſſionate Debate of the Matters in difference, as they ought to have done, but have laboured to render the Cauſe they have oppoſed odious, by many indecent Reflections and Inſinuations againſt the Perſons of thoſe that have been moſt concern'd in it, or have appeared in the defence of it. And this Provocation has been of a very miſchievous Conſequence, tending to imbitter the Spirits of one againſt another, to create hard Thoughts and Diſaffections towards one another. And this is a thing of a thouſand times worſe Conſequence in the Church, than the things themſelves about which we thus unchriſtianly ſtrive; and the Remedy, as it has been applied, has proved far worſe than the Diſeaſe. This way of proceeding has had an ill influence upon Mens Wills, and does ill affect as well thoſe who have the better cauſe, as thoſe who have the worſe; and is deſtructive of the Humility and Charity, without which Men's Orthodoxy in Judgment and Devotional Acts in Religion, will ſignifie nothing with God. And this is a thing of a far worſe nature than the enduring ſome things inconvenient in the Church, which yet are not at all deſtructive of the Power of Godlineſs.

And this immoral way of managing our Differences, is ſo far from tending to any Reconciliation, that it doubles the Difficulty of it. Before, the Difference lay moſt in Mens Opinions, which yet did conſiſt with charitable Affections one towards another: But by this untoward way of convincing one another, they are ſet at a greater diſtance from each other in point of Affection, *than they really are in point of* Judgment*: So that the difference by this means being doubled, the Difficulty of Reconciliation muſt needs be doubled alſo.*

There is a neceſſity therefore, if we would have our great Breaches made up, and Reconciliation and Peace to take place among us, to caſt out the unpeaceable Paſſions of Men, as ſo many make-bates from having any hand in attempting it: For ſo long as theſe are employ'd in it, we ſee by Experience, that the rent is but made worſe, and the breach wider. If Humility did but abound as much in the Minds, and appear as much in the Converſe, Preachings, and Writings of the contending Parties, as bluſtering Paſſions do in too many of them, it would not be ſo difficult a thing to come to a Chriſtian Agreement, as hitherto it hath been. It is only by Pride that Contention cometh, *as* Solomon *hath obſerved: And if ſo, then nothing is more neceſſary to Reconciliation, Agreement and Peace, than* Humility, *which is the contrary to* Pride; *and Contraries produce contrary Effects. If Pride were but caſt out on all hands, and Humility brought in its room, we ſhould as certainly ſee Peace in a little time, as we have ſeen Strife and Contention, too long threatning the Ruine of the Church in this Nation.*

Humility is a Vertue of a peaceable Nature; it diſpoſes Men to keep the Peace and to make Peace, as is ſhew'd in the following Diſcourſe. And to this end, it inclines them to obſerve the beſt Methods of compoſing Differences, and procuring Peace; ſuch as is an Endeavour to make the Matters in Difference, to appear as little as poſſibly may fairly be done; to reduce ſuch of them as are any whit conſiderable, or fit to be inſiſted on, into as narrow a Compaſs as can be. *Which to do, would be one good ſtep to Agreement: For the nearer differing Parties are to Agreement, the ſooner they will be brought to it, and the more the Lovers of Peace will be encouraged to undertake it, and heartily endeavour to effect it.*

But now the contrary Paſſions and ill Humours in Men, will incline them to make the Matters in difference, to ſeem as great as ever they can, by bringing in every little and inconſiderable thing to the reckoning, and by aggravating all to the utmoſt, and by inventing new Matters of Exception, and by bringing in new Fewel to maintain the Fire; as if they were afraid it ſhould go out. And this cauſes great Suſpicion, that ſuch have no mind to come to any Agreement at all by way of Compoſition, but that their hopes are, that at laſt they ſhall be able to give Terms to others, and not be under any need of compounding Matters with thoſe that differ from them. And this very thing tends to diſcourage thoſe on the other hand, from endeavouring any Relaxation for their Eaſe, though otherwiſe they have never ſo good a mind to it, as thinking ſuch a thing would be but ineffectual, for the procuring that Reconciliation and Peace, *which moderate Men ſo much long for, unleſs in reference to but a very few.*

Again, Humility, Meekneſs and Goodneſs of Temper, will incline all thoſe in our different Parties, in whom they are found, to yield to one another, as far as ever they innocently can, rather than our ſad and miſchievous Breaches ſhould ſtill lie open and unmade up. *For Men of true Wiſdom and good Temper, of ſound and undiſeaſed Minds, will never lay ſo great a ſtreſs, as the hazarding the loſs of the Peace and Proſperity of the Church, upon the retaining and ſtiffly adhering to Matters, not indiſpenſably neceſſary in themſelves, and but convenient only in ſome reſpects. For there is no Compariſon between the Peace and Unity of the Church, and what depends thereon, and between things that would be only Matters of Conveniency, in caſe there were no Competition between them and the Peace of the Church. For things, which otherwiſe may be very convenient, or conveniently neceſſary, yet ceaſe to be ſo; when, and ſo long as they, and the Peace and Unity of the Church cannot conſiſt together, but that of neceſſity the one muſt give way to the other. And whenever this is the caſe between the Peace and Unity of the Church, and Matters only of Conveniency, it is highly reaſonable that the leſſer, to wit, Matters of Conveniency, ſhould give place to the greater; to wit, the Peace and Unity of the Church, and the Edification of its Members, in Charity and other Graces, which depend very much on that Peace.* Above all things have fervent Charity among your ſelves, *ſaith St.* Peter: Above all theſe put on Charity, *ſaith St.* Paul. *There are no matters of particular Conveniency, and which are not abſolutely and indiſpenſibly neceſſary, that can be duly preferr'd or choſen before the*

the Peace of the Church in general, or be retain'd and adhered to, to the abandoning of ſuch Peace.

Upon theſe accounts therefore Humility and Goodneſs of Temper *in Diſſenters would (as may reaſonably be expected) incline them to make Conceſſions, and to yield as far as poſſibly they innocently can, rather than the Church ſhould be divided, rent and torn, and Chriſtian Charity go to wrack, as it does. It would incline and diſpoſe them to* deny themſelves, *in things that might otherwiſe be very valuable to them, if they could have them without being acceſſary to ſo great Evils, as our Diviſions and open Oppoſitions are attended with. And when I ſay this in reference to the* Diſſenters, *I do not deny, but that the ſame Goodneſs of* Temper, *and for the ſame reaſon, will incline thoſe on the other hand, when they have power and opportunity, to condeſcend to the* Diſſenters *alſo, ſo far as a due Care for the publick Good of Chriſtians in general will ſuffer them, or as will conſiſt with that. And if the* Diſſenters *would do their part, and begin in yielding, as far as they can for* Peace *ſake, (which yet I reckon to be no more, than what is their undoubted Duty) they would thereby give ſome good proof of their real Willingneſs to have our Differences compoſed on reaſonable Terms: And it would be a good Motive likewiſe to induce thoſe on the other hand, to yield them Eaſe and Relief in the reſt, ſo ſoon as ever they can.*

But now on the contrary, a high Mind, a paſſionate and intemperate Zeal, will keep Men from making ſuch Conceſſions for Peace, *as Conſcience it ſelf would not oppoſe them in, if* Humour *did not: It will put them upon ſtanding ſtiffly upon their own* Terms *and* Demands, *and whatever they have a mind to have, let what will be the Iſſue at laſt. Nay Mens Paſſions, if they get head, will ſometimes put them upon demanding more than they can rationally hope ever to obtain, and more than would have well contented them, before their Minds were diſordered by Paſſion, and more than indifferent Men, and unconcerned in our Differences, would ever think fit ſhould be granted. Such Paſſions likewiſe may poſſibly make ſome Men on the other hand to refuſe to abate any thing, to their diſſatisfied Brethren, of that which they might abate, without any Injury to the Souls of any whatſoever, yea though the very Peace of the Church ſhould lie at ſtake upon ſuch Refuſal. All which in whomſoever found, proceeds from an overvaluing of themſelves, and the Gratification of their own deſire, and from an undervaluing and neglect of others; a* Temper *of Mind very bad, both in its own Nature, and in its Tendency. For in that black Catalogue of boiſterous and enormous Paſſions, which St.* Paul *foretold, ſhould render the laſt times perillous,* Self-love *is the firſt, and Leader to the reſt.* This know alſo, that in the laſt Days perillous times ſhall come; for Men ſhall be Lovers of their own ſelves. *And Men are then Lovers of their own ſelves, when they value the pleaſing themſelves, more than the publick Good, when theſe come in Competition. For otherwiſe, for Men to love themſelves, is not their Sin, but rather their Duty, when they can love and pleaſe themſelves in that which is good, and without Injury to others, and when it will conſiſt with the common good. But for Men to do that, for the pleaſing of themſelves, and the gratifying their own Inclinations and Deſires, in things not ſimply neceſſary, (how convenient ſoever they may otherwiſe eſteem them) when it ſhall tend to a publick Diſturbance of the Peace of the Church, and be deſtructive of Charity among Chriſtians, and ſhall tend to weaken the Church, both in her Reputation and Strength, and to bring Diſgrace upon the Chriſtian Religion; this is to love themſelves in an ill Senſe, it is to love themſelves perverſly, to be Lovers of their own ſelves, in the Senſe here condemned by the Apoſtle, and by which times are made perillous to the Church, as to our great Grief we ſee they now are, and by this very means. All contrary to that Saying of St.* Paul, Charity ſeeketh not her own: *And to St.* Paul's *own Practice likewiſe;* not ſeeking mine own Profit, but the Profit of many; *and his Exhortation to others;* Look not every Man on his own things, but every Man alſo on the things of others: Let no Man ſeek his own, but every Man anothers Wealth. *Humility and Charity will not ſuffer Men ſo to overvalue themſelves, or to be ſo ſelfiſh, as to provide for the pleaſing of themſelves, without due regard to the pleaſing of others for their good, and the publick Good. Nay, St.* Paul *was ſo far from preferring the pleaſing of himſelf, or his own private Benefit, before a publick Good, as that* he could, *as he ſays,* have wiſhed himſelf accurſed from Chriſt, for his Brethren and Kinſmen the Jews. *And this amounted to very much more, though underſtood in the loweſt Senſe that can be, than Mens contenting themſelves with a leſs pleaſing Communion while lawful, when they cannot have ſuch as is more pleaſing, without a publick Injury to the Peace, Unity* *and Charity of the Church in general. Nor need any Man fear the being any Loſer by being ſo: For, for Men to deny themſelves, and to refuſe to gratifie their own Inclination, out of reſpect to a publick Good, is an Act of* Obedience, *which is none of the leaſt, but muſt needs be a greater Proof of their Goodneſs, than any thing they can do, in full Concurrence with their own Inclination, when yet it tends to a publick Injury; and muſt needs be better pleaſing unto God, and conſequently will have a Reward of a better nature. And it is but reaſonable to expect, that Almighty* God *will make thoſe means of Grace, which they enjoy in a regular way, more truly beneficial to their Souls, than ſuch as cannot be had without perverting God's eſtabliſhed Order of ſubjecting Mens private and perſonal Conveniencies, to the publick Peace and more general Edification of the Church. It is an Apoſtolical Injunction;* Let the Peace of God, to which ye are called in one Body, rule in your Hearts. *Whenever Matters not abſolutely neceſſary, though otherwiſe in ſome reſpect convenient, ſhall come in Competition with that Peace to which we are called in one Body; then and in all ſuch caſes, the Care of preſerving that Peace, ſhould always over-rule ſuch other matters. The Effects of peaceable-mindedneſs, tend indeed to make Men happy in Society; but it is in it ſelf, and as ſeated in the Heart, one of thoſe Fruits of the Spirit mentioned,* Gal. v. The Fruit of the Spirit is Love, Joy, Peace, *&c. This* Peace *is that in which the* Kingdom of God doth conſiſt, *as well as in* Righteouſneſs *and Joy in the Holy Ghoſt, if we will believe St.* Paul*'s Doctrine. And this is the rather to be noted, becauſe it being ſo, Men will ſooner approve themſelves to be ſuch as have the Holy Spirit by this Peaceableneſs, Love, Meekneſs, Gentleneſs and Goodneſs, than by Zeal for this or that external manner of Worſhip, or Mode of Government. For this Chriſtian Peaceableneſs, as appears by being one of the Fruits of the Spirit, as oppoſed to the Works of the Fleſh, and deſigned by God's ſpiritual Kingdom among Men to be promoted, and by them endeavoured as much as Righteouſneſs, is one ſubſtantial part of Chriſtianity; whereas the things we ſo unpeaceably contend for, are but ſuch Circumſtances as may be varied for Peace ſake, either by Diſſenters, or others, if the Government thought fit, and yet the Worſhip duly performed; the Scripture having no where tied us up to one in Oppoſition to another, ſo that the general Rule for Edification be but obſerved. And therefore if this Peace of God did but rule in Mens hearts, methinks it ſhould not ſuffer them to part with it for things of a far inferiour Nature.*

It is true, Peace is ſo lovely a thing, that all pretend much friendſhip to it, but how ſincerely, may be juſtly queſtioned, when they will not part with any thing for it, which they have taken a liking to, though they might without any other loſs, than that of pleaſing their Fancy, or gratifying an undue Inclination of Mind. It is a thing well known, that as good Men as ever England *bred, both of Conformiſts and Nonconformiſts, have lived and died in Parochial Communion with the Church of* England, *notwithſtanding the ſame things were then in uſe in the publick Worſhip, which are ſo now. And I could never underſtand that there was any reaſon to judge, that thoſe* Browniſts *and* Anabaptiſts, *which did then ſeperate, were any whit the better Chriſtians for it, in Humility, Charity, or the like, or did any whit excel thoſe other good Men in ſubſtantial Chriſtianity, but rather much on the contrary. Which argues that thoſe who ſeparate now might hold Parochial Communion, and thereby maintain Peace and much Good-will among Men, without any other loſs, than the parting with thoſe undue Prejudices they have taken up againſt it, or with the gratifying a fancy they have for a ſeparate Communion, as if it muſt be beſt, becauſe ſuch. For the Proſperity of Mens Souls in all manner of Goodneſs under Parochial Communion, and the Ordinances of God therein adminiſtred before our late times of Separation, does ſufficiently ſhew, that if Men are not every way eminently good in ſuch a way of Communion now, the Reaſon and Cauſe thereof is not to be charged upon the Nature of the Communion, or external Adminiſtration of Worſhip, but upon Mens ſelf-neglect and non-attention of their Heart and Soul to the internal, ſubſtantial and ſpiritual Worſhip thereby adminiſtred: And where ſuch Self-neglect is, and ſuch Attention wanting, Men may and will be bad, though the outward form of Adminiſtration ſhould be never ſo perfect and free from defects.*

But ſince peaceable and undivided Communion among Chriſtians is ſo lovely and deſirable a thing, as the Scriptures abundantly repreſent it to be, ſcarce any thing being more frequently urged and inculcated upon them than Peace; all due Care ſhould therefore be uſed in chuſing ſuch means as are more conducible than other for the recovery of it, it being in a great meaſure for the preſent loſt among us. And ſuch I reckon

Humility, Meekneſs, Mildneſs and Gentleneſs to be, when uſed in debating the Matters in difference, and in Endeavours to convince one another of Miſtakes, and in perſuading to Compliance. A gentle Rain ſokes into the Ground, but a violent Storm ſhoots off. The Apoſtle ſays, That the Servant of the Lord muſt not ſtrive, but be gentle unto all Men, in meekneſs inſtructing thoſe that oppoſe themſelves. *And why ſo, but becauſe this is the beſt way to gain upon Men, and to recover them from error; if it had not, the Apoſtle would not have been directed by the Lord to preſcribe it to that end. And if this be the beſt, why ſhould it not be made uſe of? ſince the Wiſdom of Men lies, as in chuſing the beſt End, ſo likewiſe in chuſing the beſt Means to attain it: And ſince it is ſo, when Men do otherwiſe, they diſcover either that they have other Ends to ſerve, than meerly to reconcile Men to Truth and Peace, or elſe bewray their own Weakneſs and Indiſcretion, in chuſing unſuitable Means for the End they aim at. It's true, Humility and Meekneſs alone will not convince others of their Miſtakes, or bring them into a right Way, when they have been in a wrong; but this with good Arguments will do it, when good Arguments without this will not. All does not lie in ſtrength of Argument, but very much in the manner of managing it. And* St. James *adviſeth ſuch as are* endued with Knowledge, *to do their works* with meekneſs of Wiſdom: *And indeed, Meekneſs will make the Wiſdom of them the more available and ſucceſsful. Humility and Meekneſs is that to the Wiſdom of Mens Reaſonings, which Oil is to the Auger, it facilitates its entrance, Such Meekneſs and Mildneſs puts a Reputation upon the Wiſdom of a Man's Words, and renders them more acceptable, and unſuſpected of any diſaffection or ill deſign towards him or them, to whom or of whom they are ſpoken. But on the contrary, though what a Man ſays or writes be in it ſelf, for the matter of it, never ſo full of Wiſdom, yet if mixed with Words ſavouring of Paſſion, thoſe Words will be apt to raiſe Paſſion in others, who may think themſelves concerned in them; and then that Paſſion will hinder the kindly Operation of the Wiſdom of ſuch Words, and render them leſs regarded.*

But yet, when it ſo falls out, that a Man cannot be juſt unto himſelf, nor indeed to the Truth he defends, in anſwering an Adverſary, but in being ſo, and doing ſo, he unavoidably detects either the Weakneſs or Diſingenuity of an Adverſary; yet this is not inconſiſtent with the beſt Temper of Mind, nor muſt be looked upon as invidiouſly done, though it reflect Diſparagement on ſuch an Adverſary: No, ſo long as another Meaning is not put into another Man's Words than his own, or what they naturally ſignifie, nor any worſe Deſign faſten'd upon the Author than his Words will bear, nor any indecency of Language uſed; if yet what is ſaid does not for all this pleaſe, I conceive no juſt Offence is given, though in this caſe it is too often taken among ſome Men.

But I muſt forbear farther Prefacing, being very ſenſible, that I have already exceeded the due proportion of a Preface to a Diſcourſe ſo ſhort, as that which follows is. A Diſcourſe I may ſay it is, of a Subject *ſo uſeful for the allaying the heights and heats of Mens Spirits, in this Age of Diviſion and Contention, that if it had been managed as it deſerves (which verily I am far from pretending to have performed) it would have juſtified its own Publication at ſuch a time and ſeaſon as this is. However, what I have done being well meant, though but weakly performed, will, I hope, obtain a favourable Cenſure among ingenuous Men, this tending no ways to hinder, but to provoke others, whoſe more proper work it is to lay out themſelves to appeaſe, to cool and to calm Mens Spirits, when there is ſuch extraordinary need of it, as now apparently there is. For there are many of the Proteſtant* Diſſenters, *and of the* Conſenters *likewiſe, who are run ſo far into a contrary Extream of Heat and bitter Zeal, that I cannot, without Horror, think of what the Conſequence of it may prove, if they do not take up in time, and betake themſelves to a mean.*

James iii. 16. Where Envying and Strife is, there is Confuſion and every evil Work.

Gal. v. 15. If ye bite and devour one another, take heed that ye be not conſumed one of another.

A DISCOURSE OF HUMILITY.

CHAP. I.

Of the Nature of Humility in general.

MAny and great are the *Encomiums* which are given in Scripture of the excellent Grace of *Humility*, both in reſpect of its high Acceptation with God, and Uſefulneſs and Beneficialneſs unto Men, being the Parent alſo of many other Graces. And as it is a great Duty in it ſelf, ſo it has a general influence into the right manner of performing moſt other Duties. By all which we are invited to take it the more ſeriouſly into Conſideration. As for mine own Meditations upon this Subject, I ſhall reduce them to Four Heads. And they concern,

I. The Nature of Humility in general.
II. The Properties and Effects of it.
III. The Means by which it is wrought and increaſed.
IV. The Arguments and Motives perſuading to purſue and practiſe it.

Sect. I. To begin with the firſt of theſe, which concerns the Nature of Humility in general. *Humility is ſuch a lowly habit of Mind, as by which Men are inclined to under-value rather than to over-value themſelves, and always to demean themſelves according to ſuch an eſtimate.* This is implied in thoſe words of St. *Paul*, *Let nothing be done through ſtrife or vain-glory, but in lowlineſs of mind, let each eſteem other better than themſelves*, Phil. ii. 3. Which Phraſe and manner of Expreſſion does plainly intimate, that if Men be but lowly-minded, as they ought to be, they will be ready out of a modeſt and low opinion of themſelves, to eſteem others better than themſelves, whether they be ſo or no, unleſs the contrary be manifeſt and notorious. But beſides this, Lowlineſs of Mind is here oppoſed unto Vain-glory: *Not through ſtrife or vain-glory, but in lowlineſs of mind*, &c. Now a deſire of Vain-glory, is a deſire of Honour, where there is no foundation for it in him that deſires it, or when he deſires more Honour than there is Worth in him to deſerve it: And when a Man does ſo, he takes wrong meaſures of himſelf, and over-values himſelf. Lowlineſs of Mind then, which is contrary to this, muſt needs lie in a Man's modeſt Valuation of himſelf, as rather under-rating than over-rating himſelf; in ſeeking and deſiring leſs Honour and Eſteem than he is worthy of, rather than more.

Much to the ſame purpoſe is that other Precept of the ſame Apoſtle, *Rom.* xii. 3. *That no Man think more highly of himſelf than he ought to think, but to think ſoberly according as God hath dealt to every Man the meaſure of Faith.* No Man is to conceit himſelf to know more in the Chriſtian Doctrine, or to have improved himſelf more in the Chriſtian Profeſſion, than indeed he has; for if he ſhould, this would be to think more highly of himſelf than he ought to think, but modeſtly to reſtrain the Thought and Opinion of himſelf within his own Line and Meaſure whereto he has attained. And thus to do, is the ſame thing with a Man's not over-valuing himſelf in reſpect of his Knowledge, or other Attainments, and the ſame thing with Humility.

The Humble are frequently in Scripture called the *Lowly*, and Humility *Lowlineſs*, or *Lowlineſs of Mind*, from the low Thoughts ſuch have of themſelves, and from their Minds being exerciſed about ſuch things as tend to lay a Man low in his own eyes. As on the contrary, Pride is called *High-mindedneſs*, from a too high Opinion proud Men have of themſelves, and from their ambitiouſly minding high things, and from their immoderate deſire of riſing.

Sect. II. But that we may not be miſtaken in the Nature of this Lowlineſs, we muſt diſtinguiſh between Humility as it is a *Grace* or *Virtue*, and an abject Meanneſs or lowneſs of Spirit as it is a *natural Temper* in ſome. This natural Lowneſs, or abject Meanneſs of Mind, implies in it Impotency and Feebleneſs, in oppoſition, not to Pride, but to Fortitude and Courage. By reaſon of which lowneſs, the Spirit of a Man is apt to be depreſs'd, ſunk and born down with ſmall matters; as on the contrary, to be lifted up with little things, to be lifted up with Proſperity, and exceſſively ſunk with Adverſity; to be moved hither or thither by every light Temptation, as light things are with the Wind. But Humility or Lowlineſs, as it is a Chriſtian Grace, is not oppoſed to heighth of Spirit, as that ſignifies Courage, Fortitude, or ſtrength of Reſolution; for theſe are truly conſiſtent in the ſame Subject. None had ſo humble a Spirit as our bleſſed Saviour, and yet none had ſo great a Mind as he. Many are apt to think Men are of great Spirits, becauſe they are proud; and of low, abject and weak Spirits, becauſe they are humble. But it is a great miſtake: For an humble Man is not affected or moved with ſuch little and low things as a proud Man is; as with a little flattery on the one hand, or with a little ſlighting or neglect on the other; but is of a braver Temper, and has more command of his own Spirit, and is not to be moved or affected but with greater things, things of greater concernment.

Sect. III. This farther would be obſerv'd touching this Grace of Humility, that it is a *radical Grace*, out of which many other Graces grow, ſuch as Meekneſs, Patience, Peaceableneſs, Self-denial, Submiſſion and Reſignation to the Divine Providence, Contentation with our Condition, and the like; of which a farther account is after to be given. Which may be a reaſon why our Saviour himſelf urged and propounded his own Example to his Diſciples expreſly, but only in this of Humility, and that of Charity. The former in theſe words, *Learn of me, for I am meek and lowly in heart:* The other in theſe, *A new Commandment give I unto you, that ye love one another as I have loved you:* Matth. xi. 29. John xiii 34. For theſe two comprehend in a ſort all other Graces and Duties, wherein he is an Example to us; ſo that whoſoever truly imitates him in theſe, will not fail to do ſo in all the reſt. And altho' *Charity* is not the ſame thing with *Humility*, yet this and that are of near affinity, being both *emptying Graces*, emptying thoſe that have them of *Selfiſhneſs*; the one emptying a Man of *Self-conceitedneſs*, the other of *Self-love*. And they do very frequently co-operate in producing the ſame Effects, as will appear in ſome Inſtances in the proceſs of this Diſcourſe. For as they are neighbouring Graces, ſo they are borrowing Graces, they borrow one of another, as ſometimes Neighbours do. Thus Charity borrows of Humility: *Charity vaunteth not it ſelf, is not puffed up*; and that's from Humility, 1 *Cor.* xiii. 4. And it's as true alſo of Humility in reference to Charity, many of the effects of Humility being alſo effects of Charity.

And then touching Humility and Meekneſs, the Siſter or Twin-graces, as they are called, theſe ſeem to be one in the general Nature of them, and accordingly are promiſcuouſly uſed both in Speech and Writing: The original Word tranſlated *Meekneſs*, hath an affinity with Affliction and *Lowlineſs*, ſaith an Author, ſpeaking of the Meekneſs of *Moſes*, *Numb.* xii. 3. And in *Pſal.* lxix. 32. the ſame word tranſlated *humble* in the Line-reading, is rendred *meek* in the Margin; only Meekneſs differs from Humility, as a Branch differs from the Root that bears it, and is called Meekneſs, and not Humility, in one particular reſpect eſpecially, *viz.* as it is oppoſed to raſh and immoderate Anger and Turbulency of Spirit. Which Diſtemper takes place in Men for want of Humility, and is the effect of Pride; and therefore is called *proud wrath* by *Solomon*. *Lowneſs* and *Meekneſs* are ſometimes joined together, as two Names for much-what the ſame thing. Thus our Saviour; *Learn of me, for I am meek and lowly in heart.* And I doubt not to pronounce, That whoſoever is meek, is truly humble; and therefore meek becauſe humble. I the rather give this notice here, becauſe in treating of this Subject of *Humility*, I ſhall make uſe of Scripture-proofs promiſcuouſly, that ſpeak either of Humility or Meekneſs. And thus much of the Nature of Humility in general.

CHAP. II.

Of the Properties and Effects of Humility referring to God.

HAving thus briefly done with the firſt, I proceed now to the ſecond Head of Diſcourſe, which concerns the Properties and Effects of Humility: In which I intend, in ſeveral Inſtances, to ſhew how Humility does actuate and exert it ſelf. And this I ſhall endeavour to do in ſuch as refer, firſt, to God; ſecondly, to our ſelves; and thirdly, to others. In what refers to God, I ſhall conſider in theſe following Inſtances.

Sect. I. It is by Humility that we addreſs our ſelves to the great God, with ſuch *lowly Reverence and Self-abaſement*, as becomes us when we draw nigh to him, and come before him in Prayer. For it fills the Mind with a due Senſe of our own Meanneſs, and of our Unworthineſs to approach his Preſence, and of that vaſt diſtance that is between him and us both as we are frail Creatures, and as we are Sinners. The Senſe of which, and of the glorious Greatneſs of God, causeth us to adore and worſhip him with the greateſt Reverence and Proſtration of Soul. Thus *Abraham*'s Humility fill'd his Mind with a Senſe of his own Meanneſs, when he appeared before God in Prayer. *Behold, I have taken upon me to ſpeak unto the Lord, who am but Duſt and Aſhes*, Gen. xviii.

Whereas a Man's Pride, and the over-good Opinion he has of himſelf, inſtead of filling his Mind with a ſenſe of his own Meanneſs and Vileneſs, when he comes before God, will cauſe him to reflect upon thoſe things for which he thinks well of himſelf, and hopes that God will do ſo too; ſuch as are his external religious Performances; his Prayers, his hearing the Word, and uſe of Sacraments, and his not being ſo bad perhaps as ſome other Men are: Which Senſe makes him irreverent and rude before God in the inward Behaviour of his Mind, whatever his outward Geſtures may be. This ill Effect of Pride in a Man, when he comes before God to worſhip him, is repreſented to the Life in that Parable of our Saviour, concerning the Phariſee and the Publican, that went up together to the Temple to pray. *The Phariſee ſtood and pray'd thus with himſelf: God, I thank thee that I am not as other Men are, Extortioners, Unjuſt, Adulterers, or even as this Publican: I faſt twice in the Week, I give Tithes of all that I poſſeſs.* But the Publican who went away rather juſtified, was full of the ſenſe of his own Vileneſs and Unworthineſs, and reverently abas'd himſelf before God: For *he ſtanding afar off, would not lift up ſo much as his Eyes towards Heaven, but ſmote upon his Breaſt and ſaid, God be merciful to me a Sinner*, Luke xviii.

But this ſenſe of our own Meanneſs, Emptineſs and Unworthineſs, and of God's Greatneſs, does not drown in us the ſenſe of his Goodneſs, Compaſſion and Benignity, but ſerves rather to quicken our Devotion, and to pray with the more Fervency and Hope for Compaſſion from God, and a neceſſary Supply in our indigent Condition and ſpiritual Poverty. For the more low, poor and needy a Man is in his own ſenſe and feeling, the more of this ſenſe he will put into his Prayer to God, and will lay open and plead his Poverty as a Motive to move Compaſſion in God towards him, to relieve his needy Soul out of his inexhauſtible Riches and Abundance, as Beggars are wont to do when they ſeek Relief. This is ſo natural to thoſe which have a ſtrong *ſenſe* of their Poverty, and ſo likely to move Compaſſion in ſo good a Being as God is, that good and humble Men have made great uſe of it in their Addreſſes to God, and have found great Succeſs in it, as we may read in many places in the Pſalms: *Pſal.* lxxxvi. 1. *Bow down thine Ear, O Lord, and hear me*, (and his only Argument was) *for I am poor and needy.* And their Experience or their Hope taught them to ſay, as in another place; *The Expectation of the poor ſhall not always be forgotten*, Pſal. ix. 18. And the bleſſed Virgin in her Song celebrates this cuſtomary Goodneſs of God thus: *He hath filled the hungry with good things, and the rich he hath ſent empty away*, Luke i. 53. And of all poor, the poor in Spirit are moſt regarded by God in their Applications to him. And the reaſon hereof may be, not only the Goodneſs of his own Nature enclining him to help the poor and needy, but alſo becauſe all the Hope and Confidence which ſuch have towards God, is placed in his Goodneſs, and not in their own Merit or Worthineſs, as having no ſenſe of any ſuch thing in themſelves; and becauſe theſe will receive the Bleſſings which God beſtows with ſo much the more quick, lively and grateful ſenſe of the Worth of them, and of the Goodneſs and Kindneſs of God the giver; and becauſe theſe of all other will offer to him the beſt and moſt affectionate Sacrifice of Praiſe and Thankſgiving for them.

Sect. II. *Humility in* Men *does incline and diſpoſe them to yield awful and ſubmiſſive Obedience to God's Word and Revelation of his Will, without diſputing the Matter in their own Mind, or conſulting Fleſh and Blood in the caſe.* For Humility is a governable thing, it makes the Perſon in whom it is, governable, as Pride makes Men ungovernable. It is not at all grievous to an humble Man, that has no high Conceits of himſelf, to be governed by God; who as he knows has not only an abſolute Right to govern, but alſo to be ſo good as to deſign the Good and Benefit of his Subjects in all that he requires of them, and ſo wiſe as never to be miſtaken in requiring any thing of them but what tends to that end, that is to their Benefit and Advantage. The low Opinion he has of his own Wiſdom, and the high Eſteem he has of the Wiſdom of God, makes him conclude with himſelf, that if he ſhould undertake to govern himſelf in any thing in Oppoſition to God's Government, he ſhould do it with great Diſadvantage to himſelf; as indeed all ſuch do, as refuſe God's to follow their own Counſels; and ſuch a Choice whenever it is made, is the Effect both of Pride and Folly. It is obſervable to this purpoſe, that the ſame Greek Word which is tranſlated *proud*, ſignifies *a Fool*, as you may ſee by the double reading of the 1 *Tim.* vi. 4. *He that conſenteth not to wholeſome Words, even the Words of our Lord Jeſus Chriſt, and to the Doctrine which is according to Godlineſs, he is proud*, or he is a *Fool* (as it is in the Margin) *knowing nothing*. And he is a Fool, becauſe he refuſes the better Choice made for him by God, for a worſe made by himſelf. And thoſe that do ſo, are the Men that *are wiſe in their own Eyes, and prudent in their own Sight*; againſt whom the Prophet pronounceth a Woe, *Iſa.* v. 21. 'Tis certainly great Pride and great Folly, for Men to think themſelves wiſe in following the Rules of fleſhly Wiſdom or worldly Policy, and to reject the Counſel of God. *They have rejected the Word of the Lord, and what Wiſdom is in them?* ſaith the Prophet, *Jer.* viii. 9.

We may the better perceive how much Humility tends to facilitate our Obedience to God and his Law, by that which is conſequent upon the want of it, and by the Effects of its contrary Quality, Pride. For Pride is the evil Principle of Diſobedience, the bitter Root upon which Oppoſition and making head againſt the declared Will of God grows. Thus *Nehem.* ix. 16, 29. *Our Fathers dealt proudly, and hardened their Necks, and hearkened not to thy Commandments: Hear ye, and give ear, be not proud, for the Lord hath ſpoken*, ſaith the Prophet, *Jer.* xiii. 15. Intimating that if they were not proud but humble, they would hear, that is, they would obey, but if proud they would not.

And the reaſon of all this is, becauſe the Law of God lays Reſtraints upon Mens Luſts: And the nature of Pride is to be impatient of reſtraint, and of being limited and confined by Rules contrary to the corrupt Humour of proud Men. Which makes them ſay within themſelves, as thoſe in *Pſal.* xii. 3. *Our Lips are our own, who is Lord over us?* And as thoſe in *Pſal.* ii. 3. *Let us break their Bonds aſunder, let us caſt away their Cords from us.* As thoſe great Men did, mentioned *Jer.* v. 5. *Theſe have altogether broke the Yoke and burſt the Bonds.*

There are *high Thoughts* and proud Reaſonings, by which Men labour to defend themſelves in their Diſobedience, in their Continuance in ſuch or ſuch a Sin, which are the *ſtrong Holds* St. *Paul* ſpeaks of, 2 *Cor.* x. 4, 5. It is Mens Pride that hardens them in Sin, and but for which they would never be able to hold it out againſt the ſtrong Batteries of the Goſpel, *which are mighty through God for the caſting down Imaginations, and every high thing that exalts it ſelf againſt the Knowledge of God. His heart was lifted up, and his mind hardened in pride*, as it's ſaid in *Dan.* v. 20. It is by this Hardneſs through Pride, that the Word of the Lord is reſiſted, ſo that it cannot enter or make any affecting Impreſſion upon the Mind. Whereas Humility makes the Heart tender, ſoft and penetrable, and apt to receive Divine Impreſſions, and to be ſoon affected with any thing which comes from ſo great a Being as God is. Thus we ſee in King *Joſiah*, whoſe Heart being tender, he upon the very firſt hearing of the Law was deeply affected with it, *rent his Clothes, humbled himſelf and wept*, 2 Kings xxii. 19. *To this Man will I look, ſaith the Lord, even to him that is poor* *and of a contrite ſpirit, and that trembleth at my Word*, Iſai. lxvi. 2. Trembling at the Word, notes the great Reverence and Awe the Word puts into ſuch a Soul as is poor, humble and contrite; there's no Reaſoning or Diſputing in ſuch a Mind againſt the Will and Commandment of the Lord, but all falls flat before it out of Reverence to the high and mighty Lord of Heaven and Earth, whoſe Word it is.

Sect. III. Another Property of Humility is, *it gives a Man a quick and ſtrong ſenſe and reſentment of the Mercies of God, and of the ſeveral effects of his Favour.* The humble Mind is much exerciſed about a Man's unworthineſs towards God, ſo that he can truly and feelingly ſay with *Jacob, I am unworthy of the leaſt of all the Mercies, and of all the Truth which thou haſt ſhew'd unto thy Servant*, Gen. xxxii. 10. An humble Man quickly takes notice of them when they are conferr'd, and of the Grace and Bounty of God as the alone Cauſe and Fountain from which they ſpring. And thoſe Favours which are but ſmall, in compariſon of many others, will be look'd upon as great by him, who counts himſelf unworthy of any. His Humility helps to grandize every Mercy in his own ſenſe, as perceiving the vaſt diſproportion that is between his own Worth, or Unworthineſs rather, and God's Goodneſs and Bounty to him. *Who am I, and what is my houſe, O Lord, that thou haſt brought me hitherto*, ſaith *David*, admiring the greatneſs of the Mercy, in Contemplation of his mean Original? 2 *Sam.* vii. 18. *As to the hungry Soul every bitter thing is ſweet*; ſo is every Mercy to the humble Soul, though it be but of an inferiour nature.

But Pride obſcures the Mercies of God to him that is proud, and cauſes him to overlook many of them as coming from God, and to attribute them only to ſecond Cauſes, to himſelf, to his own Power, Induſtry or Skill, which an humble Man would aſcribe unto God, and to his Bleſſing, and to the Favour of his Providence, as moſt conſiderable in all humane Affairs. Thus the Pſalmiſt in behalf of his Anceſtors, and their getting the Land of *Canaan*, ſaith; *They got not the Land in poſſeſſion by their own Sword, neither did their own Arm ſave them; but thy right Hand and thine Arm, and the light of thy Countenance, becauſe thou hadſt a favour to them:* though they did not get it without their Sword neither, *Pſal.* xliv. 3. Whereas Pride will not ſuffer Men to ſee, and heartily to acknowledge God, and the great concern of his good Providence and Bleſſing in the ſucceſs of their Affairs, but it cauſeth them to *ſacrifice to their own net*, and to *burn incenſe to their drag*; and with the King of *Aſſyria* to ſay, or ſecretly to think, *By the ſtrength of my hand I have done it, and by my wiſdom, for I am prudent*, Iſa. x. 13. Thus Men will do, whoſe Hearts are lifted up with Pride: Which made that Caution (*Deut.* viii.) ſo neceſſary: *Beware now leſt thine heart be lifted up, and thou forgetteſt the Lord thy God, and thou ſay in thine heart, My power and the might of my hand hath gotten me this wealth.* And if this be the effect of Pride, as we ſee it is; then Humility, which is contrary to Pride, muſt needs have its contrary effect, and make a Man *in all his ways to acknowledge God*, according to *Solomon*'s advice, (*Prov.* iii. 6.) and to take notice of his Bleſſing and Goodneſs in all proſperous and ſucceſsful Events.

Sect. IV. *Through Humility a Man is enabled the better to bear Diſappointments, and croſs and afflictive Providences, without Heart-riſing and Diſcontent againſt God.* His Humility makes him to have low Thoughts of himſelf, to think he is no ſuch conſiderable Perſon, as to think God ſhould do every thing to gratifie and humour him, and nothing to diſpleaſe him: And to ſay with meek and patient *Job, What ſhall we receive good at the hands of God, and ſhall we not receive evil?* Job ii. 10. He will be ready to charge his Diſappointments and Miſcarriage of his Affairs upon his own Imprudence or Negligence, rather than upon the Providence of God, as Men fooliſhly too often do. Or if his Sufferings proceed from God's immediate Hand and operative Providence, and not from his own Imprudence or Negligence; yet he will humble himſelf under this mighty Hand of God, and reflect upon his own need of ſuch Diſcipline, in order to his own Good, and for the cure of ſome Diſtemper he hath contracted through his own default otherwiſe, or elſe for the tryal and exerciſe of his Grace. So that ſtill he will look upon the Cauſe of his Suffering as riſing from himſelf, or from God only in favour to him, and will be ſure to clear God in his Thoughts from meting out any hard meaſure to him, and to ſay with *Job, When he hath tried me, I ſhall come forth as Gold*, Job xxiii. 10. Or if he ſhould look upon his Affliction as a Correction for Sin, yet his Humility will prompt him to ſay, It is of the Lord's Mercy it is no worſe, and that he exacts *far leſs than his Iniquity deſerves*; and to conſider how many Mercies he yet enjoys, which he never deſerved, and how many Evils he has eſcaped, which he has deſerved. So that by means of his Humility, he is ſo far from murmuring and quarrelling at ſuch croſs and afflictive Providences, as that he vindicates the Goodneſs and Wiſdom of God towards him in them all. And whenever it is ſo, whenever Puniſhment for Iniquity is thus accepted and taken in good part from God, it is becauſe the Heart is firſt become humble: *Levit.* xxvi. 41. *If their uncircumciſed hearts be humbled, and they then accept of the puniſhment of their iniquity*, &c.

Whereas on the contrary, a proud Man, though it be his *own Folly that perverts his Ways*, and by which he runs himſelf into trouble; yet *his heart frets againſt the Lord*, as if his Providence were the cauſe of it, and as if he had wrong'd him, *Prov.* xix. 3. And inſtead of humbling himſelf under the mighty Hand of God, when it is indeed upon him, he will be ready in the Pride and Stoutneſs of his Heart (as the Prophet ſpeaks) to ſay, *The Bricks indeed are fallen down, but I will build with hewn Stone:* He will think to repair the damage he hath ſuſtained, and to ſecure himſelf from the like Evil for the future by his own Policy and Power, without taking God along with him, or ever regarding or acknowledging that Intereſt which the Providence of God has in all Humane Affairs.

Sect. V. *Humility diſpoſeth the whole Soul unto the great Duty of Self-reſignation unto God.* Which Self-reſignation conſiſteth in a Man's entire ſurrender of himſelf to God's Government by Laws, and the diſpoſal of his Providence: To act in all things not by Self-will, but according to the Divine Will, and quietly and undiſturbedly to ſubmit to, and acquieſce in the Condition of Life which God hath choſen for him, as better, all things conſider'd, than he could have choſen for himſelf, if he had been left to his own choice.

Now this Self-ſurrender unto God proceeds from the low and modeſt Thoughts which an humble Man has of himſelf, as of his own meanneſs and inſufficiency to govern himſelf, to provide for himſelf, to preſerve himſelf, or to chuſe for himſelf what is beſt, and from the Notion he has of the abſolute and unlimited Perfection of God's Power, Wiſdom and Goodneſs. His Humility will not ſuffer him to think himſelf ſo wiſe, as that he could tell better than God what is beſt for himſelf; as what is beſt for him to do, or what to forbear, or what Condition of Life is beſt for him to be in. Nor will his Humility ſuffer him to think that there is more of Goodneſs and Love in himſelf towards himſelf, than there is in God towards him, or that he does more ſincerely and heartily deſire his own Happineſs, than God does for him. Much leſs will his Humility ſuffer him to think himſelf more able than God is, to cauſe the ſeveral Circumſtances of his Life and Condition here in the World, to operate together towards the accompliſhing and bringing about his trueſt and greateſt Happineſs. And if a Man's Humility will not ſuffer him to think, but that his caſe in reference to his Happineſs is much better in the hands of God, than it would be if it were in his own; then it muſt needs contribute with a high hand towards his making a free and voluntary and entire Reſignation and Surrender of himſelf to God, and to ſay unto him, with our bleſſed Saviour, *Not as I will, but as thou wilt; not my will, but thine be done*, Luke xxii. 42.

This frame of Mind makes Men willingly and cheerfully to deliver up themſelves to the Conduct of God's Word, as a perfect Directory in the way of their Duty, ſo as to follow it whitherſoever it will lead them; as believing, that if it bring them into trouble, that yet God intends them no worſe thereby than firſt to prepare them for the greater Happineſs, and then to confer it upon them: As believing ſtill, that although it ſhould ſometimes lead them into Temptation and Trouble, yet it will not leave them there, but *bring them forth at laſt into a wealthy place.*

And this Self-reſignation unto God, which is made by Humility, is not only the direct way to Glory and Happineſs at the laſt, but it will yield a Man now for the preſent, and while he is but in the way to it, more inward Peace and Joy, and more ſolid Satisfaction of Mind in the loweſt and worſt Condition he can be brought into, than the moſt flouriſhing Condition and moſt proſperous State in the World without it, can procure them that are in it. And the reaſon in part is, becauſe the Mind of ſuch an one is diſcharged of a great burthen of Cares and Fears about future Events in this and the other World, which poſſeſs and diſtract the Minds of other Men, and mix themſelves with that Pleaſure and Content which is or can be derived from their moſt proſperous Circumſtances, and which will ſpoil the reliſh of them, as Water does Wine when mix'd with it. That *Bleſſing of God which maketh rich, and addeth no ſorrow with it*, of which *Solomon* ſpeaks, falls upon Minds reſigned unto God, more than upon any other, if not on them only.

The Chriſtians that are humble under the mighty hand of God, will caſt all their Care upon him who careth for them, and therefore St. *Peter* perſuades to the one in order to the other, 1 *Pet.* v. 6, 7. *Humble your ſelves under the mighty hand of God, caſting all your care upon him, for he careth for you.* Humility, as I ſaid, makes a Man ſenſible of his utter Inſufficiency, as of himſelf to govern himſelf in all the Actions and Circumſtances of his Life, ſo as may be beſt for him. Which very ſenſe makes him willing to deliver up himſelf to God to be governed by him: And his only Care is, or ſhould be, to underſtand from God his Duty in all Caſes and all Circumſtances, and then faithfully to perform it. And when he has done this, the humble Man's ſenſe of his utter Inability and Incapacity to order and govern the Iſſue and Events of things, farther than what belongs to his Duty, makes him diſcharge himſelf of thoſe Thoughts and Cares about thoſe Events which diſquiet and diſtract the Minds of ſuch as are unreſigned to God, and ſet them upon the rack: I ſay, he caſts all his Care concerning theſe Events upon God, and there leaves them, not doubting but that he can and will order them for the beſt for him, though he ſhould not be able for the preſent to underſtand how. *Commit thy way to him and he ſhall bring it to paſs,* Pſal. xxxvii. 5.

But now on the contrary, it's Mens Pride that keeps them from making any ſuch Surrender of themſelves to God. They are wiſe in their own Conceits, and lean to their own Underſtanding; they think they can chuſe a better Way and Method to come at Happineſs for the preſent, than God has preſcribed by his Word: They think that the Satisfaction which they receive by fulfilling their Luſts, is much better than any that is to be attained by denying them what they crave. They have ſo good an Opinion of themſelves, as that they cannot believe that God has more Kindneſs for them, than they have for themſelves, or that he does more ſincerely deſire their Happineſs than they themſelves do; becauſe he prohibits and denies them thoſe things (and under great Penalties too) in which they place ſo much of their Happineſs, as indeed they do. And for this cauſe they are not willing to ſtand to his choice, but think they can chuſe better for themſelves; they are not willing to truſt themſelves wholly with his Conduct, and to ſit down contented with his choice. God indeed does not deſire theſe Mens Happineſs, in that way and Method, in which they themſelves deſire and ſeek it, that is, in their way of Sin and Satisfaction of their Luſts, becauſe it is impoſſible for them to be happy in that way. But otherwiſe, God does ſincerely and ardently deſire the Happineſs of theſe and all bad Men, in that way and method in which only it's poſſible to be found, that is, in the way of Holineſs. For true Happineſs and Holineſs are inſeparable in their own nature, and would have been ſo, if God had paſs'd no Decree about them, and it is not poſſible to have the one without having the other. Holineſs tho' bad Men do not perceive it, and will not believe it, is an eſſential part of Happineſs. And I do not think it any Diſhonour to Almighty God to ſay, he cannot will or deſire the Happineſs of Men, (true ſubſtantial laſting Happineſs I mean) as ſeparate from Holineſs. For it implies a Contradiction to ſuppoſe Men may be happy while they continue unholy. And you may as well ſay, that Fire is cold, as to ſay an ungodly Man is happy. Proud Men, bad Men, even while they continue ſuch, do indeed think that they truly deſire their own Happineſs, both in this World, and that which is to come; but according to Scripture account they do not, but *love Death*, ſo long as they love and chuſe thoſe ways which directly lead to, and will certainly end in Death. *All they that hate me, love Death*, ſaith the Wiſdom of God, *Prov.* viii. 36. According to Scripture account likewiſe, God does really deſire the Happineſs and Salvation of the worſt of Men, when he deſires their Converſion from evil ways to thoſe which are good, and which are inſeparable from Happineſs. *As I live, ſaith the Lord God, I have no pleaſure in the Death of the wicked, but that the wicked turn from his way and live,* Ezek. xxxiii. 11. Not in the former, but in the latter he does take pleaſure, and therefore does really deſire it. So that God does love bad Men with a Love of Benevolence better than they love themſelves, and more really deſires their Happineſs than they do their own: And indeed, they neither truly love themſelves, nor ſeek their own Happineſs at all, but are Self-haters in ſuch a Senſe, as *Solomon* ſays, *he* that is Partner with a Thief, *hateth his own Soul, Prov.* xxix. 24. and he that *refuſeth Inſtruction, deſpiſeth his own Soul,* Prov. xv. 32. and are Contrivers of their own Ruine in ſuch a Senſe, as the ſame *Solomon* ſays of Men of Violence and Blood, *That they lay wait for their own Blood, and lurk privily for their own Lives,* Prov. i. 18.

But to ſay no more of this, but to conclude the Point in hand: As it is the mean and low Thoughts which humble Men have of themſelves, and the high Thoughts they have of God, which makes them willing to reſign up themſelves to God, and to put themſelves, as it were, out of their own hands into his; ſo on the contrary, it is the high Opinion which proud Men have of themſelves, of their own Self-love, and of their own Wiſdom to chuſe what is beſt for themſelves, and the unworthy Thoughts they have of God, that keeps them from ſurrendering themſelves to him, or to truſt themſelves with his Conduct by his Word and Providence.

CHAP. III.

Of the Properties and Effects of Humility in reference to our ſelves.

Sect. I. *IT is the Property of Humility to exerciſe a Man's Thoughts much about thoſe things which tend to nouriſh and maintain in him a modeſt and low Opinion of himſelf.* It being the Nature of Humility to cauſe a Man to have ſuch an Opinion of himſelf, it is one ſpecial Property of it, to put him upon frequent Conſideration of ſuch things as are agreeable to it, and that tend to nouriſh and ſtrengthen it. As on the contrary, it is the Property of Pride to employ a Man's Thoughts principally upon ſuch things as tend to puff him up with a great Opinion and high Conceit of himſelf. It is as it were natural to every thing, and ſo to every Grace, to feed upon that which is moſt agreeable to its own Nature, and which tends to preſerve and ſtrengthen it. And thus it is with Humility, in diſpoſing Men to exerciſe their Thoughts about ſuch things, as tend to preſerve in them a low Opinion of themſelves. I ſhall now inſtance but in two things in general, which have ſuch a Tendency; becauſe I ſhall have occaſion to be more particular herein, when I come to deal in the means by which Humility is wrought.

The firſt refers to Man's Nature, Frame and Make: Humility will teach a Man oft to reflect upon himſelf and to remember, that naturally he is no better than the meaneſt Perſon he knows, who conſiſteth of a like frail and mortal Body, and immortal humane Soul, as he himſelf does: And upon that account concludes with himſelf, that he has no reaſon to think better of himſelf than of him, nor to exalt himſelf above him, or to deſpiſe him. He conſiders, that he bears about him a Body as frail as he does, who is the moſt deſpicable among Men, and as ſubject to numerous Diſeaſes and Caſualties, and as obnoxious to Death, Corruption and the Grave: And a Soul that has the ſame Danger of miſcarrying, as the Soul of any other Man, how mean ſoever. Such humbling Notions and Meditations as theſe, touching the Nature of Man, have cauſed the excellent Servants of God to pronounce and ſay, *Verily every Man in his beſt eſtate is altogether Vanity*, Pſal. xxxix. 5. And again, *Lord, what is Man, that thou takeſt Knowledge of him? Or the Son of Man, that thou makeſt account of him? Man is like Vanity: His Days are like a Shadow that paſſeth away*, Pſal. cxliv. 3, 4.

And then ſecondly, as to a Man's moral Endowments, his Humility actuates it ſelf, in making an impartial Judgment of himſelf, in reference to them: It will not ſuffer him to be partial, in reference to that which does depretiate him, and tends to bring down his Eſteem of himſelf. It makes him to conſider his worſt Circumſtances, as well as his beſt, and his bad Qualities and Actions, as well as his good. And it makes him apt rather to overlook ſomewhat of that which might commend him, than any thing of that which tends to render him little and vile, and to lay him low in his own Eyes. And upon this account it is, that an humble Man is apt to eſteem others better than himſelf, a thing to which the Apoſtle exhorts, *Phil.* ii. 3. For he acquaints himſelf moſt with the worſt in himſelf, but with that which is beſt in other Men, and by this brings down his own Eſteem, but advanceth that of another, in his own Mind. An humble Man minds his worſt Circumſtances ſo much, as that he will be ſure not to value himſelf above what he is upon a true account, when all Deductions are made which take off from his Worth.

Sect. II. *Humility keeps a Man from being puff'd up with his Knowledge, by preſerving in his mind a holy jealouſie and fear of not uſing it to thoſe ends for which God gave it.* Knowledge ſeparate from its end and uſe, does puff up Men with Pride and Self-conceit. St. *Paul*, ſpeaking of Knowledge as ſeparate from Charity, ſaith, *Knowledge puffeth up*, 1 Cor. viii. 1. Now it is the nature of Humility to ſuſpect the worſt concerning a Man's ſelf, as it is of Pride to preſume the beſt, and better than there is ground for: And ſo he is ever ſuſpicious of himſelf in reference to his Knowledge, leſt he ſhould be deficient and wanting in the due uſe of it, and thereby render himſelf the worſe, and not the better for his Knowledge, as they do that are not better in themſelves by it, and more uſeful and beneficial unto others. For he that knows and does not, ſhall be beaten with more ſtripes, than he that neither knows nor does, as our Saviour hath told us, *Luke* xii. 47, 48. An humble Man knows and conſiders, that God values no Man the more or the better meerly for his Knowledge; and therefore knows, that if he ſhould value himſelf the more, meerly for his knowing more than many other Men, he ſhould greatly err in Judgment concerning himſelf.

Humility will not ſuffer a Man to value himſelf by his Knowledge, farther than he is made better by it, more Humble and more Charitable towards Men, and more Devout towards God. He that thinks he knows any thing, when his Knowledge does not make him a better Man, a better Husband, Father, Servant, Neighbour, *&c.* he knows nothing yet as he ought to do: 1 *Cor.* viii. 4. God expects (and this an humble Man knows) that a Man's goodneſs of Temper in himſelf, and uſefulneſs to others, ſhould hold ſome proportion with his Knowledge, according to that of our Saviour, *To whomſoever much is given, of him much will be required*, Luke xii. 48. Now then Humility will make a Man not only jealous of himſelf, that his Knowledge and Practice are not uniform, but alſo conſcious to himſelf, that he knows his Duty much better than he does it, conſidering the many flaws he eſpies in the manner of his performances.

Beſides, Humility, which is ſtill mindful of ſuch things, as tend to nouriſh it ſelf, and to keep the mind in a lowly frame, will prompt a Man to remember and conſider, that by how much Knowledge he has more than others, by ſo much is he more in debt than they are; which is an humbling Conſideration, under which it will be a hard matter for a Man to be proud of his Knowledge. For Knowledge, as well as other Spiritual Gifts, are given to thoſe that have them to *profit* others with them, as St. *Paul* ſpeaks, 1 *Cor.* xii. 7. *The Manifeſtation of the Spirit is given to every Man to profit withal:* That is, to profit others withal. And ſo St. *Paul* reckoned concerning himſelf, that by how much he had received from God more than others, by ſo much he was more a debter to others. *I am a debter*, ſaith he, *both to the Greeks and to the Barbarians, both to the wiſe and unwiſe.* And altho' other Mens Province is not like St. *Paul's*, yet *every Man as he hath received the Gift, muſt ſo miniſter the ſame one to another, as good Stewards of the manifold Grace, of God*; as that other Apoſtle ſaith, 1 *Pet.* iv. 10. He that hath received the leaſt Talent, is under a Truſt of uſing it in his own Sphere, for the benefit of others, and muſt give an account of that Truſt. We have a Proverb, that *no Man is born for himſelf:* Every Man is one way or other to be uſeful, acccording to the Capacity which God has given him, to the Community to which he does belong. This being ſo, it is the property of Humility to make a Man ſtrongly ſuſpect, that notwithſtanding all that he has done, he may be yet greatly in debt to the Community of which he is a Member, greatly in arrears to the Family, the Neighbourhood to which he does belong, or to thoſe over whom he hath a Charge, if he be in a more publick Capacity. And as long as he is under ſuch a ſuſpicion, he cannot lightly be proud of his Knowledge, but humbled for his failing and falling ſhort in the management of it, for thoſe good ends for which God beſtowed it upon him. But if an humble Man be at any time ſurpriſed with ſome ſecret Buddings of Pride, and Elation of Mind, in Contemplation of his Knowledge and Parts, or with the good Opinion he has thereby obtained among Men, his Humility will preſently ſend him to ſuch Conſiderations as I have now mentioned, or to other of like nature, and they through the Grace of God will relieve him againſt his Pride's prevailing over his Humility. For Humility can no more endure that the Man in whom it is ſhould be proud of his Knowledge, than the Stomach can bear ſuch Meat as it cannot digeſt, and is ill at eaſe till it has caſt it out.

Sect. III. As Humility preſerves Men from being puff'd up with any Endowments of the Mind; ſo it does from being proud of Bodily Endowments, ſuch as Beauty, Strength, or the like, as light and vain People uſe to be. A Man's Humility teaches him to conſider, that theſe things are common to the bad, as well as to the good, to the worſt of Men and Women, as well as the beſt; and that God himſelf doth not eſteem any Man or Woman one jot the more for their Beauty or Strength: *Look not on his Countenance, or the heighth of his Stature; for the Lord ſeeth not as Man ſeeth; for Man looketh on the outward Appearance, but the Lord looketh upon the Heart;* ſaith God to *Samuel*, concerning one of the Sons of *Jeſſe*, 1 *Sam.* xvi. 7. Such a Man conſiders, that God takes no more *pleaſure in the Legs of a Man, than he does in the Strength of a Horſe*, Pſal. cxlvii. 10. And becauſe God does not value Men or Women the more for theſe, therefore good Men and good Women will not value themſelves the more, at leaſt not ſo much the more for them, as to be proud of them. Humility, which ſtill eyes a Man's own worſt Circumſtances, makes ſuch Men and Women, when they have more Beauty or Strength than others, but the more afraid of falling into Temptation, as knowing that they are thereby the more expoſed to it: And this ſerves as a counter-ballance to keep them from being unduly lifted up by them.

Sect. IV. Humility likewiſe tends to ſecure both Men and Women from the Vanity *of priding themſelves in their Apparel or Gay-clothing*, or in their rich and plentiful Eſtates, or in Offices and Places of Honour and Dignity among Men. For Humility prompts them, in whom it is, to conſider of things as they are in their own Nature, and not according to what they are in Vulgar Opinion. And therefore tho' many others may over-value Men for the ſake of theſe, tho' deſtitute of Perſonal Worth, yet Humility, when found in thoſe who have them, will incline them to look upon theſe but as adventitious things, in reference to the Perſon that is inveſted with them, and ſuch as add nothing to the true Worth of the Perſon himſelf, farther than as by a wiſe and good uſe of them, opportunity of becoming better is gained by doing the more good among Men. And therefore an humble Man will be more thoughtful of making a right uſe and improvement of them, than tickled with the opinion of being the better Man by reaſon of them.

As for Pride of Apparel, Humility, to what degree it is in them, will reſtrain Men and Women from it in a double reſpect. Firſt, it reſtrains them from exceſs in Apparel, both in reſpect of Coſtlineſs and Curioſity. For there is an exceſs in both, as when Perſons habit themſelves beyond their rank and degree, ſo as thereby they confound the difference of Perſons higher and lower, ſuperior and inferior, which ought to be viſible in their Apparel, as well as otherwiſe. And ſo likewiſe when Perſons exceed in too much Niceneſs and Curioſity, and in Affectation of new Modes of Apparel, and in immodeſt Garbs. Almighty God ſhews how diſpleaſing it is to him, for Perſons out of a vain Curioſity to affect new Modes and foreign Faſhions of Apparel, (as we here do the *French* Mode) by threatning, as he did, to *puniſh all ſuch* as were clothed with *ſtrange Apparel*, *Zeph.* i. 8. A good Caution to them who love to be among the firſt that can appear in a new *French* Mode. Humility is a modeſt thing, it is the modeſty of the Mind, and it will ſhew it ſelf, where it is indeed, in that modeſty of Apparel, as in other things, which St. *Paul* commends and requires in Chriſtians: 1 *Tim.* ii. 9.

And the reaſon why Humility reſtrains Men and Women from exceſs in theſe, is, becauſe it will not, ſo far as it can prevail, ſuffer them to deſire to be eſteemed better than they are; that is, in better outward Circumſtances among men, than God in his wiſe Providence hath thought fit to place them: For what reaſon can Men and Women exceed their own Rank and Quality in an outward Garb of Apparel, or Houſhold-Furniture, or the like, but out of a deſire to be eſteemed by others to be better in their outward Condition than indeed they are. Which deſire, in whomſoever it is, is a deſire of Vain-glory; that is, of that Reputation and Eſteem, for which there is no Foundation in reality; a thing which is oppoſite to true Humility, and from which it will preſerve People, ſo far as it prevails in them.

And as Humility reſtrains Men and Women from exceſs in Apparel, ſo ſecondly, it reſtrains them from being unduly lifted up with rich Attire and coſtly Rayment, to whom it is not unlawful to wear ſuch. For I do not deny, but that it is very lawful for thoſe of a higher Rank to wear coſtly Array, when it is not ſo for others. But to have the Mind affected and lifted up therewith, like a Feather with the Wind, argues it to be a very light thing, wanting the ballaſt of true Humility. Such a thing is not only odious in the ſight of God, but ridiculous alſo in the eyes of wiſe and ſober Men. For any to think the better of themſelves for their Gay-clothing, is ſo childiſh a thing, as that it is tolerable in none but Children, as a late worthy Author hath ſaid.

And the reaſon why Humility will reſtrain them from this Vanity, is, becauſe the Nature of it is, not to ſuffer Perſons to take falſe meaſures of themſelves, or to think better of themſelves for that which does not make them better, as to be ſure gay Clothing and Attire does not.

Sect. V. *Humility ſecures Men from becoming proud, and lifted up in their minds by a plentiful Eſtate.* The Nature of Humility inclining a Man (as I have ſhew'd) to undervalue rather than to overvalue himſelf; hence it comes to paſs, that an humble Man does not think the better of himſelf for having a greater outward Eſtate in the World, than many or moſt others have. And the reaſon is, becauſe he knows and conſiders that an Eſtate is but extrinſecal to the Man himſelf, and does not of it ſelf make him the better or worſe Man, but that he becomes better or worſe by it, according as he uſeth it. I deny not, but that his Humility will admit of reckoning himſelf the better Man for an Eſtate, if by better we underſtand his being in a better Condition, as to worldly Proſperity, than a poor Man is; and it's no Pride in him to think ſo, but would be matter of Ingratitude to God, if he ſhould not have ſuch a Senſe of the Betterneſs of his Condition. But my meaning is, that his Humility will not ſuffer him to eſteem himſelf the better Man upon a moral account, and in the ſight of God, who is no Reſpecter of Perſons, and who does no more eſteem the rich becauſe he is rich, than he does the poor becauſe he is poor. But ſuch a Man's Humility makes him very ſenſible, that he may quickly make himſelf worſe accounted of by God, by occaſion of his Eſtate, if his Heart ſhould become lifted up by it, to the ſlighting and deſpiſing of thoſe in lower Circumſtances, or to a leſſening of his Dependence upon God.

A Man's Humility diſpoſeth him to have his Eye much upon his worſt Circumſtances, and what tends to leſſen his Value: And likewiſe upon his Danger of being made worſe by Riches, and that keeps his Mind in a lowly Frame in the midſt of his Abundance. He is ſenſible that it is a rare, and no eaſie thing for a Man to be lifted up in the World by an Eſtate, and not to have his Heart lifted up with it. That Saying of *Chriſt* ſtill runs in his Mind, where he ſays, *That it's eaſier for a Camel to go through the Eye of a Needle, than for a rich Man to enter into the Kingdom of Heaven.* Which Danger and Difficulty was the occaſion of that from St. *Paul*; *Charge them that are rich in this World, that they be not high-minded, and that they truſt not in uncertain Riches:* 1 Tim. vi. 17. The humble Man conſiders likewiſe, that the more he has of this World's Goods, the more he is indebted to thoſe that want them, and the greater Truſt is committed to him, and that the greater Care is upon him not to miſcarry one way or other; but to anſwer the Expectation of Almighty God, who has intruſted him as his Steward, and who will call him to account of his Stewardſhip. And thus like as a Man's Body doth firſt warm his Cloaths, and then his Cloaths warm him; even ſo a Man's Humility doth firſt furniſh him with theſe and ſuch like Conſiderations, and then ſuch Conſiderations tend to make him more and more humble, notwithſtanding the Temptation of being lifted up by a plentiful Eſtate.

Sect. VI. *Humility reſtrains a Man from an ambitious hunting after Honour, and from being lifted up in his own mind by it, when duly conferr'd upon him without his ſeeking.* Firſt, it reſtrains him from inordinate Deſires of Honour, and from undue ſeeking of it. And the reaſon is, becauſe his Humility makes him have low and modeſt Thoughts of his own Worth and Deſerts; and having ſo, it will not ſuffer him to covet more Honour and Eſteem among Men, at leaſt not with any eager Deſire, leſt he ſhould deſire more than is due to him; a thing which his Humility will teach him to decline. Beſides, his Humility will make him cool in his Deſires after Worldly Honour, out of a Jealouſie of himſelf, and of his own Weakneſs, leſt he ſhould not be able to bear more, without being made worſe by it, by being lifted up with more or leſs Pride, by means of it. His Humility makes him fear he ſhould not ſit ſo eaſie in his own Mind, as now he does, if he ſhould be advanced to a higher Station, becauſe he foreſees he ſhall be in more Danger then, than he is now. Such Thoughts as theſe, which riſe out of a Man's Humility, will moderate his Deſires after Honour and Advancement among Men. Humility indeed is not againſt ſeeking the Honour that comes from God only, ſuch as is a Deſire and ſeeking Approbation and Praiſe from him, by becoming ſuch, and by doing ſuch worthy Actions as are commendable in the Sight of God. Our Saviour oppoſeth the ſeeking *the Honour that cometh from God only, to the receiving Honour one of another*, as approving the one while he condemns the other, *John* v. 44. But Humility does not only reſtrain Men from ſeeking Honour among Men upon unlawful Terms, as thoſe Rulers among the *Jews* did, who refuſed to confeſs *Chriſt*, though they believed on him, becauſe *they loved the Praiſe of Men more than the Praiſe of God*; but it takes them off alſo from an eager purſuit of that Honour which may be had upon Terms not unlawful. It is the Property and Excellency of Humility *to give Honour to others*, rather than to ſeek it from them. *In Honour preferring one another*, ſaith St. *Paul*, or in *giving* Honour, go one before another, not in *ſtriving for it*, Rom. xii. 10. And by ſo doing in good earneſt, and not out of Deſign, a Man gets the beſt ſort of Honour, the Honour that comes by Humility: For *he that humbleth himſelf ſhall be exalted*, ſaith our Saviour. Whereas to court Honour and to catch at it before it is given, is diſhonourable in it ſelf, and the way to loſe hearty Reſpect from Men, and to become deſpicable and contemptible in the Eyes of all but Fools. Whoſo *exalteth himſelf ſhall be abaſed*, ſaith our Saviour. *Let us not be deſirous of vain-glory*, ſaith St. *Paul*, Gal. v. 26. And whenever Chriſtians anſwer and fulfil this Injunction of the Apoſtle, it is by their Humility.

Secondly, When Honour is duly conferr'd on Men, Humility will preſerve the Mind from being lifted up with it. There is an Honour that belongs to Places of Office and Dignity: And this may lawfully not only be received when given, but expected as due for their Office and Dignity ſake. *Render to all their due: Honour to whom Honour is due*, Rom. xiii. 7. But the Minds of ſuch Men are not to be lifted up with that Honour which is duly conferr'd upon them; and it is the Property of Humility, as I ſay, to preſerve them from it. For Humility will poize and keep down the Minds of ſuch as are in Places of Honour, with Thoughts and Cares of behaving themſelves worthily in them. They will be conſidering, that they are not lifted up to thoſe Places to ſerve themſelves, or for their own ſakes, but to ſerve the publick, to ſerve thoſe that are within the Sphere of their Preheminency and Authority. Humility will put them in mind, that the true reaſon of the Honour that is due to their Place and Office, is, becauſe of the Service they do, or ought to do to the Community to which they do belong: So that if through want either of Wiſdom, Diligence or Integrity, they ſhould abuſe their Truſt, their Place and Office, to the Injury of the publick, they know that they ſhall thereby forfeit the Honour that is due to the Perſon, for the Office ſake. The thought of all which, and the Solicitouſneſs of the Mind, to quit themſelves worthily in ſerving the publick, to the utmoſt of their Power, will antidote humble Men againſt being unduly lifted up with their Honour, their Humility having firſt ſuggeſted ſuch Conſiderations to them.

Sect. VII. *By Humility it is that a Man can bear Applauſe and Praiſe from Men, without being lifted up in his own Mind by it.* For it being the Property of Humility in a Man not to overvalue himſelf, ſuch a Man cannot, ſo far as humble, think the better of himſelf for any Man's Applauſe; becauſe he knows, that can add nothing to his real Worth, but that he remains but the ſame after it, which he was before. Beſides, it is the Property of Humility in a Man, to have his Eye upon that which is worſt in him, rather than upon that which is beſt. And therefore when he hears himſelf commended for this or that, his manner is to reflect upon thoſe things in himſelf, which he accounts diſcommendable, and which render him low in his own Eyes And by theſe he makes a Deduction, and ſubſtracts in his own Mind from the Value which the Praiſes of Men put upon him, and by this means keeps himſelf from being blown up in his own Mind by their Breath. Men, when they praiſe a Man, they take notice only of what is commendable; but a wiſe and humble Man, when he eſtimates himſelf, he minds as much or rather much more the worſt concerning himſelf than the beſt; and this brings the value of himſelf very low in his own account, and cauſes him to be little affected with Mens Applauſe, but many times makes him the more humble by occaſioning him to reflect upon his own Defects.

However, though he ſhould know, that that is truly worthy in him, for which Men praiſe him; yet his Humility will put him in mind, that he has nothing that is ſo, but what he received from God; and therefore inſtead of glorying in himſelf, will glory in God, and ſay, *Not unto us Lord, not unto us, but unto thy Name be the Praiſe*, Pſal. cxv. For it is the Property of Humility in a Man, not to aſſume unto himſelf the Praiſe, which properly belongs to any other, much leſs that which belongs unto God. And therefore he well knowing, that *it is God that works in him both to will and to do*, when any thing is well reſolved on, or well performed by him, he will turn off the Praiſe of it from himſelf unto God, as the principal Agent, and ſay with St. *Paul*, *Not I that did it, but the Grace of God which was with me*, 1 Cor. xv. 10.

Sect. VIII. As Humility will not ſuffer a Man (ſo far as it prevails) to be lifted up with Pride, by Applauſe or Praiſe from Men, *ſo much leſs will it ſuffer him oſtentatiouſly to proclaim his own Goodneſs*, to which ſome are too much addicted, as *Solomon* obſerved, *Prov.* xx. 6. *Moſt men will proclaim every one his own goodneſs:* Againſt which this wiſe Man wiſely cautions Men, ſaying, *Let another man praiſe thee, and not thine own mouth; a ſtranger, and not thine own lips*, Prov. xxvii. 2. And as an Argument to take Men off from doing ſo, he ſaith, *It is not good to eat much honey; ſo for men to ſearch their own glory, is not glory*, Prov. xxv. 27. And Humility is ſo far againſt a Man's ſearching his own glory, that it ſtill inclines him to ſearch into all that is inglorious in him, that he may know the worſt he can concerning himſelf; but ſtill in order to cure and remedy. He is more concerned about what he has yet to overcome, and what he yet wants, than about what he has overcome, and what he has attained already. *Forgetting the things that are behind, I reach forth to thoſe that are before*, ſaith St. *Paul*, Phil. iii. 13.

This Humility will alſo incline a Man to perform ſecret Duties in a ſecret manner, and as free from all appearance of Oſtentation as may be. As in giving Alms, *not to let the left hand know what the right hand doth*; and the like of ſecret Prayer and Faſting, *Matth.* vi. It makes a Man jealous of himſelf, leſt he ſhould loſe his reward from God, by doing his Duty to be ſeen of Men. An humble Man is more for doing his Duty, and doing it well, than he is for being ſeen to do it, and taken notice of for it.

Sect. IX. *Humility reſtrains Men from attempting things too high for them, ſuch as are above their reach, and without their ſphere. David* gives this as an inſtance of his Humility, when he ſaith; *Lord, my Heart is not haughty, nor mine Eyes lofty; neither do I exerciſe my ſelf in great matters, or in things too high for me*, Pſal. cxxxi. 1. It will not ſuffer Men to engage in things beyond their Capacity, or meaſure of Underſtanding, nor to undertake that which they are not competently able to manage, as thoſe do who undertake to be Teachers of others, before they have well learned themſelves. And ſuch were thoſe of whom St. *Paul* ſpeaks, *who deſired to be Teachers of the Law, when they underſtood neither what they ſaid, nor whereof they affirmed*, 1 Tim. i. 7. Such as theſe, who make Oſtentation of that which is not in them, are of that ſort *Solomon* ſpake of, when he ſaid, *Whoſo boaſteth himſelf of a falſe Gift, is like Clouds and Wind without Rain*; make a noiſe as the Wind, and a ſhew as the Clouds, when no Rain followeth, *Prov.* xxv. 14. And ſuch were ſome great Pretenders to Illumination and Knowledge in the Apoſtles time, of whom St. *Peter* ſays, *Theſe are Wells without Water, Clouds carried by a Tempeſt, viz.* from one dangerous Error to another, by every wind of Doctrine, as Clouds are from one place to another, by a tempeſtuous Wind, 2 *Pet.* ii. 17. But the modeſty of Humility will not ſuffer Men *to think more highly of themſelves than they ought to think*, (as they do, who think they are able to do more than indeed they are) *but to think ſoberly, according as God hath dealt to every Man the meaſure of* Faith, Rom. xii. 3.

Sect. X. *Humility will not ſuffer Men to intrude themſelves into things they have not ſeen*, as ſome are ſaid to have done, who are *vainly puff'd up with a fleſhly mind*, Col. ii. 18. It will not ſuffer them curiouſly to pry into things not revealed: *For ſecret things belong to God.* It was the Ambition of knowing more than God would have had them to have known, that was the fatal Stumbling-block to our firſt Parents, at which they firſt fell. Humility is a modeſt thing, and will make Men content with knowing ſo much as tends to their happineſs, by making them better by doing their duty better. And it delights more in Enquiries after uſeful and practical Knowledge, than that which is but ſpeculative; after that which tends to godly Edification, rather than that which tends more to Oſtentation.

Sect. XI. *Humility will keep Men from affecting to be ſingular, and from deſiring to be taken notice of as ſuch*, farther than Duty at any time makes it neceſſary. Becauſe otherwiſe it carries in it a ſhew of a deſire to appear wiſer or better than other Men, when the thing wherein they are ſingular does not at all make them ſo. And Humility and Modeſty hate to make a ſhew of ſuch a thing, when there is nothing really of that nature in it. It rather makes them on the other hand deſire to differ from other Men as little as ever they can innocently, and to become all things to all Men in things not forbidden, if thereby they may gain any advantage of being more acceptable to them for their good, and the common good of the Community: And herein they have St. *Paul* for an Example, 1 *Cor.* ix. 22. And upon the ſame account Humility and Modeſty will not ſuffer Men to be ſo zealous for or againſt thoſe things which of themſelves make Men neither better nor worſe, as for or againſt thoſe which indeed do; which yet too many in zeal for one Party in oppoſition to another, are wont to be.

Sect. XII. *Another Property of Humility, is to moderate and govern the Paſſion of Anger.* Wrath, which is but Anger in exceſs, *Solomon* calls *proud wrath*, as proceeding from Pride, *Prov.* xxi. 24. But where there is no ſuch Tree, there will be no ſuch Fruit. A proud Man thinks more highly of himſelf than he ought to think; he over-values himſelf. Hence he expects more obſervation from Men than they think to be his due, or fit for him to receive from them, perhaps. Wherein if he meet with this or that little diſappointment, he is ready to take it in ſcorn, his choler to riſe, and he to be offended, as if he were affronted. And hence proceeds a great deal of cauſleſs Anger in the World. Whereas an humble Man he rather under-values than over-values himſelf; and therefore he having a lower opinion of himſelf than others generally have, he ſeldom meets with leſs obſervance from Men than he thinks due to him, but very often more, and ſo has no temptation upon him to kindle his Anger, as a proud Man hath. Pride is a raſh thing, and puts Men often upon affirming things upon miſtakes, and of taxing others upon ſurmiſes and jealouſies without juſt cauſe, and then makes them impatient of juſt Oppoſition therein, and ready to fly out into Paſſion, as ſuppoſing their Reputation called in queſtion.

Whereas Humility makes Men *ſlow to ſpeak, and ſlow to wrath*; not forward to affirm, nor forward to accuſe, nor impatient of Contradiction, or of being ſet right when under a miſtake; no, though it be but by one's Servant. This effect Humility produced in *Job: If I deſpiſed the cauſe of my man-ſervant, or of my maid-ſervant, when they contended with me*, &c. Job xxxi. 13. As the Winds ruffle the Waves, and cauſe them to roul one againſt another, when it is high; ſo does Pride the Paſſions. But Humility quiets and calms thoſe Paſſions, and compoſeth the Mind. *A meek and quiet Spirit* lodge together, and are ſeldom long aſunder, 1 *Pet.* iii. 4. Though the Paſſion of Anger may by a ſurprize be kindled, yet if there be no fuel of Pride to feed and maintain it, that Fire will quickly go out.

Sect. XIII. *Humility* (eſpecially where it is in any eminent degree) *ſhews it ſelf, in making him that hath it content with his Condition and Portion alloted him by God in the things of this Life.* To what degree Men are humble, to that degree they are content. For Humility conſiſts in the Lowlineſs of the Mind: And what's that, but its not minding high things, as the Expreſſion is, *Rom.* xii. It is not impatiently bent upon them, does not become uneaſie to it ſelf for want of them. It is very true indeed, there is no Man knows ſo well how to bear, and how to uſe Fulneſs, a plentiful Eſtate, and places of Honour among Men, as an humble Man does, ſuppoſing him but equal with others in Underſtanding. But then there is no Man neither that can bear the want or abſence of theſe ſo well as an humble Man can. *David*, ſpeaking of his Humility, ſaith, *Surely I have behaved and quieted my ſelf as a Child that is weaned of his Mother, my Soul is even as a weaned Child*, Pſal. cxxxi. 2. As if he had ſaid in other words: When my Soul at any time grew froward, unquiet and diſcontent in any *deduction* made in the external Circumſtances of my Condition, as Children upon their weaning uſe to be, I do with my Soul, as the Mother or Nurſe does with the Child, labour to quiet it, and to huſh it into ſtilneſs and ſilence, until at laſt it becomes as well contented with its preſent Condition, as the weaned Child is without the Breaſt; *i. e.* to be as well content without it, as it was wont to be with it. And this ſervice his Humility did him, for of that he here ſpeaks, as the Verſe before ſhews.

And there are theſe Reaſons, among other, why Humility procures Contentment.

1. Humility cauſeth a Man to think meanly of himſelf, and to be full of the ſenſe of his own unworthineſs, and upon that account he looks upon himſelf as much rather engaged to God in the Duty of Thankfulneſs, that his Condition is no worſe, than to have any cauſe to be Diſcontent that it is no better. Whereas a proud Man will think he deſerves as well as thoſe that are above him, and therefore will be diſcontent in that he is not in as good Circumſtances as they are. And if he be raiſed and put into the ſame Condition, for which he envied others before; yet he will ſtill conceit himſelf to be as well deſerving as thoſe are, who are yet above him in the World, and ſo through his Pride will always be diſcontent in what Condition ſoever he is in, ſo long as there are any in more flouriſhing Circumſtances in the World than himſelf.

2. Humility makes a Man to eye his Subjection and Subordination unto God, in the Condition he is in, though never ſo mean; it makes him ſenſible of his Creature-ſtate, that he is in God's hands as the Clay is in the hands of the Potter: It makes him remember that God has an abſolute Right to diſpoſe of him, a rightful Dominion over him; and that he came into that Condition he is in by the ordering of his Providence, operative or permiſſive. And as he conſiders God's abſolute Sovereignty over him, to diſpoſe of him into ſuch a Condition, as that in which he ſtands; ſo he does the Goodneſs of God's Nature likewiſe, as inclining him to govern himſelf in the Exerciſe of his infinite Power, by infinite and unerring Wiſdom, in doing what he does to worthy Ends, and always to the good of thoſe that love him, in what he orders concerning them. All which Conſiderations tend to repreſs all proud diſcontented Heart-riſing Thoughts againſt God and his Providence, for placing him in no better Circumſtances. Whenever the mighty hand of God brings ſuch a Man into a low and humbling Condition, he by his Humility will humble himſelf alſo under that mighty hand of God, by quiet and ſubmiſſive Compliance therewith, as knowing that he will aſſuredly *exalt him in due time.* When by his humbling Condition, he has made him fit for Exaltation.

3. There is farther reaſon why Humility procures Contentment, becauſe the humble Man has no ſuch devouring coſtly Luſts to maintain as Pride is. Pride lifts up the Mind, and makes a Man always to be aſpiring higher and higher in the World, which riſing is not to be attained, as he thinks, but by the ſwelling of his Eſtate proportionably to the ſwelling of his Mind, and ſo he thinks he never has enough, becauſe he never thinks himſelf high enough. His Riches and Proſperity are the Stairs by which he expects to aſcend higher and higher. As his Ambition is a boundleſs thing, ſo are his Deſires after thoſe things which ſhould feed and maintain it: *His Deſire is enlarged as Hell, and is as Death, and cannot be ſatisfied*, as the Prophet ſpeaks. Hereupon he is vexed and diſquieted with every little Interruption and Rub, with every Diſappointment and croſs Accident he meets with: He is always unſatisfied and ſtill Deſires more, and is therefore always Diſcontent, becauſe he is always in want of more than he has.

But the humble Man, he has no ſuch chargeable Luſt, as Pride is, to maintain, and therefore is under none of thoſe Diſquietments aud Diſcontents of Mind, which Pride betrays Men into. The humble Man, as he is but little in his own Eyes, ſo if he have but little, he can be ſatisfied with that; becauſe that will anſwer a Man's real Neceſſities and moderate Conveniencies. As he ſeeks no great things for himſelf, ſo he is under no Diſappointment, and conſequently under no Diſcontent, if he find not that which he looks not after: His Mind by Lowlineſs and Humility being proportioned to his Eſtate and outward Condition, and not exalted above it, that makes it to dwell at eaſe in it. Beſides, Humility will not ſuffer a Man to think that he could have choſen better for himſelf, than God has done for him, if it had been left to his own Choice; and if not, there is no reaſon or pretence to be diſcontent with that State of Life, which God has choſen for him. Tho' a Man may be mean in the World, yet if he be but humble, he will have better Thoughts of God, than to think he envied him worldly Proſperity. But when he conſiders, how many have been made worſe by being advanced in the World, and how few better; how frequently *Riches are kept for the Owners thereof to their own hurt*, as the wiſe Man obſerved long ago, (*Eccl.* v.13.) and how often in Scripture the Lord ſignifies the tender and ſpecial regard he has for the Poor, more than he does concerning the Rich; he will conclude, that Almighty God hath made his Condition ſo low as it is, out of Love and Good-will to him, rather than out of Diſregard, and for that cauſe will reſt well contented with it.

The humble Man, though he have but only the Neceſſaries of Life, or at the moſt but the Conveniencies thereof, will conſider with himſelf, that if he had much more, yet his Condition would be little or nothing the better for it, ſave in his own or others Fancy and Opinion, but not in Reality. *For when Goods increaſe, they are increaſed that eat them, and what good is there to the Owners thereof, ſaving the beholding thereof with their Eyes*, ſaith *Solomon*, Eccl. v. 11. And the humble Man of all others, can be well content to be without that Felicity that conſiſteth only in Fancy and Opinion, if he have but that which is ſubſtantial, as he has that has a Competency. And when he conſiders that Men really enjoy no more than they uſe, he ſees no reaſon but that he may be as well content with what he has, when that is competently ſufficient for the neceſſary Uſes of Life, as thoſe that have Abundance more than they uſe.

Sect. XIV. *Humility qualifies a Man for a faithful Diſcharge of the great Duty of Self-denial: Nay, Self-denial is in it ſelf a great Act of Humility.* Self-denial conſiſts in a Man's refuſing to fulfil the Inclinations of his own Will, or to yield to the craving of his Appetites and Affections, when theſe come in Competition with what is matter of Duty to God, or Fidelity to Chriſt, though it be to the loſs of any, or of all the external Comforts of his Life, or Life it ſelf. So far as what a Man deſires will not conſiſt with keeping a good Conſcience towards God and towards Men, if it ſhould be gratified, ſo far that deſire is to be denied, and not gratified; and that Denial is *Self-denial.* And this a Man cannot do in any great and conſiderable Inſtances viſible unto Men, but at the hazard of his Reputation among worldly wiſe Men: Which hazard, a Man without Humility will never be able to run. A Man does not only ſuffer the Loſs of thoſe worldly Advantages and Accommodations he lets go and parts with, to preſerve his Innocency and Integrity, when he therein denies himſelf, but he loſeth alſo his Reputation for Wiſdom among worldly wiſe Men, who will count him but a Fool for doing ſo. Such as they will praiſe him for a wiſe Man, *that does well to himſelf*, (as the Pſalmiſt gives notice, *Pſal.* xlix. 18.) ſo they will diſpraiſe and count him for a Fool that neglects and denies himſelf in the good things of the World for ſcruple of Conſcience, as they will call it, and ſay he is more nice than wiſe. So that a Man in ſuch Self-denial ſuſtains a double Loſs; a Loſs not only of his Goods, his Liberty, or his Eaſe, or it may be his Pleaſure, but alſo his Reputation for Diſcretion with the worldly wiſe. And this a Man, that will deny himſelf according to his Duty, muſt in many a caſe be content to undergo. And this is that which St. *Paul* meant, (as I ſuppoſe) when he ſaid, *If any Man among you ſeem to be wiſe in this World, let him become a Fool that he may be wiſe*, 1 Cor. iii. 18. That is, let him be content to be accounted a Fool by his worldly-wiſe Neighbours, that he may act as a wiſe Man indeed, as one that is ſpiritually wiſe, wiſe for his greateſt, beſt and laſting Intereſt, as one that takes care of the main Chance, as one that reſolves that if he muſt needs part with one, his worldly Accommodations or his Innocency, that then he will do as a wiſe Man would do, part with that he may beſt ſpare, that which is of leſs uſe to him as to his real and true Happineſs, but will hold faſt his Integrity, as that which will exalt him to Honour, and bring him to Happineſs at laſt, when all other things fail and fall off, and can be no farther uſeful to them that had the faſteſt hold of them.

But this proud Men can never do that have not Humility, but ſeek Honour from one another, and are great Lovers and Admirers of it. What kept thoſe chief Rulers among the *Jews* from confeſſing *Chriſt*, when yet they believed on him, *but becauſe they loved the Praiſe of Men more than the Praiſe of God*, John xii. 42, 43. They could not deny themſelves in becoming Fools for *Chriſt*'s ſake, as the ſincere Diſciples did: *We are Fools for Chriſt's ſake, but ye are wiſe in Chriſt*, ſaith St. *Paul*, 1 Cor. iv. 10. The worldly-wiſe Chriſtians in thoſe times of Perſecution, thought to deal more prudently in profeſſing Chriſt, than the Apoſtles, and other faithful Chriſtians did: They thought by a little complying to ſave their Stake, and their Reputation too among their unbelieving Neighbours, and yet to confeſs Chriſt alſo, as ſome in thoſe times did: But thoſe that were tite and thorow, and not mungrel Chriſtians, by becoming Fools for Chriſt and his holy Religion, in ſuffering the loſs of all things for them, did him and his Goſpel great Honour in the World, by ſtaking down all they had in the World upon the Credit hereof, which was Self-denial in a high degree. But it was by their Humility that they were able to do thus, to lay themſelves thus low, and to be content to become little in the World, to make their dear Lord and his Religion, as great and worthy and renowned in the Eyes of Men, as poſſibly they could, by humbling themſelves thus low for their ſake. Our bleſſed Saviour, through his Humility, made himſelf of *no Reputation* for our ſakes, and to lift us up when we were ſunk very low, which was Self-denial in him. And thoſe that have learned of him to be humble, will not think it too much for them to make themſelves of no Reputation for him, when occaſion calls for it in greater or leſſer Inſtances.

CHAP. IV.

Of the Properties and Effects of Humility in reference to others.

Sect. I. BY *Humility Men become peaceable in their own Temper, and promoters of it in others. Solomon* ſaith, *Only through Pride cometh Contention*, Prov. xiii. 10. And again, *He that is of a proud heart ſtirreth up ſtriſe*, Prov. xxviii. 25. And if by Pride only cometh Contention, then by Humility Contention muſt needs be prevented, and ſo Peace preſerved. It is by their Humility and Meekneſs, as well as by their Charity, that Men are not eaſily provoked. For when they have low Thoughts of themſelves, it is no intolerable Offence to them, if Men lay them low by diſparaging them, they will not quarrel with them about it; eſpecially if it be in any thing wherein their Innocency is not concerned; nor will they retaliate or recriminate, by endeavouring to lay them low likewiſe; by which means, Peace, as much as in them lies, is preſerved: For, *it is the ſecond blow that makes the fray*, according to the Proverb. Whereas a proud Man, he having high Thoughts of himſelf, and expecting that others ſhould have ſo too, cannot bear it at the hands of him that ſhall do or ſay any thing that tends any way to lay him low, as by contradicting him, or the like, but his Choler will be ſtraightway ready to kindle at it, and he ready to account every little thing, which an humble Man would make nothing of, to be an affront to him. And as ſuch an one is apt to receive a Provocation, ſo he is as prone to give one to another, and if that take like effect in him to whom it is given, the Peace is preſently violated. And if there be any ſeconds or ſidings in the caſe by more, then the breach of Peace ſpreads as far as any are found ſiding with the two contending Parties. And thus the breach many times becomes great and wide, by reaſon of the Pride of the Parties contending, when the matter about which they contend is but little and of ſmall moment, of which this Age affords abundance of lamentable Experience.

When the Apoſtle ſays, *Let us not be deſirous of Vain-glory, provoking one another, envying one another*, (Gal. v. 26.) it is apparent that the deſire of Vain-glory is the root of *provoking* and *envying* one another, and conſequently of diſturbing and breaking the Peace of the Church. The deſire of Vain-glory, which is Pride, or a deſire to be better eſteemed than another for this or that, when there is no reaſon for it, cauſeth *Provocation* to be given by the vain-glorious Perſon, to him or them whoſe Condition is envyed. And if this Provocation be ſo taken, that another be returned, the Peace is broken. And as the deſire of Vain-glory is the cauſe of *provoking one another*, ſo it is of *envying one another*. For he that drives on a deſign of Vain-glory, always envies him that ſtands in his way in that deſign, and in all that by which he advances towards it. But now if there were no ſuch bitter Root in Men as Vain-glory is, (and ſo far as they are humble, there is not) there would be none of that envying one another, and provoking one another, which grows out of it; and conſequently none of that unpeaceableneſs which is cauſed thereby. For Humility will not ſuffer a Man unduly to provoke another, nor to be provoked by another to any unpeaceable Behaviour. *Lowlineſs of Mind* is oppoſed to *Strife* or *Vain-glory*, as the Remedy againſt it, *Phil.* ii. 3. Well might St. *Paul* therefore, in order to the Chriſtians *keeping the Unity of the Spirit in the Bond of Peace*, perſuade them as he does, *to walk in all lowlineſs and meekneſs, in all long-ſuffering, forbearing one another in love*, Epheſ. iv. For if Men in lowlineſs of Mind would forbear provoking one another, and ſuffer long, when Provocation is given without returning it, it would be the ready way to keep the Unity of the Spirit in the Bond of Peace. And I am very much of opinion, that our great and ſad breaches in the Church at this day are much more owing to the Unchriſtian manner of managing our Differences, than to the Nature of the things themſelves about which we differ. If Humility were but permitted to have its perfect work among us, there would be ſo much innocent Condeſcenſion and Forbearance, as that our real Differences in Judgment would not prevail againſt Peace.

Sect. II. *Humility ſtrongly inclines Men readily to yield all due Honour, Reverence and Obedience to them, to whom it does belong.* As for inſtance: The Younger to riſe up before the hoary head, and to honour the face of the Aged: Children to honour and obey their Parents, and Servants their Maſters: Subjects to be ſubject to Principalities and Powers, and to obey Magiſtrates: The People to eſteem them very highly for their Works ſake, who are over them in the Lord, and who rule well, and faithfully labour in the Word and Doctrine: The weaker in Wiſdom and Learning to give all due preference to thoſe that excel them, and the like. When St. *Peter* had ſaid, *Likewiſe the Younger, ſubmit your ſelves unto the Elder; yea, all of you be ſubject one to another;* he adds, *And be ye clothed with Humility*, as neceſſary to qualifie them for the being all ſubject one to another, in thoſe ſeveral reſpects in which they were one above another, 1 *Pet.* v. 5. It is againſt the nature of Humility in a Man to deny to another, or to arrogate to himſelf, that Honour and Reſpect which is due from him to another, upon any the aforeſaid, or the like accounts. And Diſobedience to Parents, and to thoſe in Authority, and the deſpiſing Dominion, and the not being afraid to ſpeak evil of Dignities, and the like, is the proper effect of that Headineſs, High-mindedneſs and Pride, which thoſe are deſcribed by, who had a form of Godlineſs, but denied the Power of it: 2 *Tim.* iii. 2 *Pet.* ii. Humility is a governable thing: It is Pride, and not Humility, that makes Men impatient of bearing the Yoke of Government. An humble Man will be apt to think himſelf in leſs danger of miſcarrying in the capacity of being governed, than in being a Governour, which makes him well content to be without that Honour, and not to be at all ambitious of ruling; this having more of Difficulty, more of Temptation, and more of Envy attending it, than the other has.

Sect. III. As Humility inclineth Inferiours to yield due Reverence and Submiſſion to Superiours; *So does it likewiſe diſpoſe thoſe that are of ſuperiour Quality, in Power, Office, or Dignity, or in any publick Capacity, to be of publick Spirits; that is, to uſe their Preheminence in Authority, Office or Dignity, for the publick Good, and not to their perſonal Advantage in oppoſition to it.* Humility, which diſpoſeth Men to think as meanly of themſelves as their Circumſtances will admit, will ſuggeſt to Perſons in ſuch preheminence as aforeſaid, that it is not for their own ſakes, or becauſe they are better Men in the ſight of God, than all that are below them, that they are advanced above others, but for the ſake of the publick, for the ſake of the Community of Men, of which they themſelves are Members, to the end that they might be of ſuch publick uſe and advantage, which neither they nor others, while in a private Capacity only, could be. Humility will not ſuffer them to think that they are advanced above others, only that they might be more reverenced and honoured than others, but that by means of that Honour which belongs to their Place and Office, or to them upon the account of it, they might be in the better capacity of ſerving thoſe that are below them, in protecting them from Wrong, in cauſing Right to be done them, in ſeeing due Order obſerved among Men, and that their Peace be not diſturbed.

Theſe things, which Humility will thus ſuggeſt to Men, advanced above their Brethren in Place and Office, are fully agreeable to the Holy Scriptures: And an humble Man will not affect to be wiſe above that which is written. The Apoſtle deſcribes the Reaſon and End of ſome being advanced to Rule and Government over others, thus, *He is the Miniſter of God to thee for good*, Rom. xiii. 4. And Civil as well as Eccleſiaſtical Rulers, are called *Shepherds and Paſtors*, from the deſigned uſefulneſs of their Office to the People, which is to *guide and feed* the Flocks, to *watch and defend them*, to *heal* the diſeaſed, and to *ſeek out*, and to *bring back* ſuch as are loſt, or go aſtray, *Ezek.* xxxiv. *Jer.* xxiii. Thus when God ſets a wiſe and good Prince over a People, it is for the People's ſake, and out of favour to them, and for their good: *Becauſe the Lord hath loved his People, he hath made thee King over them*, ſaith *Huram* King of *Tyre* to *Solomon*, 2 Chron. ii. 11. And the very ſame ſaid the *Queen of Sheba* to him, 1 *King* x. 9. And when God ſuffers a good or bad Prince to miſcarry in any thing to the publick damage, it is for ſome Diſpleaſure of God againſt the People. It was when *the anger of the Lord was kindled againſt Iſrael*, that *David was moved to number the People*; the Conſequence of which was the deſtruction of Seventy Thouſand by the Peſtilence, 2 *Sam.* xxiv. 1. *And it was through the anger of the Lord, to the caſting off Juda out from his preſence, that Zedekiah rebelled againſt the King of Babylon*, to occaſion it: *Jer.* lii. 3. And *Moſes* ſaid to the People under his Conduct, *The Lord was angry with me for your ſakes*, Deut. i. 37. For by their murmuring, *they angred him at the Waters of Strife, ſo that it went ill with Moſes for their ſakes; becauſe they provoked his Spirit, ſo that he ſpake unadviſedly with his Lips*, ſaith the Pſalmiſt, *Pſal.* cvi. 32, 33.

Now that Humility, ſo far as it prevails, keeps Men that are above others, from abuſing their Power, Office and Dignity, in making uſe of it to their own private and perſonal Advantage, to the hurt and damage of the publick, we may gather from that where God commanded that the King ſhould read in the Book of the Law of the Lord, for this end, that he might learn to fear God, that *his Heart might not be lifted up above his Brethren*, Deut. xvii. 20. For the Heart of the King might then be ſaid not to be lifted up above his Brethren, when yet he himſelf was advanced ſo far above them, as to be their King, when it did not enter into his Heart to uſe that Supremacy of Power and Dignity any way to their prejudice, but wholly for their Advantage and Benefit. And that, I conceive, is meant by his Heart's not being lifted up above his Brethren: Since it is enjoyned him in the Verſes before, *not to multiply to himſelf Horſes, nor greatly to multiply to himſelf Silver and Gold*, not to burthen the People in doing ſo, farther than what was neceſſary and convenient to ſupport the Government in an honourable manner. Although a Supream Governour may juſtly expect that Honour and Aſſiſtance from his Subjects, as may capacitate him for the honourable Diſcharge of that great Truſt he is under; yet no Man, ſo far as he is humble, though otherwiſe never ſo great, can think ſo highly of himſelf, as to believe his own ſeparate Intereſt more valuable than the Intereſt of the whole Common-wealth, and conſequently cannot in this Senſe lift up himſelf above his Brethren, in preferring his private Advantage before the publick Benefit.

And Humility has the like effect in the Minds of Men, preferred above others in Place and Office in the *Church*: For it will not ſuffer them to be exalted in their own Minds above the People, by minding more to be ſerved by them than to ſerve them. Although there is a double Honour belongs to them who rule well, and alſo labour in the Word and Doctrine; the Honour of Reverence and Reſpect, and the Honour of Reward and Maintenance; yet Humility makes a Man more thoughtful and ſolicitous about ſerving them, than of being ſerved by them; about performing the Duty of his Office, in benefiting the People under him, in things pertaining to their Souls, than about what he is to receive from them, as a juſt Recompence, which they are to pay for that Benefit. Humility levels the minds of Church-Rulers unto the deſigned end of the Office to which they are preferr'd, which is Uſefulneſs, Service and Benefit in Soul-Affairs, or Spiritual Concerns to the People under them. Such a Man's Humility will ſuggeſt to him, that he is ſet above the People for their ſakes, more than for his own, more for their Spiritual Benefit, than his own Temporal Advantage, and accordingly will engage his Mind more in the purſuit of the publick ſpiritual Benefit of the People, than of his own private temporal Concerns among them, though the Senſe of Duty he owes to his Family, will not ſuffer him to neglect his temporal Concerns neither. It was ſuch a Spirit of Humility and Charity as this is in St. *Paul*, which made him ſay, *I ſeek not yours but you*, 2 Cor. xii. 14.

This is that frame of Mind, which our bleſſed Saviour ſought to reduce his Apoſtles to, when two of them deſired of him to be preferred above the reſt in his Temporal Kingdom, which they miſtakingly expected, when they ſaid unto him, *Grant unto us that we may ſit, the one on thy right hand, and the other on thy left in thy Kingdom.* In anſwer to which Requeſt, he told both them and the reſt, that the Princes of the Gentiles indeed that ſought and obtained Principality over the People, *did exerciſe Lordſhip over them*, uſed their Power and Authority to advance themſelves as their principal end and deſign. But ſaith he, *it ſhall not be ſo among you: But whoſoever will be great among you, ſhall be your Miniſter, and whoſoever of you will be the chiefeſt, ſhall be the Servant of all*, Mark x. 43. Our Saviour would not have them deſire Preheminence and Precedency, out of Ambition of worldly Glory, as the Princes of the Gentiles did, but he let them know, that if any became greater than other among his Followers, that they thereby became Servants to all below them; that they thereby became under an Obligation, as well as in a Capacity to ſerve all the reſt, and to become more uſeful to them than they were before; that the more of Dignity and Precedency any had, the more of Burthen they took upon themſelves thereby. And therefore he would not have his Servants deſire to be preferr'd in the Church, that they themſelves might be more ſerved by others, but that they might do others the more Service. That this was our Saviour's Scope, appears by his next words, *Even as the Son of Man came not to be miniſtred unto but to miniſter:* Not to accumulate outward Advantages from others, but to confer ſpiritual Benefits upon them, *Matth.* xx. 28. *I am among you*, ſaith he, *as he that ſerveth*, as St. *Luke* hath it, *Chap.* xxii. 27. Which great piece of Humility in himſelf, he propoſes to them for their Imitation. Which the Apoſtles well underſtood, and therefore St. *Paul* ſaid, *We preach our ſelves your Servants for Jeſus ſake*, 2 Cor. iv. 5. And St. *Peter* likewiſe: Feed the Flock of God among you, not for filthy Lucre, *not as Lords over God's Heritage*, as worldly Rulers too often do in exerciſing Dominion over the People in ſerving themſelves of them, rather than their Goodneſs in truly ſerving them therewith. There is nothing plainer than that the end of Mens Advancement in the Church, and their Qualification by God for ſuch Advancement, is the Church's Benefit and Service: *All are yours, whether Paul or Apollos or Cephas, all are yours*, 1 Cor. iii. 21, 22. And as this is the end of it, ſo Humility which inclineth Men to be condeſcending to others to ſerve them, not in Complement but in Reality, will accordingly engage thoſe that are advanced in the Church, to be more intent upon ſerving the Church, than upon ſerving themſelves by that Advancement.

Sect. IV. *By Humility a Man can bear undue neglect and diſreſpect from Men without being much concerned at it.* A proud Man indeed, that has a high Opinion of himſelf, and therefore thinks others ſhould have ſo too, will be diſturbed in his own mind at every little Appearance of Neglect and Diſrepect towards him. But an humble Man, that is but little in his own Eyes, can have no Expectation of being great in others. And therefore if he find himſelf neglected, and little taken notice of, it's no Diſappointment to him, and ſo no Diſturbance to his Mind. The more humble a Man is, the more he will be ſenſible, that as he is no whit the better Man for the Honour that ſome would caſt upon him by their Praiſe and Applauſe, ſo he is alſo that he is not the worſe in himſelf, for the Diſhonour which theſe without cauſe would put upon him by ſlighting and Diſreſpect. The more humble a Man is, the more ſenſible he is how poor and inſignificant a thing Applauſe from Men is, and therefore muſt needs be ſo much the leſs affected and concerned, when it is with-held from him by ſome.

Humility is the Mother of Patience. A proud Man cannot be a patient Man: For his Pride makes his Spirit impotent and weak, that he cannot bear either Diſappointment, Injuries or Neglect, without being put into an impatient Motion of Mind. But Humility being of a contrary Nature, either does not feel theſe things, or elſe it ſupports and fortifies the Mind, and makes it able to bear, not only ſlighting and neglect from others, but alſo unjuſt Slanders and Reproaches without putting the Mind into Diſorder. We ſee St. *Paul* being of an humble and brave Spirit, could truly ſay, *With me it is a very ſmall thing to be judged of you, or of Man's Judgment*, 1 Cor. iv. 3.

Sect. V. *Humility will keep Men from affecting to be ſingular, and from a deſire of being taken notice of as ſuch, farther than Duty at any time makes it neceſſary:* Becauſe otherwiſe it carries a ſhow in it of a deſire to appear to be wiſer and better than other Men, when the thing wherein they are ſingular, does not at all make them ſo, but only pleaſes their Fancy better. And Humility and Modeſty hates to make a ſhow of Betterneſs, when there is nothing in Reality of that Nature in it. But on the contrary, it makes Men deſire to differ from other Men as little as ever they can innocently, and to become all things to all Men, ſo far as they can lawfully, and when they may gain an Advantage thereby of becoming more acceptable to them for their Good, or for the promoting of a common Good by their Aſſiſtance: And herein they have St. *Paul* for an Example, 1 *Cor.* ix. 22. And upon the ſame account, Humility and Modeſty will not ſuffer Men to be ſo zealous; for, or againſt thoſe things, which make Men neither better nor worſe, (unleſs accidentally) as for, or againſt thoſe which do really make them ſo, which yet many in Zeal for one Party, in Oppoſition to another, are wont to be.

Sect. VI. *Humility will keep Men from being ambitious of Precedency of Place*, a piece of Pride the Phariſees were guilty of, when they loved the uppermoſt Rooms at Feaſts, and the chief Seats in Synagogues. Humility, as I have ſaid, is a modeſt thing, and diſpoſeth Men to give Honour, and to prefer others, and not to aſſume it to themſelves, according to that of St. *Paul*, *In honour preferring one another*, Rom. xii. And yet Humility it ſelf will keep Men from an Extream on the other hand, from too much refuſing Honour of this kind, when given them by others not unduly, leſt otherwiſe they ſhould draw a Suſpicion upon themſelves of being ambitious of being thought to be humble. Upon this account, the Diſcretion of humble Men will direct them to chuſe to take place, as not above their own Rank, ſo not too much below it neither, when freely left to their own choice.

And as Humility will not ſuffer Men to be guilty of this kind of Ambition, ſo neither will it ſuffer them to reap where they have not ſown, in aſſuming to themſelves the honour of other Mens labours, as if they had been their own, or to *boaſt in another Man's line of things made ready to their hands*, as St. *Paul* ſpeaks, 2 *Cor.* x. 16.

Sect. VII. *Humility will make Men modeſt, and cautious how they cenſure the Actions of Men, that are not apparently bad*, the reaſon of which they do not know, and eſpecially of the Actions of their Governours in the execution of their Office. For Humility will cauſe them to think themſelves incompetent Judges of ſuch Actions, at leaſt ſo long as they are ignorant of the reaſon of them.

It will alſo preſerve them from a medling Temper, and from buſying themſelves unneceſſarily in other Mens matters, leſt they thereby get a blot unto themſelvs of Pragmaticalneſs, which Humility is always ſhy of.

The modeſty of Humility is ſuch likewiſe, as will not ſuffer Men to be Dogmatical and Peremptory in doubtful things, nor importunely to impoſe their dubious Opinions upon other Men. Such Men count it enough modeſtly to propoſe the Reaſons which ſway with them in ſuch caſes, and then to leave others at liberty to judge, and to chuſe or refuſe, as they ſee cauſe. And after this, they will not be much concern'd at it, if others be not of their mind.

Sect. VIII. Humility will not ſuffer Men to deſpiſe ſuch as are harmleſs, neither for their Poverty nor Simplicity, or weakneſs of Underſtanding: Nor to ſlight any meerly for their different Opinion, if otherwiſe modeſt and humble. It is as unſeemly for the ſtrong to deſpiſe the weak Chriſtian for his different Opinion about leſſer things, as it is for the weak to judge the ſtrong, *Rom.* xiv. 3.

Humility alſo keeps Men from inſulting over others, when in worſe Circumſtances than themſelves, although Enemies, and although brought into them by their own naughtineſs. Againſt this, as againſt a proud thing, St. *Paul* cautioned the believing Gentiles, in reference to thoſe *Jews* who were broken off through Unbelief, ſaying, *Boaſt not thy ſelf againſt the Branches; thou ſtandeſt by Faith; be not high-minded but fear*, Rom. xi. 18, 20. This good temper of Humility and Modeſty kept *Job* from this uncomely Behaviour: *If*, ſaith he, *I rejoyced at the deſtruction of him that hated me, or lift up my ſelf when evil found him*, &c. Job xxxi. 29. *Rejoyce not when thine enemy falleth, and let not thine heart be glad when he ſtumbleth*, Prov. xxiv. 17.

Neither will the Modeſty and Ingenuity of an humble Mind ſuffer a Man to overlook that which is good and commendable in another, or not to acknowledge it, when otherwiſe he has juſt occaſion to take notice of that which is evil in him, and to blame him for it. Our Saviour took notice of that which was praiſe-worthy in the Seven Churches of *Aſia*, and commended them for it, even then when he ſet himſelf to rebuke them for what was a-miſs in them. A thing worthy to be thought on by ſuch as rake up all the evil they can againſt their adverſe Party, and repreſent them as bad as they can by that, without owning that of a better Character which is in them: For they may know themſelves thereby to be none of the beſt Diſciples of the beſt Maſter.

CHAP. V.

Of the Means by which Humility is wrought or increaſed.

Sect. I. WHen we ſpeak of the means by which Humility, or any other Grace is wrought, we always ſuppoſe it to be done by the Holy Spirit of God, as the Author and principal Agent, and all other means that contribute any thing towards ſuch a production, to be but ſubordinate to him therein. But then the Holy Spirit doth this by our own Thoughts, as the next and immediate means of producing it. For God's way of working upon the Soul, in turning the inclination and bent of the Mind and Will to this or that, is, I conceive, by terminating and pitching Mens

Thoughts upon ſuch Subjects, as which being ſeriouſly conſidered, are apt to ſtrike thoſe Faculties, and make laſting Impreſſions upon them. It is, I think, hard to conceive how Almighty God works any change, or good effects in the Soul, otherwiſe than by the Operation of the Thoughts. When the Lord would work Faith in *Lydia*, he firſt *opened her heart* to let in ſuch Thoughts, by which ſhe did *attend to*, and conſider *the things ſpoken by Paul*, which had an aptneſs in them to work ſuch a thing as Faith in her Soul, *Acts* xvi. 14. When our Saviour would work a Belief in his doubting Diſciples of his own Reſurrection, when they were prepoſſeſs'd with an Opinion, that the Meſſias ſhould never die, and ſo not riſe again, he does it by *opening their Underſtanding*, and letting in Thoughts and Conſiderations into their Minds, by opening the Scriptures of the Old Teſtament, touching the ſuffering and riſing again of the Meſſias, which never found the way into their Minds before, *Luke* xxiv. 45, 46. The Work of Grace in the Soul, as it is aſcribed unto God in the Scripture, ſo it is attributed unto Mens Conſideration alſo; which ſhews, that God does effect it, by drawing Men to conſider ſuch things as are apt, being ſeriouſly conſidered, to work it in them. And Conſideration is but the Thoughts often repeated and fixed upon the ſame Subject. The Grace of Humility then is wrought and increaſed in the Heart by the Holy Spirit's engaging the Thoughts (if he be not reſiſted, but complied with) to be much imployed upon ſuch Subjects of Meditation, as are apt to perſuade the Mind, and draw the Will into an humble frame. Some of which Subjects of Meditation I ſhall point to, and a little inſiſt on, as directive to us in our Endeavours of becoming humble. And as we deſire to be and to continue humble, and to grow therein, it will be our wiſdom to exerciſe our Mind and Thoughts much upon ſuch Subjects.

Sect. II. To this end we ſhall do well to ſet Almighty God before us in all his Glory and Greatneſs, and often to contemplate the glorious Perfections of his Being; his Omnipreſence and Omniſcience, that there is no place or ſpace where he is not, nothing ſo ſecret or concealed which he knows not. The Infinity and Irreſiſtibleneſs of his Power to effect and do, without the leaſt difficulty or controul, whatever he has a mind to do, and to hinder whatever he has a mind to hinder. The Riches of his Wiſdom ſuch, that it is not poſſible any thing which he does ſhould have been better done. And his Holineſs ſuch likewiſe, as ſets him at the greateſt diſtance poſſible from all Unrighteouſneſs and unequal dealing with his Creatures, and from all Unfaithfulneſs in what he promiſeth and undertakes. That his Goodneſs and Kindneſs to his Creatures likewiſe has no other bounds than the Immenſeneſs of his Power has, and that is his Wiſdom, by which he regulates all the Exertions of his Power, as well as his Goodneſs and Kindneſs. To contemplate alſo the Glory and Greatneſs of God in the Glory and Greatneſs of his Works, the Greatneſs of his Power and the Greatneſs of his Wiſdom, in making and contriving the Heavens and the Earth, and all the Hoſts of them, and the orderly ſubſerviency of one thing to another, and the dependency of one thing upon another, and all upon his Almighty Power and Providence in ſuſtaining and governing them in their ſeveral Orders, Motions and Operations. How that *the Nations of the Earth are but as a drop of a Bucket, and are counted but as the ſmall duſt of the Ballance: That all Nations before him are as nothing, and that they are counted to him leſs than nothing and vanity.* That *thouſands of thouſands of glorious Spirits miniſter unto him, and ten thouſand times ten thouſand ſtand before him.* And while a Man is under the ſenſe of all this, he cannot but have low and mean thoughts of himſelf: All the ſenſe of his own Excellency in this or that reſpect will ſink and diſappear, as the Light of the Stars does when the Sun ariſeth in his full ſtrength; no Fleſh will be able to glory in himſelf in ſuch a Preſence. Holy *Job*, though he could diſcourſe ſomewhat freely and confidently with his Friends touching his own Integrity towards God, and of his worthy Behaviour towards Men, and *wiſh'd to be weigh'd in an even Ballance, that God might know his Integrity*; yet when Almighty God had but once fill'd his Mind with a ſenſe of his Majeſty, Glory and Greatneſs, by diſcourſing to him of his marvellous Works, we have *Job* preſently crying out, *Behold, I am vile, I abhor my ſelf*, Job xl. 4. *I have heard of thee by the hearing of the Ear, but now mine Eye ſeeth thee; wherefore I abhor my ſelf*, Job xlii. 6. From both which Paſſages we may plainly infer, that by how much the greater ſenſe we have of the Greatneſs of the Majeſty and Glory of God, by ſo much the meaner thoughts we ſhall have of our ſelves, and the more humble we ſhall be. *When I conſider thy Heavens, the Work of thy Fingers, the Moon and the Stars which thou haſt ordained*, thoſe vaſt Bodies of Light, *What is Man!* ſaith *David*, Pſal. viii. 3, 4. *Humble your ſelves under* *the mighty Hand of God*, ſaith St. *Peter*; intimating that the Conſideration of the Mightineſs of God's Hand or Power, under which, and at the ordering and diſpoſal whereof we are, tends greatly to the making of us humble, 1 *Pet.* v. 6. Whatever riſing or ſwelling Thoughts Men may have of themſelves, while they contemplate their own Excellency, or while they compare themſelves with thoſe, which it may be are much beneath them, yet when they turn their Thoughts upon the moſt High, and conſider that Greatneſs of his, which ſets him at an unconceivable diſtance above them, in all manner of reſpects whatſoever, this Senſe of God will drown and quite ſwallow up the too great Thoughts which ſuch had of themſelves.

Sect. III. The frequent Thought and Conſideration of our former worſt Eſtate, of what we have been and what we have done, is another very good means to make and keep us humble. Though Men have repented of, and are converted from the ſins, in which they have formerly lived, in their unregenerate State, yet the Thought and Remembrance of what they have been, and what they have done in a way of Sin, has a great Tendency in it to keep them humble, to prevent or to take down a too good Opinion of themſelves. For it is, I doubt not, with other good Men, as it was with *David* when he ſaid, *my Sin is ever before me*. Though he begg'd of God to hide his Face from his Sin, yet he was not unwilling to keep it ever before himſelf, for the ſhaming and humbling of himſelf. Though God has caſt the Sins of true Penitents behind his back, yet they ſet them ſtill before their Face. And this is that which makes them many times to *loath themſelves*, to think what they have been and done, as it is ſaid of ſuch Penitents, *Ezek.* xxxvi. 31. This Senſe of what he had been, was that doubtleſs, which made St. *Paul* ſpeak ſo diminutively of himſelf, as he did, when he ſtiled himſelf *leſs than the leaſt of all Saints*, when yet he knew he was *not behind the very chiefeſt of the Apoſtles*. For when he thought on his blaſpheming of Chriſt, and his perſecuting his Church, he thought, it's probable, that the leaſt of all the Saints had not ſo much in Contemplation of former Miſcarriages, to lay them ſo low in their own Eyes, as he had. Upon this account it was that he called himſelf *the leaſt of the Apoſtles, and not meet to be called an Apoſtle, for that he had perſecuted the Church of God*, though as to the Performance of his Office, not behind the chiefeſt of them, 1 *Cor.* xv. 9.

The Remembrance, in a Convert, of what Affronts he has put upon God, and how he has formerly diſhonoured him, all the while he was doing him good, and ſeeking his farther good, and how great Folly he was guilty of, when he hazarded the loſs of Soul and Body for ever for very Trifles: When he conſiders how much Sin he cauſed, or occaſioned others to commit, for which they or ſome of them may, for all that he knows, ſuffer eternally: I ſay, the Conſideration and Remembrance of ſuch things as theſe, will make a good Man hang down his Head, and his Mind to fall very low. *Mine Iniquities have taken hold on me, ſo that I am not able to look up:* They are more in number than the Hairs of my Head, *Pſal.* xl. 12.

Sect. IV. *A due Senſe of our ſpiritual Poverty, is another means to make and keep us humble.* As Self-fulneſs, and a Senſe in Men of their Abundance, and their need of nothing, tend to puff them up with Pride, as it did the *Laodicean* Chriſtians; ſo the Senſe of Poverty and Want is in it ſelf of an humbling Nature, and tends to take down the Loftineſs of Men, and to preſerve the Mind in a lowly Frame. *The Poor in Spirit* are ſo called, not becauſe they are really deſtitute of Spiritual Riches, but becauſe their Minds and Thoughts are exerciſed more about their Spiritual Wants, than about what they have attain'd to. Like St. *Paul*, who *forgot the things behind, and preſs'd on towards that which was before:* He did not conſider ſo much, how much he had, and how much he had done, as how much he yet wanted, and how much he had yet to do, and to overcome.

The way doubtleſs, for Men to maintain their Minds in an humble Frame, is to be well acquainted with their own ſpiritual Wants, and how very far they yet fall ſhort of what is deſirable, and of what is attainable. And to this end, and to the end they may always be poor in Spirit, it is adviſable, that they exerciſe their Thoughts much about the Defectiveneſs of their Knowledge, not only how much they are yet ignorant of in things Spiritual and Divine, but alſo of the Imperfection of their Conception of thoſe things they do know in part, and how inadequate their Notions of Spiritual and Divine things are to the Excellency of the Nature of the things themſelves, and how they are able to take in of that Light, by which ſuch things are ſeen in their proper Nature but by degrees, now a little and then a little, as Children do in the

Knowledge of natural things. They ſhould alſo reflect upon themſelves, how little they are affected with the things they do know, concerning God and his wondrous Works, and the Methods of his Grace by Chriſt Jeſus, towards the Children of Men, and be ſenſible of their own Flatneſs and Dulneſs, under the Operation of ſuch enraviſhing and tranſporting Objects of Meditation. The Poor in Spirit are not without a Senſe of ſome Diſproportion, that is ſtill between their Knowledge and their Practice, and that they are more wanting and defective in doing their Duty, than in knowing it. They will be under a Jealouſie, that their Care and Diligence, and Zeal in doing and performing, does not hold meaſure with their Knowledge of what ought to be done, as to the manner and meaſure of doing, at leaſt, if not in the matter. They are and will be greatly ſenſible of, how much they are wanting in that Innocency, Humility, Self-denial, fervent Charity, Zeal to honour their Saviour, and to do good to Men, and Unconcernedneſs for the things of this World, which was found in the Primitive Chriſtians and Martyrs, altho' we have the ſame Motives and Encouragements as they had, to do and ſuffer as much as they did, for the Honour of God, and our Saviour, and his Religion, and for the Benefit of the World. And when they compare themſelves with theſe, and other brave Souls, ſuch as *Abraham*, *Job*, *Daniel*, St. *Paul*, and the like, and their high Attainments, Men great and tall in ſpiritual Stature, they will be ready to eſteem themſelves but as Graſs-hoppers to them, as the Spies ſent into *Canaan* ſaid of themſelves, when they ſaw there the Sons of *Anak*, which came of the Giants. Wherefore to have our Eye, our Thoughts much upon what we are wanting in, and upon our Defects and Failings, and to abide under a Senſe of our Spiritual Poverty, is a very proper means to prevent Spiritual and all other Pride, and to take down and ſuppreſs any Buddings of it, and to keep the Mind in an humble Poſture.

Sect. V. *The frequent Conſideration, and an abiding Senſe of the continual Danger that we are in, of ſuffering in the Affairs and Concerns of our Souls, from the corrupt Fountain of our depraved Natures, will contribute very much to the Humility of our Minds.* In this Propoſition there are two things ſuppoſed, and one aſſerted. One of the things ſuppoſed, is, that our Nature ſince the Fall is depraved, the Powers and Faculties thereof ſo corrupted, as that thereby a Proneneſs to actual Sin is contracted: Which Corruption and Propenſion to Sin, the Scripture calls *Luſt.* And this corrupt Fountain is that from which all thoſe impure Streams of actual Sins do iſſue and proceed, which like a Deluge have overflowed the World, and filled it with Diſorder and Confuſion: *The Corruption which is in the World*, is *through Luſt*, as St. *Peter* informs us, 2 *Pet.* i. 4. *This Luſt, when it hath conceived, bringeth forth Sin:* (actual Sin, unleſs ſtrangled in the Birth) as St. *James* tells us, *Chap.* i. 15. Now this corrupt Fountain we cannot ſay, is wholly dry'd up, no not in the beſt of Men during their militant State here on Earth. For although the *Body of Sin* is ſaid to be *deſtroy'd* in ſuch, and *the old Man crucified*, and the *Fleſh* to be *crucified with the Affections and Luſts*, yet this is not to be underſtood of a total Deſtruction of the being of the old Man, the Body of Sin, the Affections and Luſts, but of a deſtroying of theſe in their Dominion, Reign and Power. As Chriſt is ſaid, through his Death, to have *deſtroyed him that had the Power of Death*, to wit, the Devil; which is not to be underſtood of the Deſtruction of his Perſon, Eſſence or Being, but only of his Power and Dominion. This then being ſo, there is and will be ſtill found in the regenerate themſelves, ſomething of this Luſt which is called the firſt Motions to Sin: This corrupt Fountain is dried up but by degrees, not in an inſtant, and all at once.

The other thing ſuppoſed is, that by reaſon of this remaining Corruption, which breeds in Men the firſt Motions of Sin, and a Propenſion to actual Sin; good Men themſelves are in a continual Danger of being betray'd into more or leſs actual Sin, before they are aware; unleſs they, through the Influence of a contrary Principle, ſtand continually upon their Guard, to watch the ſtirrings of the firſt Motions of Sin, to oppoſe and ſtop them, that they proceed no farther. The many Temptations that are in the World, from outward Objects and Occurrences, do and will kindle the firſt Motions unto Sin; and thoſe firſt Motions will be drawn forth into Act, by the Incitement of thoſe Objects, unleſs oppoſed and hindered by a ſtronger Power of the Spirits luſting againſt the Fleſh, or by the Oppoſition which the Reaſon of a Man may make againſt them. And this Oppoſition cannot be made, unleſs a Man watch and obſerve thoſe Motions, in order to the quenching and ſuppreſſing of them, but will be ſurprized by them.

Theſe things ſuppoſed, that which is aſſerted is, That for a Man to abide under a ſenſe of this danger fore-mentioned, which he is in, is a means that will contribute much to the Humility of his Mind, eſpecially conſidering what Care and Watchfulneſs he is continually obliged to, to prevent the evil he is in danger of. *Thou ſtandeſt by Faith, be not high-minded but fear*, ſaith St. *Paul*, Rom. xi. 20. Implying by that Oppoſition in the words, that a ſenſe of danger and fear of falling, is a good antidote againſt High-mindedneſs, and ſo a means to preſerve the Mind in a lowly frame. King *Hezekiah*, though ſo excellent a Man as he was, yet for want of a ſenſe of this danger, fell in a time of Temptation. His Temptation was this: God had given him ſuch a ſign of his Recovery out of a dangerous Sickneſs, by cauſing the Sun to go backwards, as was notorious to Neighbour Nations. Which made his Fame ſpread ſo, as that the Princes of *Babylon* ſent Ambaſſadors to him, to enquire of the Wonder, and to make Preſents to him. Hereupon he became unduly lifted up in his own Mind, when he ſaw himſelf admired by foreign Princes, for the great things God had done for him: *For it is ſaid, Hezekiah rendred not again according to the benefit done unto him, for his Heart was lifted up*, 2 Chron. xxxii. 25. He was, it ſeems, more ſenſible of, and more affected with the great Honour that was put upon him both by God and Men, than thoughtful how to behave himſelf ſo as not to miſcarry under it. Now that this befel him, for want of a due ſenſe of the danger he was in upon account of the remaining Corruption that was in his Nature, and of being betrayed by it in time of Temptation, I gather from thoſe words, ver. 31. *God left him to try him, that he might know all that was in his Heart:* Implying, that he did not know, nor duly conſider, what Corruption was yet in his Heart, nor the danger of miſcarrying he was in thereby, until he found it by this ſad Experience. But by this Experience he came to know it, and not only ſo, but to be cured alſo of that Diſtemper, into which he fell; Ver. 26. *Notwithſtanding Hezekiah humbled himſelf for the Pride of his Heart.* And like unto this, God, as I conceive, does many times with other Men, when they grow too confident of their own ſtrength, and too ſecure, and inapprehenſive of the danger they are in from the ſecret Enemy that lurks in their Natures, he leaves them to fall, as here he did *Hezekiah*, that they might thereby come to know themſelves better, to know their own weakneſs and proneneſs to Sin, and to know their danger, and ſo to make them more jealous of themſelves, and more wary and watchful, and ſo the more humble likewiſe.

And it would be farther conſidered, in order to the keeping the Mind humble, that this remaining Corruption in the Nature even of good Men, does not only expoſe them to the danger of falling into actual Sin in time of Temptation, but that it does continually hinder them alſo from doing ſo much good as they have a deſire to do, and would do, were they not clogg'd and hinder'd by it. This remaining Corruption in the Nature of good Men, is to the Soul, what Sickneſs is to the Body; it makes a Chriſtian more liſtleſs and indiſpoſed to that which is his proper Work, than otherwiſe he would be. How many good Purpoſes, by reaſon of this, have languiſhed and dwindled away to nothing, and faint Attempts alſo? It weakens a Man, and makes his motion but ſlow in the Chriſtian Race, in compariſon of what it would be, if this *weight did not hang ſo faſt on.* It makes a Man more unactive, and able to diſpatch but few of the many Buſineſſes belonging to his Chriſtian Calling, which otherwiſe he has opportunity to go through with. This *Fleſh luſteth againſt the Spirit*, ſo that good Men *cannot do the things that they would*, as St. *Paul* ſpeaks, *Gal.* v. 17. It luſteth againſt the luſting of the Spirit; when the Spirit draws forward, that draws backward. And although the Spirit is too hard for it in good Men, ſo that it makes on its way, notwithſtanding ſuch a pull-back, yet it is with much more difficulty, and leſs ſpeed. Theſe *Luſts in our Members war againſt the Law of our Minds*, as St. *Paul* ſpeaks, *Rom.* vii. *They war againſt the Soul*, as St. *Peter* ſpeaks, 1 *Pet.* ii. 11. So that ſincere Chriſtians are fain to carry on their Spiritual Building, as the *Jews* did their Building of the Walls of *Jeruſalem*, in *Nehemiah*'s time, working with one hand, and holding a Weapon in the other, becauſe of their Enemies, *Nehem.* iv. 17. They muſt have Conſiderations in their Mind to defend them from the Motions of the Fleſh, as well as others, to make them willing to follow the drawings of the Spirit.

Moreover, by reaſon of this remaining Pravity in the Nature of good Men, *ſome carnal motive* or other is apt oft-times to thruſt it ſelf into their Minds and Thoughts, and to mingle it ſelf with theſe better motives, by which they are drawn to perform this or that Duty, ſo that they may truly ſay in St. *Paul*'s words, *When I would do good,*

good, evil is preſent with me: And this proves matter of humbling to them alſo, *Rom.* vii. 21. For by reaſon of this mixture, their ends in doing what is in it ſelf matter of Duty, is not ſo pure as they deſire it ſhould be, and which does ſo ſully and ſtain the ſervice in their own Eyes, as that it makes them many times queſtion whether it does not ſpoil its acceptance with God, and whether it may not deprive them of that Reward which God hath promiſed to ſuch Service, when ſincerely performed. Some think it was in reſpect of theſe firſt motions of Sin, which the beſt Men cannot get wholly rid of, ſo long as this corrupt Fountain is not wholly dried up, (though they diſlike them, and are not pleaſed with themſelves, becauſe of them) that S. *Paul* cried out, *O wretched Man that I am, who ſhall deliver me from this Body of Death!* Rom. vii. 24. But whether this were ſo or no, there is no doubt but that ſuch Buddings of the Fleſh in good Men, as I have been ſpeaking of, though nipt in the Bud, and never come farther into act, is a great grievance to them, and tends to lay them low in their own Eyes; and does afflict the Mind, as a Mote does the Eye, when got into it.

Sect. VI. *The frequent Conſideration and ſtanding Senſe of what judgment God makes of Men, in reference to what they have, and what they do, tends to make and keep them humble.* For the ſenſe of this tends to make them judge no better of themſelves, in reſpect of what they do, and what they have, than God does: And ſo long as they value themſelves upon account of theſe but as God does, they will be in no great danger of over-valuing themſelves. Now God values Men according to that frame and temper of Mind they are of, in doing what they do, and in uſing what they have. Accordingly God is ſaid in Scripture *to ſearch the Heart, and to try the Reins, to give to every Man according to his ways, and according to the fruit of his doings,* Jer. xvii. 10. Rev. ii. 23. To this end he ſearcheth and tryeth the Heart, that he may give to every Man according to his doings: Which implies, that he does judge of Mens doings according to that frame and temper of Mind from which thoſe doings proceed, and will reward them accordingly. When Men do thoſe things that are materially good, God values them in ſuch their doing, according to that temper of Mind in which they do them. As when Men do Acts of Righteouſneſs and Equity, in love to Righteouſneſs it ſelf, becauſe they are of God, and pleaſe him, and becauſe good in themſelves. *Thou meeteſt him that rejoyceth and worketh righteouſneſs,* Iſai. lxiv. 5. *It is joy to the juſt to do judgment,* Prov. xxi. 15. So it's Mens love to Mercy it ſelf, as it is good upon ſeveral accounts, that Almighty God values Mens Acts of Mercy, and them upon the account of them, as they proceed from a Principle of Mercy, from a merciful Temper or Habit, from a merciful Mind. *If thou draw out thy Soul to the hungry,* ſaith the Lord by his Prophet, as well as thou doſt thine Alms, *Iſai.* lviii. 10. *What doth the Lord thy God require of thee, but to do juſtly, to love mercy, and to walk humbly with thy God,* Micah vi. 8. And the like may be ſaid of Acts of Charity, a Man is eſteemed by God, upon the account of them, according to the good habit of Mind from which they proceed, from a Mind that ſtands inclined to do good to others upon all fitting occaſions, and as there is opportunity, and from a *love to do good.* Particular Acts of Juſtice, Mercy and Charity may be done, and yet not from a Principle of Love to Righteouſneſs, Mercy and Charity themſelves, but for Oſtentation-ſake, or for ſome other Selfiſh-end, and then we cannot ſay that the Men that do them will be any whit the more valued or eſteemed by God upon account of thoſe Acts. St. *Paul* ſuppoſeth it poſſible for Men to give all their Goods to feed the Poor, and yet to have no Charity; and their Bodies to be burned, and yet to have no true Principle of Love to the Truth, or Cauſe for which they ſuffer: Or upon ſuppoſition, that the one could be done, or the other ſuffered, without proceeding from a good habit and temper of Mind, of true Love and Good-will, yet all this would profit them nothing, 1 *Cor.* xiii. And as God does not value Men meerly for what good Acts they do, but according to the frame of Mind by which they do them, as from what Principle or Motive, and for what End; ſo neither does he value them for what they have, be it Knowledge or Skill in one thing or other, or Worldly Wealth, or Intereſt and Honour among Men, but according to the temper of their Minds, inclining them to uſe theſe to worthy Ends and Purpoſes. *Though I had the Tongues of Men and of Angels, and had the gift of Prophecy, and underſtood all Myſteries, and had all Faith, ſo that I could remove Mountains, and had not Charity,* (inclining and diſpoſing me to uſe theſe for the good of others) *I were nothing,* 1 Cor. xiii. This St. *Paul* wrote to thoſe who valued themſelves by thoſe Gifts, wherein they excell'd others, as they thought. Nor does God eſteem of Men the more for their external ſpiritual Privileges, their being of the Church, their enjoying the Ordinances there adminiſtred, though never ſo purely and powerfully, farther than they are careful to improve them to the bettering of their Minds, and regulating their Wills and Affections, and the better Government of their Lives, but will deal worſe with them, than with thoſe that never enjoyed them, in caſe they do not make that uſe of them, but think themſelves in a good Condition, only becauſe they have them.

Now ſince Almighty God does not value Men, meerly by what they do, or what they have, but according to the Frame and Temper of Mind wherewith they do the one, and uſe the other; no wiſe Man will count it ſafe for him to value himſelf otherwiſe, than as God values him. And if he does thus value himſelf, but according to the Temper and Diſpoſition of his Mind and Spirit, wherewith he performs every Duty, and uſeth all his Attainments, he cannot lightly but make a very humble and modeſt Eſtimate of himſelf, by all he does, and all he has. And the reaſon is, becauſe he will find ſo many Flaws and Defects in the manner of doing his Duty, in reference to that inward Purity and Sincerity of Mind, in which every Duty ought to be performed, that he will find in himſelf abundant more cauſe of being humble under the Senſe of his Defects, than to be lifted up with a good Opinion of his Attainments and Performances.

Sect. VII. *The Senſe and frequent Conſideration of the unſuitable returns we have made to God and our Lord Jeſus Chriſt, for all the Compaſſion, Mercy, Love and Kindneſs which they have ſhew'd us, tends greatly to kill Pride, and to beget Humility of Mind.* When we cannot tell what God and our Saviour could have done more for us, which they have not done to overcome our ill Nature, and to gain our Love, and to make us freely willing to pleaſe them in every thing: How can it be, but that Shame ſhould cover our Faces, our Thoughts deſcend, and Minds lie low; and we our ſelves become vile in our own Eyes, when we conſider the many unkind and diſpleaſing Paſſages of our Lives, towards our good and bleſſed God and Saviour, which the beſt of us ſtand guilty of? When we call our ſelves to account, and charge our Memories with the many untoward, unbecoming and ungrateful Motions of our Souls and Actions of our Lives, will not our Hearts ſmite us, and our Conſciences prompt us to ſay to our ſelves, as *Moſes* ſometime ſaid to the Children of *Iſrael*, *O fooliſh People and unwiſe, do we thus requite the Lord!* Has the bleſſed God not only forborn us, but been ſeeking our Good, and doing us good alſo, all the while we were unmindful of him, and unſenſible of the deſign of Grace and Love he had upon us? Has not the Father given his only Son to lead a ſorrowful Life, and to ſuffer a ſhameful and painful Death for us, and has not his Son been as willing to undergo it, to redeem us from the Curſe that lay upon us! Has he not by his Word and Spirit, and by other Methods of his Grace, been long ſtriving with our unteachable Minds, and untractable Wills, to draw us out of the broad Way, that leads to Deſtruction, and to put us into a Capacity once more, of being as happy as Heaven can make us? Has he not protected us from many Calamities, which we have deſerved, and others have ſuffered, and delivered us out of many other, into which we had fallen? Have we not been maintained by his Goodneſs and his Bounty all our days? And can we ſeriouſly think of theſe things, and yet have any great Opinion of our ſelves, when after all this, our Hearts are in a great meaſure dull and flat within us, inſtead of being tranſported, and all in a Flame of Love and Zeal? And when we conſider how weak and liſtleſs, and defective our Endeavours have been, to do thoſe things, in which our God delights: When, I ſay, we conſider ſuch things as theſe, it is not likely that any proud Thoughts, or high Conceits of our ſelves, can appear or ſhow themſelves among ſuch Thoughts as theſe. And yet theſe are ſuch things as ſet themſelves before our Minds every day, if we will but look upon them.

Sect. VIII. The frequent Conſideration of the Lovelineſs of that Example, which our bleſſed Saviour hath left his Diſciples, both in the excellent Temper of his Mind and Spirit, and the Innocency and Holineſs of his Life, in the Piety of his Behaviour, in reference to God his Father, and in the Uſefulneſs and Profitableneſs of it, in reference unto Men, will lay the Minds of ſuch low, as do truly deſire to approve themſelves his Diſciples indeed, when they find in themſelves how exceeding ſhort they fall, in imitating their great Pattern and Example. When they compare his Devotion of Soul with their own, his Humility and Charity with theirs, his Meekneſs, Gentleneſs and Patience, with what of that they find in themſelves, his Zeal to honour God, and to do good to Men, both as to Soul and Body, with what of that kind they can upon impartial Examination diſcern in themſelves; his Heavenly-mindedneſs, and low eſteem of worldly Wealth and Glory, his Contentation under the hard and difficult, and afflictive Circumſtances of his Life, and the Entireneſs of the Reſignation of himſelf, to the Will and Pleaſure of God, with what of this nature they can find in themſelves: I ſay, when ſuch Compariſon is made, though by the very beſt of his Diſciples, they will find in themſelves ſo much of Unlikeneſs to him, in theſe and the like, as will make them aſhamed of themſelves, and which will ſuppreſs the riſing of any proud Thoughts in their minds, in the Preſence of ſuch Conſiderations, by which ſuch Compariſon is made. And the more they are in love with him for theſe Perfections, and the more they deſire to be like him, the more their Souls will be humbled within them, when they find how far ſhort they fall of their Pattern with which they are ſo much taken. And the more ſpiritual any Man grows, the greater ſenſe and more clear diſcerning he will have of the Beauty, Excellency and Lovelineſs of thoſe things, wherein our Saviour is an Example to us, and the ſtronger deſire of growing more and more like him. And by how much the more ſpiritual he is, by ſo much the more, and by ſo much the ſooner will he diſcover ſuch Defects in himſelf, which one leſs ſpiritual will have little or no ſenſe of; and the ſenſe of theſe will ſtill keep him humble, and little in his own Eyes. Theſe leſſer Defects and Surpriſals in a Man of a refined Spirit, will humble him as much or more, and lay him as low or lower in his own Eyes, than thoſe that were greater would do, while he was but of a leſſer Growth and Stature in Chriſtianity. The ſpiritual *Senſe* in ſuch a Man, is *more quick* in taſting and diſcerning both Good and Evil, and in diſcerning thoſe degrees of Spirituality he longs after, but cannot yet attain, and likewiſe of thoſe Infirmities and Defects which hinder him from them: And this Senſe ſtill ſets him the more out of danger, of being puft up with Pride, or Self-conceitedneſs.

Sect. IX. *A due Senſe of our Dependence upon Almighty God, and his free Grace and Bounty, for all we have, or hope to have, is of great uſe, to keep our Minds in an humble poſture.* In reference to things pertaining to our Souls, both preſent, and for the future, we may truly ſay with St. *Paul, By the Grace of God I am what I am: All our Sufficiency is of God: That it is God that worketh in us both to will and to do of his own good pleaſure: That we are kept by the power of God, through Faith unto Salvation*, and the like. Conſidering all which, though we may and ought to be glad in the Lord, becauſe of his Goodneſs and Bounty to us; yet ſince what we have from God in this kind, is not upon account of any Merit of ours, there is no Foundation for glorying in our ſelves. *What haſt thou, ſaith the Apoſtle, which thou haſt not received? Now, if thou didſt receive it, why doſt thou glory as if thou hadſt not received it?* 1 Cor. iv. 7. Although God does not ordinarily confer ſpiritual Gifts and Graces, without our Endeavours in the uſe of his appointed means; yet ſince God was under no Obligation from Men, to vouchſafe us thoſe means, nor to incline us to make uſe of them, nor to aſſiſt us in the uſe of them, nor to ſucceed our uſe of them to the obtaining his ſpiritual Benefits, without all which we cannot have them, thence it comes to paſs that all occaſion of priding our ſelves in any Attainments, is quite cut off from us, and that we cannot ſay we have any thing, which we have not received of God's meer Grace and Bounty, without any deſert of ours. Beſides, whatever we have received of free Gift, is not thereupon ſo ours, or in our keeping, but that we are in danger of loſing it, and of falling from thoſe happy Circumſtances, in which the Goodneſs of God has plac'd us, if we do not carry our ſelves humbly and ſoberly under them, not exalting our ſelves in our own minds, againſt thoſe that are in a worſe Condition, but pitying them in theirs. *Boaſt not thy ſelf againſt the Branches: Becauſe of Unbelief they were broken off, and thou ſtandeſt by Faith, be not high-minded but fear.* Rom. xi. 18, 20. And he, in the Parable, had his Talent taken away from him, after it had been given him, for not making a good and ſober uſe of it. The Conſideration of all which, tends to keep us humble in that Condition, and under thoſe Circumſtances that are moſt pleaſing to us.

And as a due ſenſe of our dependent State, in reference to things ſpiritual, is a good means to keep us humble, ſo it is in reference to things ſecular, ſuch as Health, Wealth, Honour, and Reputation, Succeſs in Affairs, and the like. The way for Men not to be puft up, and to pride themſelves in theſe, is to be under a continual ſenſe, that theſe things are not in their own Power, but depend upon the Diſpoſal of the Divine Providence. It is the Voice of Humility, to ſay with the Prophet, *O Lord,* *I know that the way of Man is not in himſelf; it is not in Man that walketh to direct his ſteps*, Jer. x. 23. And with *David*, *My times, O Lord, are in thine hand*, Pſal. xxxi. 15. Whereas for any to ſay, *To day or to morrow we will go into ſuch a City, and continue there a Year, and buy and ſell and get gain*, without minding the Intereſt of Divine Providence in the caſe, is but *arrogant boaſting* of that which is out of their power, in the ſenſe of St. *James*, Chap. iv. 13. And the truth is, the more Men are void of the ſenſe, that all their Honour, Wealth and Riches, and the Proſperity and Succeſs of their Affairs, depend upon the ſavour of Divine Providence, the more will their Hearts be lifted up with them. When the Prince of *Tyrus* ſaid in his Heart, *By my great Wiſdom, and by my Traffick, I have increaſed my Riches*; then it was that his *Heart was lifted up*, becauſe of his Riches, *Ezek.* xxviii. 5. *Moſes* premoniſhed *Iſrael* of their danger of having their Hearts unduly lifted up, when they ſhould come to be in a proſperous Condition, if they did not preſerve in their Minds a ſenſe of how much it did depend upon God, and the favour of his Providence towards them, to be in ſuch a Condition, *Deut.* viii. *Beware leſt when thy Herds and thy Flocks, thy Silver and thy Gold, and all that thou haſt is multiplied, leſt then thy Heart be lifted up, and thou forget the Lord thy God, and ſay in thine heart, My power and the might of my hand hath gotten me this Wealth.* And he preſcribed them this Remedy againſt ſuch Pride, and as a means to keep them humble: *But thou ſhalt remember the Lord thy God, that it is he that giveth thee power to get Wealth.* So that a ſtrong ſenſe we ſee, that we and all our concerns for Soul and Body, for this World and that which is to come, are in the hands of God, and ſhall be diſpoſed of by the Wiſdom of his Providence, and that always for good, to thoſe that are humble and good, does conduce very much to lowlineſs of Heart, and modeſty of Mind. And it does ſo more eſpecially when it is joined with a ſenſe of our own weakneſs and frailty, and how unable we ſhould be to manage ſo many and great Affairs, which in ſome ſort lie upon our Hands and Care, if left wholly to our ſelves, and how impoſſible it would be for us to wreſtle with, and overcome at laſt, all that Oppoſition we meet with from thoſe buſie and potent Enemies of ours, the World, the Fleſh, and the Devil. The ſenſe of this, and of the place where our help lies, will make us have little liſt to arrogate much to our ſelves, or to glory or boaſt of our own Power or Performances, but to caſt down our ſelves before the mighty God, and to glory only in him, and in his ſaving aid.

Sect. X. Another thing which tends to make Men humble, and to keep them ſo, is, their remembring and conſidering the great Account that they will be called to, how they have uſed and improved thoſe ſeveral Talents intruſted with them, and the means and opportunities they have had of being good, and doing good. For, as thoſe that have abuſed what of that they have received more than others, by perverting the ſame, to the breeding and nouriſhing Pride in themſelves, to the exalting themſelves in their own Conceits above others, inſtead of deſigning the good of others, by a due uſe thereof, will not be able to ſtand in the Judgment, nor to hold up their Heads in the Preſence of their Judge; ſo neither can proud and ſelf-exalting Thoughts be able to abide in the Mind, when that Judgment is but in a lively manner repreſented to a Man's ſelf by his own Thoughts. For when Men conſider, that to what degree they have received more than others, to that degree more will be required of them: And when they conſider likewiſe, that the Counſels of their Hearts will be brought into Judgment, as well as their Words and Actions, as out of what Principle, and for what End and Deſign they have done what they now do, as whether to approve themſelves to God, and to anſwer his Expectation, or only, or chiefly, to gain Approbation and Honour from Men: I ſay, while Men are under the influence of ſuch Thoughts as theſe, they will be in no great danger of being vainly lifted up in their own Minds with a ſenſe of their having received more Talents than others, whether of goods of the Mind, or goods of Fortune. The very Thought of our laſt and great Account to God, and the iſſue of that great Day's Tryal, is enough to bring down all the loftineſs of any Man, while he is under it, and to lay him low.

Sect. XI. *Add unto all the reſt, Prayer unto Almighty God, as a fit and proper means to obtain more and more Humility.* Every good and perfect Gift (of which number Humility is one) comes down from God the Father of Lights, and from him we muſt have it, if we have it at all. And we have no reaſon to expect it from him, without ſeeking to him for it. The tenour of the Promiſe is, *Ask and you ſhall have, ſeek and you ſhall find.* And St. *James* ſaith, *Ye have not, becauſe ye ask not: If any Man lack*

Wiſdom, let him ask it of God, who giveth to all Men liberally, and it ſhall be given him; and there is as much reaſon to expect Humility from God upon theſe terms, as there is to expect Wiſdom. For we are ſure, that to ask Humility, and to be qualified with it, is fully agreeable to God's Will. And St. *John* ſaith, *This is the Confidence we have in him, that if we ask any thing according to his will, he heareth us.* But then we muſt be careful to ask according to his Will, in the manner of ſeeking, as well as in the matter. We muſt ſeek it as Men ſeek what their Heart is fully ſet upon, and are reſtleſs till they obtain; we muſt ſeek it without ceaſing, and with great longing after it. *Ye ſhall ſeek me and find me, when ye ſhall ſearch for me with all your heart*, ſaith God, *Jer.* xxix. 13. And then we muſt ſeek this Grace of Humility from God, as we beg our daily Bread of him in the Lord's Prayer, by joyning therewith our own Endeavours in the uſe of means. For otherwiſe we can no more expect Humility from God, meerly upon our asking, without the uſe of ſuch other means as are in our power, than we can expect our daily Bread upon the account of our asking it, without uſing the means of obtaining it, which God hath put in our power. And among other means, a frequent Meditation and Conſideration of thoſe ſeveral things I have before mentioned, and ſuch other of like tendency, as you can think on, would not be neglected.

But the tendency of this Direction is, that in our ſeeking Humility we do not reſt in the uſe of any other means, without the uſe of this; though, as I have ſhew'd, we muſt not reſt in this neither, without the uſe of the other. For we cannot ſay, that any means which we can uſe, are ſufficient of themſelves to plant this Grace of Humility in us, without the Bleſſing of God upon them, to proſper them to that end, and the efficacious Operation of the Spirit of God upon the Mind by them. For ſuch a thing as this is always ſuppoſed, when we beg God's Bleſſing upon the means we make uſe of for the procuring of ſuch things as we would have. There is ſomething more that is neceſſary to the conveying of Grace into the Soul, and for the increaſing of it, than God has put into the means, abſtractly conſidered, and that is it we ſeek of God by Prayer to him, even then, when we uſe other the moſt likely means we can for the procuring of what we would have. *Though Paul may plant, and Apollos water, yet it is God that giveth the increaſe.* And beſides this, the drawing our Minds ſeriouſly and frequently to think on thoſe things which have a tendency in them, when duly thought on, to work Humility in us, depends very much upon the Spirit of God, who works upon our Souls by our Thoughts, as I ſhew'd at the beginning of this Chapter. And therefore *David* prays to God *to unite his heart to fear him*, in one place; and that he would *keep* a good thing *for ever in the imagination of the thoughts of the heart of his People, and prepare their heart unto him*, in another, *Pſal.* lxxxvi. 11. 1 Chron. xxix. 18. The inſpiring the Mind with good Thoughts, is one way of the Spirit's Operation; as the working of laſting Impreſſions upon the Soul by them, is another. *Thanks be to God which put the ſame earneſt care into the heart of Titus for you*, 2 Cor. viii. 16. So that we ſee there is great reaſon for this Application of our ſelves to God by Prayer for Humility, when we have done the beſt we can for the obtaining it by other means: And there is as great reaſon to promiſe our ſelves ſucceſs in the uſe of this, if we do not neglect the other.

Sect. XII. In the laſt place for direction, whenever we find our ſelves tempted to Pride, upon any account whatſoever, or whenever we find any Thoughts to ariſe in our Minds, which tend unduly to lift us up in our own conceit, then let us inſtantly have recourſe in our Minds unto ſome of thoſe Conſiderations, which are of an humbling nature, and which as truly tend to ſuppreſs and keep down proud Thoughts, when they begin to put forth, as Water does to quench a Fire, when caſt upon it in its beginning, and before it has got an head: For ſuch Conſiderations are the Inſtruments, in the uſe of which, by the Mind, Men learn to be humble, as they do their ſeveral Trades and Arts by the uſe of ſuch Tools, about ſuch matter as are proper for ſuch a purpoſe. Habitual Humility is learned by a cuſtomary Practice of Humility in particular Acts, as occaſion does occur. And when Men do really endeavour to act a Chriſtian part in Humility, as well as they can, though not ſo well as they would, they will certainly grow more and more perfect in it; and then, and in this way they may expect, and will certainly obtain an anſwer of thoſe Prayers which they put up to God for it. Almighty God delights to aſſiſt thoſe moſt, that moſt endeavour to practiſe what they pray for. But when we pray, and pray to God, from time to time, to make us humble, or for any other Grace, and yet do not increaſe and grow therein, I do believe the principal, if not the only reaſon is, for that we do not in good earneſt ſet about the Exerciſe and Practice of it, according to what we are able to do.

CHAP. VI.

Of the Arguments and Motives perſuading to the Purſuit and Practice of this Grace of Humility.

Sect. I. B*Y Humility Men become of the number of God's Favourites and Objects of his ſpecial reſpect:* And that's enough to recommend it to us, as a thing altogether deſirable. It is counted a great Happineſs for Men to be the Favourites of wiſe and potent Princes, who have both Power and Will to prefer them. What is it then to be the Men of ſpecial account and reſpect in the Eyes of the great God of Heaven and Earth, in whom nothing is wanting to prefer them, even beyond their hearts deſire? And yet this doth Humility prefer Men unto, *Pſal.* cxxxviii. 6. *Though the Lord be high, yet hath he reſpect unto the lowly; but the proud he knoweth afar off.* The infinite diſtance between God and Men in reſpect of their Nature and Beings, will not we ſee, keep God at a diſtance in his Favour and Affection from them, if they are humble. Though they have mean Thoughts of themſelves, yet God has a high eſteem of them: *A meek and quiet Spirit, are in the Sight of God, things of great price*, as St. *Peter* notes, 1 *Pet.* iii. 4. Of like import is that in another of the Prophets: *Thus ſaith the Lord, the Heaven is my Throne, and the Earth is my Footſtool: But to this Man will I look, even to him that is poor and of a contrite Spirit, and trembleth at my Word*, Iſa. lxvi. 1, 2. The mentioning the Majeſtick Greatneſs of God, by way of Preface to thoſe words, *but to this Man will I look*, &c. ſerves to ſet off the very great Value which God has for humble Men of contrite Hearts, and that ſtand in awe of his Word. Tho' they be poor in their own Eyes, and in the Eyes of others, and though God be ſo great as to have Heaven for his Throne, and the Earth for his Footſtool, yet he would have them and all Men know, that his Eye in ſpecial is upon them as a pleaſing Object, and as ſuch for whom he does and will concern himſelf, as having them under his Eye and Care: For that ſeems to be the Import of that Phraſe, *To this Man will I look. He withdraweth not his Eyes from the righteous*, ſaith *Elihu, Job* xxxvi. 7. It was ſaid of the Land of Promiſe, that it was a *Land which the Lord cared for, and that the Eyes of the Lord were always upon it from the beginning of the Year to the end of the Year*, Deut. xi. God's watchful and favourable Providence, ſtood always charged with it, as it were. And this ſaying of God, Unto this Man will I look, ſignifies no leſs, as we may well think. Yet again, in *Iſa.* lvii. 15. the Lord ſpeaketh on this wiſe: *Thus ſaith the high and the lofty one, he that inhabiteth Eternity, whoſe Name is holy, I dwell in the high and holy place, with him alſo that is of an humble Spirit.* And why doth God ſtill mention his own Height in Majeſty, Glory and Greatneſs, when he would declare his own liking of humble Men, but thereby the better to ſet off the Greatneſs of that Reſpect and Eſteem he has for them. For whereas he knows proud Men only afar off, though they be never ſo great, yet he will dwell with humble Men, though they be never ſo poor and mean, and notwithſtanding he is the high and lofty one, as I have ſaid; which argues the very great reſpect he bears to them: He would have them to know, that though they are mean in their own Eyes, that yet therefore they are great in his, and as a Token of it, he will come and dwell with them, though otherwiſe his dwelling is in the high and holy Place.

Sect. II. *The humble of all other are thoſe whom God will teach.* He will guide them in the way in which they ſhould go, and direct them in all the great Affairs of their Souls, that they may never err dangerouſly either in Judgment or Practice. *The meek he will guide in Judgment; the meek will he teach his way*, ſo ſingeth the Pſalmiſt, *Pſal.* xxv. 9. God will guide them in Judgment, he will aſſiſt them to underſtand aright, what to chuſe and what to refuſe; and he will teach them in the way, by aſſiſting them to will and to do aright in point of Practice. And therefore well might *Solomon*

lomon ſay, as he does, *with the lowly is Wiſdom*, Prov. xi. 2. *And the Wiſdom of the prudent is to underſtand his way*, as he ſays in another place.

Humility makes Men *teachable*, and that may very well be a reaſon why the Lord delighteth to teach ſuch. Pride on the contrary makes them unteachable. Proud Men are wiſe in their own Conceit: They are apt to think they know enough, when yet they know nothing as they ought to know; and that very Conceitedneſs makes them unteachable, careleſs to learn. *Seeſt thou a Man wiſe in his own Conceit, there is more hope of a Fool than of him*, Prov. xxvi. 12. But Humility makes Men ſenſible of their own Weakneſs and Poverty of Mind, and that Senſe makes them willing diligently to attend thoſe means by which God is wont to communicate Light and Direction unto Men, for the ſafe Conduct of their Lives and Actions. It is this ſort of Men of all others, that do as it were *hear a Voice behind them, ſaying, this is the Way walk in it, when they turn to the right hand or to the left.*

And there is this farther reaſon, why God will thus teach humble Men, rather than any other; becauſe Humility makes them deſire Knowledge not for Oſtentation, but for Practice ſake: They deſire to know more, that they may do more and do better; and thoſe are the Men whom God delighteth to make to know Wiſdom. Proud Men, if they deſire more Knowledge, it is for Oſtentation ſake, ſo ſaith *Solomon*; *A Fool hath no Delight in Underſtanding, but that his Heart may diſcover it ſelf*, Prov. xviii. 2. And the Holy God does not delight to miniſter Fuel to that Fire, to give Knowledge unto Men to ſpend it upon their Luſt. But thoſe who deſire Knowledge, not for Oſtentation, but for Duty ſake; that deſire more Light, that they may do more Work, and more Skill that they may do it better, as humble Men do; theſe ſhall be ſure to be taught of God how to pleaſe him, and how to ſteer a right courſe to be made happy. *If any Man will do his Will, he ſhall know of the Doctrine*, ſaith our Saviour, *John* vii. 17. *I underſtand more than the Ancients, becauſe I keep thy Precepts*, ſaith *David*, Pſal. cxix. 100. Doing is the right uſe of Knowledge; *If ye know theſe things, happy are ye if ye do them*, ſaid our Saviour: *And to him that hath*, and uſeth it for the end for which it was given, *to him more ſhall be given*, and *he ſhall have abundance*, according to the general Rule given by our Saviour. I deny not, but that Men of proud Minds may acquire a far greater Form of Knowledge in the things of Religion, than many humble Men attain to: Nor do I deny, but that God may aſſiſt them in this Acquiſition for the ſake of others, that they may receive Benefit thereby. But then they want that *Senſe and Savour* of Divine things, of plain Truths in Religion, which Almighty God works in the Minds of humble Men. By reaſon of which *Senſe*, their leſſer degree of Knowledge becomes far more uſeful to themſelves in reference to Practice, than a far greater degree of Knowledge does in the other. St. *Paul* pray'd, that the Chriſtians might abound more and more *in Knowledge and in all Senſe*, as it is in the Margin, *Phil.* i. 9. It's one thing to have a Knowledge of what is Duty, and of what is neceſſary to Salvation, ſwimming in the Brain, and another to have a deep and an affecting ſenſe and feeling thereof in their Hearts, both of the Neceſſity and Goodneſs thereof, ſuch as iſſues it ſelf in a ſuitable Practice. A little Knowledge with a great deal of this Senſe, will go much farther in the true Practice of Chriſtianity, than a great deal of formal and notional Knowledge will do without this Senſe. And that's the reaſon why many but weak in Knowledge, are far better and more practical Chriſtians, than many others, who yet far tranſcend them in Knowledge. The things neceſſary to Salvation are but few and very plain, and therefore eaſie to be underſtood and remembred by People, though but of weak Capacities: The Doctrines neceſſary to Salvation, *make wiſe the ſimple*. And when Almighty God is pleaſed to fix the Mind and Thoughts of ſuch upon thoſe few and plain things, ſo that they dwell much upon them and digeſt them, they come thereby to have ſuch a Senſe and Reliſh of their Goodneſs, Worth and Uſefulneſs to make them happy, as brings forth a far better Fruit of good Living, than abundance of more Knowledge does in others which want that Senſe.

Now this *Senſe* we ſpeak of, and *Pride*, are hardly found lodging together in the ſame Heart; but whenever God works that Senſe in a Man that has been a proud Perſon before, he firſt beats down and removes that Pride, at leaſt from being predominant. The different Effect of the Goſpel upon Men of proud Minds, though more knowing, and upon thoſe of a more humble Temper, though ſimple and leſs learned, was very viſible in the Scribes and Phariſees, compared with thoſe who were more illiterate and leſs knowing. The great Opinion which the one had of themſelves and of their Knowledge, made them unteachable under our Saviour's Miniſtration: When the meaner ſort, who were deſpiſed by them for their Ignorance, (*this People which know not the Law*, ſay they of them) being yet freer from Pride, received his Doctrine. His Father, as our Saviour ſays, *hid thoſe things from thoſe Wiſe and Prudent ones*, which yet *he revealed unto Babes*; ſuch as had more of Humility, though leſs of Knowledge: *Matth.* xi. 25. which is another full proof, that Humility qualifies Men for God's Teaching, and makes them more capable of the beſt Wiſdom: And that's Argument ſufficient to perſuade any Man, that cannot abide to be a Fool, to prize Humility.

Sect. III. *Almighty God will ſupport the Humble under, and ſtrengthen them againſt thoſe abuſes from bad Men, to which their Humility may expoſe them.* Humble Men, that have but mean and low Thoughts of themſelves, are not forward to ſet out themſelves among Men, as others are. And upon that very account, ill-natured Men will be apt to deſpiſe, neglect and ſlight them the more: For that's an Objection in the Minds of Men againſt that which we call Humility; for, ſay they, if a Man does not value himſelf, others will not value him neither. *I am ſmall and deſpiſed*, ſaith the Pſalmiſt: Indeed therefore deſpiſed becauſe ſmall, *Pſal.* cxix. 141. And again, *I am a Worm and no Man*, (and what follows upon it?) *a reproach of Men and deſpiſed of the People*, Pſal. xxii. 6. Our Saviour was an eminent Inſtance of this, in his humble appearance and deportment in the World, for *he made himſelf of no Reputation*, but took on him the form of a Servant, as the Apoſtle notes, *Phil.* ii. 7. And he himſelf ſaid, *I am among you as one that ſerveth*, Luke xxii. 27. And what followed upon this among bad Men, but that which the Prophet expreſſeth thus; *He was deſpiſed, and we eſteemed him not*, Iſai. liii. 3.

And whereto tends all this, if ſuch Men ſhould not be much ſupported and upheld by God, but to wound the Heart and to ſink the Spirit? And therefore, we have good Men, that have felt it, complaining thus: *The proud have had me greatly in deriſion*, Pſal. cxix. 51. *Reproach hath broken my heart, I am full of heavineſs*, Pſal. lxix. 20. *Our Soul is filled exceedingly with contempt, with the contempt of the proud*, Pſal. cxxiii. I am *poor and needy, and my heart is wounded within me*, Pſal. cix. 22. This being ſometimes the caſe of Men humble and of contrite Hearts; the good and bleſſed God, to ſhew the tender regard he hath to ſuch, hath declared his Reſolution to ſupport and incourage them, and to keep up their Hearts from ſinking, and to comfort and revive their drooping Spirits: *Iſai.* lvii. 15. *Thus ſaith the high and lofty one, that inhabiteth Eternity, whoſe Name is holy, I dwell in the high and holy place; with him alſo that is of a contrite and humble ſpirit, to revive the ſpirit of the humble, and to revive the heart of the contrite ones.* For I look upon theſe words, as here brought in, for the encouragement and ſupport of thoſe that humbled themſelves to walk with their God in faithfulneſs, in a time when the generality of the *Jews* became greatly degenerate, by which the Humble expoſed themſelves to be deſpiſed, contemned and derided by bad Men, as we may gather from Ver. 4. where it's ſaid, *Againſt whom do ye ſport your ſelves? againſt whom make ye a wide mouth, and draw out the tongue?* And when good Mens Hearts are wounded within them, for the Sins of thoſe among whom they live, and for their cruel Mockings, (as the Apoſtle's Phraſe is) Almighty God is wont to bind up and to heal ſuch Wounds: Pſal. cxlvii. 3. *He healeth the broken in heart, and bindeth up their wounds. The Lord hath anointed me to preach good tidings to the meek, he hath ſent me to bind up the broken-hearted, to comfort all that mourn*, Iſai. lxi. 1, 2. And the Conſolations of God are not ſmall in the Eyes of humble and good Men, whoſe chief deſire and aim is to be approved of God. For when they can be well perſuaded in their own Minds that they have gained that, it will weigh down and quite over-balance all the deſpiſing Reproach and Deriſion of Men. And they can (after they have taken down God's Cordials) patiently wait for the time and ſeaſon of his performing ſuch Promiſes as that: *Hear the Word of the Lord, ye that tremble at his Word; your Brethren that hated you, that caſt you out for my Name ſake, ſaid, Let the Lord be glorified: But he ſhall appear to your joy, and they ſhall be aſhamed*, Iſai. lxvi. 5.

Sect. IV. *Another benefit of Humility, which makes it deſirable, is, it procures quietude, reſt and peace unto the Soul.* This is the Motive uſed by our Saviour to perſuade his Diſciples to learn of him to be humble and meek: *Learn of me, for I am meek and lowly in heart, and ye ſhall find reſt unto your Souls*, Matth. xi. 29. Pride, which is its contrary, is the great diſturber of the Soul, fills it full of Commotions and Tumults, cauſeth one Storm after another to ariſe, blows up boiſterous and turbulent Paſſions of Diſcontent, Anger and Fury. Hence Wrath is called *proud wrath* by *Solomon*, from the root out of which it grows, *Prov.* xxi. 24. Every little Diſappointment, every croſs Providence, every imaginary Neglect from others, is enough to put a proud Man out of humour, and to give diſturbance to his Mind. And if ſo, he can have little reſt in his Mind, conſidering how full this World is of Diſappointments and Interruptions unto Men: For he that walks through the World, walks through a croud of theſe, and will be juſtled by one or other of them ever and anon. Pride heats the Mind, and ſo prepares it for fiery Paſſions, that every little Provocation will kindle and inflame it, as a ſmall Spark when it falls upon Tinder or Gun-powder. But Humility keeps the Spirit ſo cool, that it is not apt to take fire, though a Provocation does fall upon it. *Solomon* ſays, a Man of Underſtanding is of *a cool Spirit*, or of an *excellent Spirit*; for the ſame word, it ſeems, ſignifies both, *Prov.* xvii. 27. And he is of an excellent Spirit, becauſe of a cool Spirit, for that defends and preſerves ſuch a Man from a great deal of Trouble, Perturbation and Vexation, which a proud fiery Spirit expoſes a Man unto. Humility calms the Paſſions, and keeps the Face of the Soul ſmooth, as the Face of the Waters are in a Calm. Meekneſs and Quietneſs go together, and keep company in the ſame Spirit, and are ſo coupled by the Apoſtle, 1 Pet. iii. 4. *A meek and a quiet Spirit, which is in the ſight of God of great price*, ſaith he. And if it be in the ſight of God of great price, in reſpect of the Nature of it, well may it be in the ſight of us of great price alſo, in reſpect of the Benefit that comes by it, eaſe and reſt and quietneſs to the Mind.

Sect. V. *Humility, Lowlineſs and Meekneſs entitle Men to God's ſpecial Care and Protection in evil times, times of publick and common Calamity.* It does entitle them to it, ſo far at leaſt, as that they are far more likely to be ſecured than other Men. Not but that the beſt of Men, in a general Calamity, may ſhare in it more or leſs, yea in extraordinary caſes may fall with the reſt. *Behold, I will kindle a Fire in thee, and it ſhall devour every green Tree in thee, and every dry*, ſaith God by his Prophet. And again, *I will draw forth my Sword out of its Sheath, and will cut off from thee the Righteous and the Wicked.* But the meaning then of the aforeſaid Propoſition, is, that the Providence of God will ordinarily, and for the moſt part ſo diſtinguiſh between meek and humble Men and others, in publick Judgments, as that they ſhall be more favourably dealt with than other Men, *Job* xxii. 29. *When Men are caſt down, then thou ſhalt ſay there is lifting up, and he ſhall ſave the humble Perſon.* And again, *Zeph.* ii. 3. *Seek ye the Lord all ye meek of the Earth, ſeek Righteouſneſs, ſeek Meekneſs; it may be ye ſhall be hid in the day of the Lord's anger.* And they are ſaid to be hid, when God's Providence does ſo interpoſe it ſelf on their behalf one way or other, that they are as ſecure from the main ſtroke of a common Judgment, as if it could not find them out. Thus *Pſal.* xxxi. 20. *Thou ſhalt hide them in the ſecret of thy preſence from the pride of Men, thou ſhalt keep them ſecretly in a Pavilion from the ſtrife of Tongues. Thou art my hiding place, thou ſhalt preſerve me from trouble*, Pſal. xxxii. 7. Thus God commanded a diſtinguiſhing Mark to be ſet on the humble Men, that mourned for the Abominations of the Times, when Judgment was to be executed on the reſt, *Ezek.* ix. 4. Thus again, in *Rev.* vii. 3. it was given in charge to the four Angels, to whom it was given to hurt the Earth and the Sea, not to do it until the Servants of God were firſt ſealed in their Fore-heads, as a token of Exemption. Sometimes God moves the Hearts of their Enemies to treat them favourably, as he promiſed the Prophet *Jeremy*, they ſhould do him, and the Remnant that were faithful with him, *Jer.* xv. 11. *The Lord ſaid, Verily it ſhall be well with thy Remnant, verily I will cauſe the Enemy to intreat thee well in the time of evil, and in the time of affliction.* And accordingly the Pſalmiſt obſerves God's dealing with his People, ſaying, *He made them to be pitied of all thoſe that carried them Captives*, Pſal. cvi. 46. And by this act of his merciful Providence, among the reſt, God, I ſuppoſe, was a Sanctuary to his People, when carried out of their own Land, *Ezek.* xi. 16. *Thus ſaith the Lord God, although I have caſt them far off among the Heathen, and although I have ſcattered them among the Countries, yet will I be to them as a little Sanctuary in the Countries where they ſhall come.* Eminent Inſtances of this we have recorded touching the Preferment of *Daniel*, *Nehemiah*, *Mordecai*, and others.

There are many other Scriptures which do atteſt to this Truth, that God's Providence is ſpecially concern'd for the Preſervation and Deliverance of the Humble and Meek, more than for others. *The Lord lifteth up the meek; he caſteth the wicked down*

down to the ground, Pſal. cxlvii. 6. *He will beautifie the meek with Salvation*, Pſal. cxlix. 4. *When God aroſe to Judgment to ſave all the meek of the Earth*, Pſal. lxxvi. 9.

And as Humility is ſo acceptable to God as we ſee, to obtain this diſtinguiſhing Favour from him; ſo is it in its own nature apt to obtain more Favour in the Eyes of Men, though otherwiſe Enemies, than others in many caſes find. For Humility making Men as it does, innocent and harmleſs, and free from giving Provocation, it qualifies and prepares them for Pity and Favour in the Eyes of Men otherwiſe bad. *Who is he that will harm you*, if ye be *Followers of that which is good?* 1 Pet. iii. 13. But though this humble, innocent and harmleſs Behaviour in Men, has a natural Tendency in it to procure them Favour even with bad Men, yet this is not all from which ſo good an Effect does proceed, but this Temper and Deportment is ſo pleaſing unto God, as that for their ſakes, *he reſtrains* the ill Nature of Men from venting it ſelf againſt ſuch innocent and harmleſs Men as otherwiſe it would do; by reaſon whereof they many times enjoy fair quarter with them. This *Solomon* obſerved, and therefore ſays, *when a Man's ways pleaſe the Lord, he maketh even his Enemies to be at peace with him*, Prov. xvi. 7. And this is another Motive to Humility.

Sect. VI. *Our bleſſed Saviour hath pronounced the meek to be bleſſed upon this account, that they ſhall inherit the Earth, which is another Motive to it*, Matth. v. 5. Now Men by Meekneſs may be ſaid to come to inherit the Earth more than Men of contrary Paſſions, in ſeveral reſpects.

1. As their Meekneſs tends to prolong their Life, and to preſerve their Health, to enjoy Earthly Bleſſings longer than other Men of contrary Paſſions generally do. And this it does, firſt, in a way of natural Cauſality. For Meekneſs cauſeth or procureth Health, and ſo long Life, by moderating the contrary Paſſions of Anger, Wrath and Rage, which fire the Spirits and enflame the Blood, and become deſtructive of that Health, without which all other Earthly Bleſſings will ſignifie very little. What *Solomon* ſays, of the Fear of the Lord, or Religion in general, as that *it ſhall be Health to the Navel, and Marrow to the Bones*, Prov. iii. 8. is true, eſpecially of Meekneſs: For it keeps the Paſſions cool and calm, and in an even and equal Temper; and that is preſervative of a healthy Conſtitution. For as *Envy is Rottenneſs to the Bones, ſo a ſound Heart is the Life of the Fleſh*, ſaith *Solomon*, Prov. xiv. 30. Secondly, Meekneſs preſerves the Earthly Bleſſings of Health and long Life, by with-holding Men from thoſe Broils and Quarrels which many times impair Health and ſhorten Life, into which Men are betray'd by the contrary Paſſions of Pride, Anger, and Deſire of Revenge. *A Man of great Wrath ſhall ſuffer Puniſhment*, ſaith the wiſe Man, *Prov.* xix. 19.

2. As Meekneſs and Humility tend to preſerve Health and to prolong Life, ſo they tend to procure and preſerve the Comforts and Conveniencies of humane Life.

Firſt, They tend to ſecure them in the Poſſeſſion of them. For theſe Virtues of Humility and Meekneſs, do ſtrongly incline Men to be ſubmiſſive and obedient in all lawful things, to the Government both Civil and Eccleſiaſtical, under which they live; and by this means they enjoy the Benefit of ſuch Government, by having their Lives, Liberties, Properties, Peace and Safety ſecured thereby. Whereas Men many times by contrary Paſſions of Pride, Headineſs, Self-will'dneſs and Conceitedneſs, are betray'd into ſuch Words or Actions, as do expoſe them to the laſh of the Law in the Forfeiture of its Protection in the Enjoyment of the aforeſaid Privileges.

Secondly, Humility and Meekneſs tend to procure Men fair and friendly Correſpondence and Agreement with Neighbours and Acquaintance, and thoſe with whom they have to do: And by this their Lives are made peaceable and pleaſant to them. Humility and Meekneſs make Men innocent and harmleſs, they keep them from affronting any, from ſlighting or deſpiſing any, from giving any manner of Provocation to any, either by Word or Deed. And this procures them Good-will, Love and Reſpect among their Neighbours, and all good Offices of Friendſhip. And this gives Pleaſure and Delight to a Man, and makes his Life very comfortable. And this ſeems to be pointed at in ſpecial, in *Pſal.* xxxvii. 11. to which our Saviour ſeems to refer, when he ſays the meek ſhall inherit the Earth. *The meek ſhall inherit the Earth; and ſhall delight themſelves in the abundance of Peace*, ſaith the Pſalmiſt there. And hereto agrees that of St. *Peter*, 1 Pet. iii. 10. *He that will love Life and ſee good Days, let him refrain his Tongue from Evil, and his Lips that they ſpeak no Guile; let him eſchew Evil and do good, let him ſeek Peace and enſue it: And who is he that will harm you*,

you, if ye be Followers of that which is good. Now a Man's Humility and Meekneſs, encline him to thoſe very things here directed to, in order to the obtaining of long Life, and ſeeing good Days.

Thirdly, In this Promiſe of our Saviour, the Meek ſhall inherit the Earth, may be, and doubtleſs is comprehended, and that eſpecially, that real good and ſubſtantial Benefit and Satisfaction which GOD deſigns good Men by Earthly Bleſſings. By the Meek's inheriting the Earth here promiſed by our Saviour, it is not neceſſary to underſtand their having rich and plentiful Eſtates; for I do not know any other Promiſe in the New Teſtament, that will agree to ſuch a Senſe. But that which I rather underſtand thereby, among other things, is all that real and ſubſtantial Benefit which Earthly Bleſſings are able to afford unto Men: And this is promiſed to the Meek, when it's promiſed that they ſhall inherit the Earth. Now all that Earthly Bleſſings are able to afford unto Men, is the *Satisfaction* of Humane Nature in reference to the Preſervation of Life and Health, and in reference to thoſe Decencies of Life which are ſuitable to that Condition, in which the Providence of God hath placed every Man in this World. This is all they can do for them which have the moſt of them, even then when the Bleſſing of God goes along with them, without which they cannot do ſo much. Thoſe then to whom God gives ſo much, or ſo many of theſe earthly Bleſſings, as do miniſter *Content and Satisfaction* to them, to theſe he *gives to inherit the Earth*; for they that have that, have all that Earthly things can yield to any Man whatſoever. So that when our Saviour ſays the Meek ſhall inherit the Earth, I cannot conceive that his meaning is, that they ſhall have more of the Earth than other Men; more of worldly Wealth, larger Revenues, richer Fare, more coſtly Array, more ſumptuous Houſes, richer Furniture, and greater Attendance, and the like. For ſince our Saviour, and his Apoſtles have laboured in their Doctrine to take Chriſtians off from coveting much of the World, and from minding Earthly things, as indeed they have; to put them then in Expectation of having a greater ſhare in them than other Men, would not well conſiſt with the conſtant Tenour of their other Doctrine. Wherefore I rather think that our Saviour by aſſuring the Meek, that they ſhall inherit the Earth, means, that they ſhall have *a better Enjoyment* of Earthly Bleſſings than other Men; more Content and Satisfaction in what they have, though it be leſs than proud Men have though they have more. And if they have this, they have more of the Earth in the *Spirit and Quinteſſence* of Earthly things than others, though they may have more in the groſſer Body and Bulk of Matter.

Our Saviour hath ſaid, *there is no Man hath left Houſe, or Brethren, or Siſters, or Father, or Mother, or Wife, or Children, or Lands for my ſake and the Goſpels, but he ſhall receive an hundred fold now in this time, Houſes, and Brethren, and Siſters, and Mothers, and Children, and Lands, with Perſecution*, Mark x. 29, 30. And by ſaying this, he hath given us to underſtand, that there is *another and better way* of enjoying Earthly Bleſſings *abundantly*, than by enjoying *abundance* of them in *kind*. For our Saviour did not mean, that they ſhould in that caſe enjoy an hundred fold more of thoſe things in kind; but as much Satisfaction and Content of Mind, as if they had had an hundred fold more in kind. And thus St. *Paul* could ſay concerning himſelf and his Fellow-ſufferers, that they were, *as having nothing, and yet poſſeſſing all things*, 2 Cor. vi. 10. He could ſay, *I have all, and abound and am full*, Phil. iv. 18. when yet that which gave him occaſion to ſay ſo, was but a preſent Supply which the *Philippians* had ſent him. Though they were fed by the Providence of God but from hand to mouth; yet they had more ſolid Satisfaction therein, by reaſon of that inviſible Bleſſing that did accompany that little they had, than a hundred fold more would have yielded without it. He that could make five Barly-Loaves and two Fiſhes to feed and ſatisfie Thouſands, can eaſily make a very ſmall Pittance of Earthly Goods, yield abundant more Satisfaction to ſome, than a great abundance of them will do to others.

The reaſon why the *little* which a righteous Man hath, is *better than the Revenues of many wicked*, as *David* ſaith it is, (*Pſal.* xxxvii. 16.) is doubtleſs, becauſe he hath more real Content and true Satisfaction in that little, than they have in all their great Revenues. And for the ſame reaſon *Solomon* hath ſuch Proverbs as theſe: *Better is a little with the Fear of the Lord, than great Treaſure and Trouble therewith*, Prov. xv. 16. *Better is a dry Morſel and Quietneſs therewith, than a Houſe full of Sacrifices with Strife*, Prov. xvii. 1. And again, *Better is a handful with Quietneſs, than both the Hands full with Travel and Vexation of Spirit*, Eccleſ. iv. 6.

Now there is a threefold Reaſon, why a leſs proportion of Earthly Enjoyments ſhould yield more Content and Satisfaction to an humble and meek Man, than a much greater will do to a proud.

1. The one is the Bleſſing of God upon the humble Man's Enjoyments, above what is vouchſafed to a bad Man with his, which makes them more yielding of ſuch ſatisfaction as is proper to them, and more uſeful as to the end for which they ſerve: *Ye ſhall ſerve the Lord your God, and he ſhall bleſs thy Bread and thy Water*, Exod. xxiii. 25. And it is by his Bleſſing that courſer fare, yea, and when but more ſparingly received, does ſometimes nouriſh them better, to whom God gives not better, than better Diet does others, as we ſee by daily Experience; beſides the more extraordinary caſe of *Daniel* and his Companions, with their *Pulſe*, *Dan.* i. 15. It is through this Bleſſing of God, that *the meek eat and are ſatisfied*, as the Pſalmiſt ſpeaks, *Pſal.* xxii. 26. When yet that which God threatens in *Micah* vi. 14. *Thou ſhalt eat and not be ſatisfied*, befals others: *He grants others the things they deſire, but yet ſends leanneſs into their Souls*, Pſal. cvi. 15. *He cauſeth his ſecret to be upon the Tabernacle of good Men*, as it was upon *Job*'s, (*Job* xxix. 4.) his ſecret and inviſible Providence to proſper their Affairs, which is that *Bleſſing of God that maketh rich, and addeth no ſorrow with it*, of which *Solomon* ſpeaks, *Prov.* x. 22. When-as *his curſe is upon the houſe of the wicked*; ſo that things one way or other fall out untowardly to their vexation: *Prov.* iii. 33. *The curſe of the Lord is in the houſe of the wicked, but he bleſſeth the habitation of the juſt.*

2. This Satisfaction which humble Men receive in *a little*, more than other Men do in *much*, proceeds from God's Operation upon their Minds, inclining and diſpoſing their Minds contentedly to comply and comport with that pittance of outward Bleſſings, which God in his Providence does allot them. *Godlineſs* ſeated in the Heart *is great gain*, in this reſpect among others, *becauſe it maketh a Man content with thoſe things which he hath*, 1 Tim. vi. 6. It is not in the power of abundance of worldly things of themſelves to give content or ſatisfaction to the Mind of him that hath them. *He that loveth Silver, ſhall not be ſatisfied with Silver*; nor he that *loveth abundance, with increaſe*, ſaith the wiſe Man, *Eccleſ.* v. 10. *In the fulneſs of his ſufficiency he may be in ſtraits*, ſaith *Zophar* of a wicked Oppreſſor, *Job* xx. 22. But whenever Men are content and ſatisfied with what they have, it is of the Gift of God in bringing the Mind to it. *That a Man take his portion and rejoyce in his labour, this is the gift of God*; *God anſwereth him in the joy of his heart*, ſaith *Solomon*, Eccleſ. v. 19, 20. St. *Paul* ſaith, he had *learned* in whatever ſtate he was, to be therewith content: He knew how to be abaſed, and how to abound, to be full and to be hungry, to abound and to ſuffer need; but all this was *through Chriſt ſtrengthening him*, Phil. iv. 12, 13.

3. Humility and Meekneſs do in their own nature qualifie Men for Contentment with a little, if God gives them but little. It's true, it qualifies them for a right uſe of much, if God pleaſe to give it them, as I ſhall ſhew in the next Motive: But otherwiſe, if God think fit to give them but little, their Humility teaches them to be content with that little. And the reaſon is, becauſe it is by this Humility of theirs that their Minds are proportioned to their Eſtates and Condition in the World. It is by the *lowlineſs of the Mind*, as not ſet upon high things, that the Mind is ſuited to a low Eſtate and Condition. And it is the proportion that is between the Mind of a Man, and the State and Condition in which he is, out of which Contentment and Satisfaction grows. As on the other hand, it is the diſproportion that is between the Mind of a Man, and his Eſtate and Condition, out of which Diſcontent doth ariſe. If a Man have never ſo much of this World, yet if his Mind be lifted up above what he has, and bent upon that *more* which he wants, he is reſtleſs and uneaſie in his Mind for want of that he cannot obtain, (as we ſee in *Ahab*, when *he was ſick for Naboth's Vineyard)* and far from that content which a poor Man has, who by his Humility has his Mind levelled to his Condition. But of this I have ſaid more, *Chap.* III. *Sect.* XIII.

And truly if by means of Humility and Meekneſs, Men may upon all theſe accounts come to inherit the Earth more *emphatically* than any proud Men in the World can do, though they have never ſo much the advantage of them in outward Eſtate, it is a very conſiderable motive to make us prize Humility and Meekneſs at a very high rate, and to labour diligently to get a good ſtock of theſe. Who would not be poſſeſs'd of ſuch a Treaſure, by which thoſe that have but Food and Rayment, may live at a higher rate of Contentment and Satisfaction, than thoſe that have never ſo great an affluence of Wealth and Honour in the World can do, if they have not with it Meekneſs and Humility.

Sect. VII. *Humility qualifies Men for a right uſe of Proſperity, and ſo for Proſperity it ſelf.* It is moſt certain that Almighty God does not envy good Men outward Proſperity; he does not uſually deny it them, but in order to their having ſomewhat that is better for them than that is. When Proſperity will do them no hurt, nor hinder ſome better thing from them, the Lord then is ſo far from grutching them Proſperity, that he takes pleaſure both in their Enjoyment of it, and to confer it upon them. *Let them ſay continually, Let the Lord be magnified, which hath pleaſure in the proſperity of his Servant*, Pſal. xxxv. 27. When at any time God's Church and People have by ſuffering been humbled; and by being made humble, prepared for a more proſperous ſtate; then he is wont to *rejoyce over them to do them good*, as the Scripture ſpeaks, *Deut.* xxxii. 41. It is ſpoken as if the Lord were glad when his People are capable of Proſperity without ſuffering hurt by it, and that he rejoyces then to proſper them. The great reaſon why there are no more good Men great and wealthy in the World, and full of all Proſperity, is, becauſe there are ſo few that are not made worſe by it, either by being lifted up with Pride, or by truſting in their Wealth, or ſetting their Hearts inordinately upon it, or otherwiſe abuſing the ſame to exceſs, to the taking them off, or hindering them in their ſeeking the Kingdom of God and his Righteouſneſs. Our Saviour hath declared how hard a thing and difficult it is for a rich Man to enter into the Kingdom of Heaven. And it being ſo, there is great reaſon to believe, that when God does not make all good Men rich, it is out of favour to them, leſt by their being rich, their Salvation ſhould be put in the greater hazard. There is no queſtion but that ſome good Men, that are but poor and low in the World, are very apt to think, that if they were as rich and as great as any other Men, that they ſhould not be the worſe for it, but the better, by doing the more good. But they ſhould rather think with themſelves, that God, who knoweth the Hearts of all Men, knows that they are not fit for it, nor would be able to bear ſuch a Condition without miſcarrying and growing worſe by it. *David* was an extraordinary good Man, we know, and yet it ſhould ſeem he ſuffered ſome diminution in his Goodneſs by his extraordinary Advancement in the World. It was the great Commendation of *Jehoſaphat*, that he *walked in the firſt ways of David his Father*, 2 Chron. xvii. 3. By which it ſeems to be intimated, that thoſe firſt ways of *David*, while he was yet but newly advanced, were his beſt ways. *Hezekiah*, another extraordinary good Man, of whom it is ſaid, *That he truſted in the Lord God of Iſrael, ſo that after him was none like him among all the Kings of Juda, nor any that were before him*; and yet he was not able to bear his proſperous Condition, without miſcarrying under it for a time, to the drawing down of Wrath upon himſelf and the Nation. For it is ſaid of him, that *he was magnified in the ſight of all Nations*, 2 Chron. xxxii. 23. But then in *ver.* 25. it's ſaid, that *his heart was lifted up*, and that *therefore wrath was upon him, and upon Juda and Jeruſalem*. In the buſineſs of the Ambaſſadors of the Princes of *Babylon*, *God left him to try him, that he might know all that was in his Heart*, ver. 31. He did not know how unable he was to withſtand ſuch a Temptation to Pride, as his great Proſperity was, until his fall by it diſcovered it to him. And as for *Solomon*, how excellent a Perſon he was, and how great his declining was, by occaſion of his great Proſperity, we all know. Theſe things conſidered (beſides what our own Obſervation may furniſh us with) it may well reconcile the Minds of good Men unto their Condition, when but low in the World, as that which God knows to be better for them, than to be in a higher rank would be. It is ſaid in the Parable of the Talents, that to one was given five Talents, to another two, and to another one, *to every Man according to his ſeveral ability*, Matth. xxv. 15. God, we ſee, in diſtributing Talents, whether of one kind or other, hath reſpect unto the *ability* of them unto whom they are committed, of managing them; and accordingly gives to one more, and to another leſs, according as they differ in ability to uſe them.

And wherefore have I ſaid all this by way of digreſſion, but the better to ſet off the excellent uſefulneſs and deſirableneſs of Humility, when it ſhall appear, that it is that, through God, that will ſecure Men from any groſs abuſe of a proſperous Condition, when well rooted in the Heart in any good proportion, and that nothing without that will do it, but Mens Tables otherwiſe will become a ſnare to them. Now that Humility does qualifie Men for a right uſe of Proſperity, I ſhall make out thus: It is ſaid, that

God's humbling of his People in the Wilderneſs, by feeding them as it were from hand to mouth, was *that he might do them good in the latter end*, Deut. viii. 16. That is, at the end of that long Chain of Providences which God uſed; firſt in bringing them out of *Egypt*, and then in conducting them through the Wilderneſs, and at the end ſetling them in the Land of *Canaan*, in the midſt of great Plenty. Almighty God prepared them for the Enjoyment of great Plenty and Proſperity in the Land of *Canaan*, by keeping them low, and by that means humbling them in the Wilderneſs. He had ſaid before in *ver.* 5. *Thou ſhalt conſider in thine Heart, that as a Man chaſteneth his Son, ſo the Lord thy God chaſteneth thee*, to wit, *by humbling them and cauſing them to hunger*, as *ver.* 3. The Lord their God nurtured and diſciplined them, by humbling them in the Wilderneſs, that they might the better know how to uſe and enjoy the great Plenty of *Canaan*, when they ſhould come to poſſeſs it. Juſt as a Man prepares his Heir for a fair Inheritance, by humbling Diſcipline in his Youth. If then Almighty God did humble his People in the Wilderneſs (*i. e.* uſe a Method of Providence to make them humble) for this very end that he might do them good in the latter end (*i. e.* that they might be more capable of being put into a more proſperous Condition afterward, without hurt to themſelves) Then we may well conclude from hence, that Humility has an excellent Tendency in it to make Men capable of enjoying Proſperity, without hurt to themſelves by abuſing it.

And as it appears by Divine Teſtimony, that Humility qualifies Men for a due uſe of a proſperous Condition, ſo it may be farther made appear from the Nature and Reaſon of the thing it ſelf. Humility, as it cauſes Men to have low and modeſt Thoughts of themſelves and of their own Worth, ſo it qualifies them for a right Uſe and Enjoyment of Plenty and Proſperity, and that in a double reſpect.

1. Firſt, It will preſerve them from abuſing their Plenty to Intemperance one way, and vain Oſtentation in another. Men that have no great Opinion of themſelves, will not make over-much of themſelves; thoſe who do not *overvalue themſelves*, will be in no great danger of *overloving themſelves*; they will not employ their Plenty in making proviſion for the Fleſh, to fulfil the Luſts thereof. But as they are ſober in Mind, ſo they will content themſelves with a ſober Uſe of things for the Body. And then the Humility of their Minds will reſtrain them alſo from all Exceſs for Oſtentation ſake and Vain-glory, in reference to Apparel and all other Pride of Life, wherein lofty Minds are wont to exceed. And it will make them to content themſelves only with ſuch Decencies in all things, as are ſuitable both to their Rank and Quality, and to the Humility and Sobriety of their Minds. And by reaſon of all this Sobriety which ſprings from Humility, they will be at the greater Liberty of falling in with Opportunities of helping others, and of doing good to them, wherein one ſpecial part of the right uſe of a plentiful Eſtate doth conſiſt. Which brings me to the ſecond thing.

2. Humility diſpoſeth Men as to Sobriety in reſpect of themſelves, who are in plentiful and proſperous Circumſtances, ſo it does to Acts of Charity and Friendſhip towards others. For one Property of Humility is to condeſcend to them of low degree, not in Complement only, but in real Service. It was a very great Expreſſion of our bleſſed Saviour's Humility as well as Charity, that he being ſo exceeding high as he was, yet ſtooped ſo low as he did, yea and emptied himſelf to relieve us. Yea the moſt high God is ſaid to humble himſelf in beholding things in Heaven and on Earth; in concerning himſelf as he does for the Welfare of thoſe Beings in Heaven and Earth which are infinitely beneath him. Pride makes Men to deſpiſe and neglect the poor, but Humility does the contrary, it inclineth them that have Power and Intereſt among Men, not to diſdain to eſpouſe the honeſt Cauſe of a poor and mean Man, but to aſſiſt him to plead his Cauſe, and to defend him againſt his Oppreſſor. Humility will cauſe Superiors to ſtoop to mean Offices of Love towards their Inferiors, when there is juſt occaſion; as our Saviour did, in waſhing his Diſciples Feet, for an Example to his Followers. Now, if Humility does cauſe Men, in proſperous State, to be thus mindful of thoſe that are below them, and in worſe Circumſtances, and to be ready to ſerve them in what they can, upon all fair Occaſions and convenient Opportunities; then I am ſure it cauſes Men to make a right uſe of their proſperous State.

And as Men, by means of Humility, uſe their Plenty and Power, their Intereſt and Proſperity aright, ſo by thus uſing it aright as aforeſaid, they take the likelieſt courſe that can be, to have it continued to them by God. For, *By Humility and the Fear of the Lord, are Riches and Honour and Life*, ſaith the wiſe Man, *Prov.* xxii. 4. It had uſually ſo happened in his and common Obſervation, elſe he would not have made a Proverb of it. When *Job* had recounted how he had uſed his proſperous State, he tells how he promiſed himſelf a Continuance in it, thus: *I delivered the poor that cried, and him that had no Helper: The Bleſſing of him that was ready to periſh came upon me, and I made the Widows heart to ſing for Joy: I put on Righteouſneſs, and it clothed me: My Judgment was a Robe and a Diadem. I was Eyes to the Blind, and Feet was I to the Lame: I was a Father to the Poor; and the Cauſe which I knew not I ſearched out. I brake the Jaws of the Wicked, and pluckt the Spoil out of his Teeth: Then I ſaid, I ſhall die in my Neſt, and multiply my days in the Sand*, Job xxix. 12--18. He might well (as we ſee he did) promiſe himſelf a Continuance in his proſperous State, while he thus uſed it. For it was not according to God's common Method of proceeding, in that he gave ſo great an Interruption to *Job*'s proſperous Condition, as he did for a time, (and but for a time) conſidering how well he behaved himſelf in it. But it was upon ſpecial Reaſon that he did it, to ſet him up as a famous Inſtance and Example of Patience and Submiſſion, and of the happy iſſue of his patient enduring and holding faſt his Integrity. And God's calling out humble Men to ſuffer Perſecution for the Honour and Confirmation of his Truth, or otherwiſe to ſuffer upon ſome ſpecial Deſign, we take to be exempt caſes, when we ſuppoſe and ſay, that Humility qualifies Men for a right uſe of a proſperous Condition, and conſequently for a proſperous Condition it ſelf.

Since then Humility qualifies Men for a right uſe of a proſperous Condition, and for that reaſon renders their Continuance in ſuch a Condition (ſuppoſing them to be in it) the more likely; this alſo becomes a Motive to ſuch, not inconſiderable, to uſe the beſt means and endeavours they can to become humble, and to abound in it.

Sect. VIII. *Humility is the beſt way to that which is Honour indeed, to Honour of the beſt kind.* I do not mean that Honour which conſiſts in outward Titles, but that which ſprings from the worthy Qualification of the Perſon, and the Value of his Actions and Deportment. As when they do worthy and becoming things for the ſake of the Goodneſs of them, and not to get a Name and Fame among Men: When the very manner of doing them ſhall convince Men, that they do not fiſh for Praiſe and Applauſe, but that what they do, they do out of Love of doing worthily. And ſome ſuch thing as this perhaps may be that which our Saviour means by the *Honour that comes from God only*, in Oppoſition to the Phariſaical *Jews*, *ſeeking Honour one of another*, John v. 44. For Reputation among their Party, governed in what they did, and what they did forbear. Whereas good Men indeed had ſtill reſpect to the Worthineſs of the things they did, that they might be ſuch, as in the doing of which they might have Approbation from God, whether they had any from Men or no. Now that Humility is the beſt way to this Honour, we learn from what our Saviour hath aſſerted more than once, when he ſaid, *he that humbleth himſelf ſhall be exalted:* as on the contrary, *he that exalteth himſelf ſhall be abaſed*, Matth. xxiii. 12. Luke xiv. 11. & xviii. 14. And *Solomon* often aſſerts the ſame thing, ſaying, *before Honour is Humility*; as on the contrary, *Pride goeth before Deſtruction, and a haughty Spirit before a fall*, Prov. xv. 33. & xvi. 18. & xviii. 12. We have this Saying in ſundry places of Scripture; *God reſiſteth the proud, but giveth Grace to the humble*, Prov. iii. 34. Jam. iv. 6. 1 Pet. v. 5. Grace here, I conceive, is to be underſtood of that which is oppoſite to Diſgrace, as Favour, Reſpect and Honour is in the Eyes of Men. And to have a good Name, Favour and Friendſhip with Men, eſpecially ſuch as are ſober and wiſe, is ſo great a Bleſſing, that great Riches and abundance of Silver and Gold, is not to be compared to it, in the wiſe Man's Judgment, *Prov.* xxii. 1. *A good Name is rather to be choſen than great Riches, and loving* Favour, *rather than Silver and Gold.* But as God gives Grace to the humble, ſo on the contrary, he reſiſteth the proud, and croſſeth them in their Deſign. The Deſign of a proud Man, is to be honoured and eſteemed above other Men. But the more he ſeeks it, the farther he is from it, and comes to be leſs eſteemed, for the ſake of thoſe Ways and Methods, by which he ſeeks Honour among Men. *Solomon* ſays, *a Man's Pride ſhall bring him low, but Honour upholdeth the humble in Spirit*, Prov. xxix. 23. That by which a proud Man ſeeks to riſe, and to have a great Name in the World, that oftentimes God makes the occaſion of his Downfal, as we ſee in *Haman*. God Loves to reſiſt and thwart Men that would have Honour, whether God will or no, and by ſuch ways as he never allow'd. *In the thing wherein they dealt proudly, he was above them*, by making that very thing their overthrow, *Exod.* xviii. 11. But as a Man's Pride brings him low, ſo *Honour upholdeth the humble in Spirit:* The Favour and Reſpect which his Humility procureth him, ſupports and keeps him up, when proud Men fall. *When Men are caſt down, then thou ſhalt ſay there is lifting up*; *and he ſhall ſave the humble Perſon*, Job xxii. 29. Pride always tends to lay Men low in the Minds of others, eſpecially of all conſidering Men; though it's true, their eminent and remarkable down-fall does not always follow in this World, but yet very often it does, that God may thereby caution others againſt Pride and Haughtineſs. And when God intends to make their Pride viſible in their fall, as the cauſe of it, he many times forbears them long, until their Haughtineſs becomes very notorious and remarkable: And that is one of God's *due times*, to make the Loftineſs of Man to be bowed down, and the Haughtineſs of Men to be laid low: *Their feet ſhall ſlide in due time*, Deut. xxxii.

On the other hand, Humility always tends to exalt Men in the minds and good eſteem of others, though an external viſible Exaltation does not always follow in this Life, and yet ſometimes it does, which gave occaſion to the bleſſed Virgin in her Song to ſay, *He hath put down the mighty from their ſeat, and hath exalted the humble and meek.* God ſometimes *beautifies the meek with Salvation*, as when *the righteous are delivered out of trouble, and the wicked come in their ſtead*; when *the wicked are a ranſome for the righteous*, and *the tranſgreſſors for the upright*, as ſometimes they are, as *Solomon* hath obſerved, *Prov.* xi. 8. and xxi. 18. When St. *Peter* exhorted the Chriſtians to humble themſelves under the mighty hand of God, *that he might exalt them in due time*, (1 *Pet.* v. 6.) it is not unlikely, but he might have an eye in part upon that great turn of Providence, not then far off, when the Chriſtians were preſerved, and their Perſecutors deſtroyed, as at the time of the deſtruction of *Jeruſalem.* It is true, the Humility of every humble Man is not rewarded with temporal Deliverances, much leſs with Exultation to places of Honour and Dignity in the World. But then there is *a due time* in the next World, which is the moſt proper time of Retribution, in which God will eminently exalt in Glory every humble Soul, and they moſt that have been moſt humble; ſo ſaith our Saviour, *Whoſoever ſhall humble himſelf as this little Child, the ſame is greateſt in the Kingdom of Heaven*, Matth. xviii. 4. And what greater Motive can we have to endeavour to excel in Humility than this?

Sect. IX. The great Example of Humility and Meekneſs that appeared in our bleſſed Saviour, is another great Motive to all that would approve themſelves to be his Diſciples indeed, to endeavour to be herein as like him as they can: And ſo much the rather, becauſe he has propoſed himſelf to their Imitation in this in ſpecial: *Learn of me*, ſaith he, *for I am meek and lowly in heart*, Matth. xi. 29. And although we can never act our part in Humility as he has done in leſſening himſelf upon a worthy deſign, as when *he was in the form of God, and thought it no robbery to be equal with Him, he made himſelf of no reputation, took upon him the form of a ſervant, and became obedient unto death:* Yet, as I ſay, the Apoſtle would have the ſame mind and temper of ſpirit to be in Chriſtians, which was in him when he thus humbled himſelf, *Let the ſame mind be in you which alſo was in Chriſt Jeſus*, &c. *Phil.* ii. 5, 6, 7. When he would come into the World upon ſo glorious a deſign, as to be the Saviour of it, the manner of his appearance in it, ſhews how little he regarded the Glory and Grandeur of it: Choice was made of mean Parentage; *He hath regarded the low eſtate of his Hand-maid*, ſaid the Mother of our Lord. He diſdained not to be born in a Stable, nor to be called the Carpenter's Son. And when he made himſelf publick by his Miniſtration, he made choice but of a Company of poor Fiſhermen, and other mean Men for his Apoſtles. And the place out of which he choſe them was *Galilee*; upon which account they were called *Men of Galilee*, and *Galileans.* And *Galilee* was a place of leaſt eſteem among the *Jews*, and indeed under ſome kind of Reproach: *Can any good thing come out of Nazareth?* ſaid *Nathanael*, which was a Town in *Galilee*, John i. 46. *Art thou alſo of Galilee?* ſaid they to *Nicodemus*: *Search and look, for out of Galilee ariſeth no Prophet*, John vii. 52. Theſe things argue the Humility of our Saviour's Mind.

And then as touching his Carriage among Men, his Humility appeared in that tender regard he ſhew'd to the meaneſt Perſons that apply'd themſelves to him for help and cure, never complaining of their troubleſomeneſs, though they throng'd him, and though ſometimes he had not leiſure ſo much as to eat Bread, by reaſon of their crouding to him. The great Regard and tender Affection he expreſſed to little Children that were brought unto him, when his Diſciples were offended at their being brought, was another Inſtance of the ſweet, gracious and condeſcending Temper of his Spirit.

And ſo was his indulgent carriage and tender dealing with ſuch, in whom was any the leaſt appearance of good Inclinations, to look after the Affairs and Concernment of their Souls; a thing which was foretold of him, in theſe words of the Prophet, *The bruiſed Reed he ſhall not break, the ſmoaking Flax he ſhall not quench:* He neither deſpiſed nor neglected any for Meanneſs or Lowneſs in one kind or other. He diſdained not to ſtoop ſo low as to do the meaneſt Offices of Love even to his Inferiours, as in waſhing his Diſciples Feet, and for this reaſon too, that by his Example he might teach his Followers to do the like towards one another. *If I your Lord and Maſter have waſhed your feet, ye alſo ought to waſh one another's feet; for I have given you an Example, that ye ſhould do as I have done unto you,* John xiii. 14.

And then he was ſo far from ſeeking Humane Applauſe by the Excellency of his Doctrine, and the Mightineſs of his Works and Miracles, which yet procured great Admiration among the People, that he ſtill laboured to avoid as much as he could all appearance of Oſtentation, and aſcribed the Wiſdom and Power, by which he preach'd the one and wrought the other, unto God his Father. *I ſeek not mine own glory,* ſaith he in one place, *John* viii. 50. *I receive not honour from Men,* in another, *John* v. 41. *My Doctrine is not mine,* ſaith he, *but his that ſent me,* John vii. 16. *The Father that dwelleth in me, he doth the works,* John xiv. 10. He did not act the great things he had to do with pomp and noiſe, but with ſtilneſs and calmneſs, in a meek, quiet, and peaceable manner, according to what was foretold of him by the Prophet: *He ſhall not ſtrive, nor cry, nor lift up his voice in the ſtreets,* Matth. xii. 19.

Nor was the humble frame of our Saviour's Spirit alter'd by the greateſt Applauſe and Acclamation of the People. The greateſt of this kind we read of was when he rode as it were in Triumph into *Jeruſalem,* when *the People ſpread their Garments in the way, and cut down Branches of Trees, and ſtrow'd them in the way likewiſe, and cry'd, Hoſanna to the Son of David, bleſſed be the King of Iſrael that cometh in the Name of the Lord;* as much as if they had ſaid, God ſave the King. And yet he was then ſo far from being lifted up, or tranſported in his own Mind with all this, as that he then beholding the City, *wept* over it, in a compaſſionate ſenſe of the Miſery and Deſtruction that was coming upon it, *Luke* xix. And the Prophet *Zachary* had foretold the meek Behaviour of the bleſſed *Jeſus* in the midſt of all this great Honour thus put upon him by a very great Multitude, in theſe words: *Tell the Daughter of Zion, thy King cometh unto thee, meek and ſitting upon an Aſs, and a Colt the Fole of an Aſs,* Matth. xxi. 5.

And as our Saviour's Humility appeared in bearing Applauſe, without being in the leaſt puff'd up with it, ſo it did likewiſe in his bearing Affronts, Slanders, Reproaches, Revilings and great Indignities from Men, yea and Perſecution unto Death it ſelf, and all with great Meekneſs and invincible Patience, ſuch as any degree of Pride would never have ſuffered a Man to bear, without ſome fretting, vexation and diſorder of Mind. And all that Meekneſs and Patience of his proceeded from his matchleſs Humility. When *James* and *John,* two of the Diſciples of *Chriſt,* out of their fiery Zeal would have called for Fire from Heaven to have conſumed the *Samaritans* for putting ſuch an affront upon their Lord and Maſter, as to refuſe to receive him, our Saviour rebuked them for their intemperate Zeal, ſaying, *Ye know not what manner of Spirit ye are of.* As for the manner of our Saviour's Behaviour under the moſt unworthy and barbarous uſage of his Enemies, St. *Peter* gives this ſhort account of it: That *when he was reviled, he reviled not again; that when he ſuffered, he threatned not, but committed his Cauſe to him that judgeth righteouſly,* 1 Pet. ii. 23. He did not go about to defend himſelf from their unjuſt Accuſations and Revilings, by recriminating their own Crimes upon themſelves, thereby to vilifie them, but contented himſelf at moſt in that caſe with a ſober and diſpaſſionate Vindication of himſelf and his own Actions. And when he fell into his Enemies hands at laſt, he did not go about to terrifie them, with threatning them with what would follow for their ill uſage of him, as if he were pleaſed with the foreſight of how their villainous uſage of him, would be avenged on them; *But was led as a ſheep to the ſlaughter, and like a Lamb dumb before his ſhearers, ſo opened he not his mouth;* meekly and patiently left all to God to be vindicated by him in his due time. He ſhew'd himſelf ſo far from any Exaſperation and Bitterneſs of Spirit againſt them, when they proceeded to crucifie him, and was ſo far from deſiring God to avenge him on them, that on the contrary he heartily pray'd for their Pardon; and was ſo far from aggravating in his own mind the exceeding Hainouſneſs of the Crime, as that he leſſened it as much as poſſibly he could, by ſuppoſing it to proceed from their Ignorance: *Father, forgive them they know not what they do*, ſaid he. And although, as he was Man, he had a natural Deſire to have eſcaped the ſuffering he was to undergo in his Agony and Crucifixion, and therefore prayed, ſaying, *Father, if it be poſſible, let this Cup paſs from me*; yet at the ſame time his Humility was ſuch, and his Submiſſion and Reſignation of himſelf to the Will of God thereby, as that he could truly ſay to God his Father as he did, *Yet not my Will but thine be done*.

In theſe, and like things, we have a Proſpect of the Humility of our Saviour, wherein he hath recommended himſelf to our Imitation, if we would approve our ſelves to be his Diſciples by learning of him. And what renders him more lovely in our Eyes, and more worthy our Imitation, than his Humility and Charity? Now it is almoſt natural unto Men, at leaſt for good Men to deſire to be like them, for whom they have a great Veneration and Love, in thoſe things, for the ſake of which they honour, reverence and love them. And I think there is no greater a ſign of undiſſembled Love to our Lord Jeſus, than an earneſt and ſtrong Deſire to become like him, in Mind, Spirit and Temper. And indeed Diſciples cannot honour their Maſter more, nor more endear themſelves to him, than by ſtriving to imitate all that is worthy in him. Nor is there any other way, without this, to make our ſelves known to our ſelves, or to others, to be the Diſciples of Chriſt indeed, than by imitating his Example, and following his Precepts: And this is one of his Precepts to his Followers, to learn of him to be meek and lowly in Heart.

Theſe Motives, together with all the deſirable Effects of Humility mentioned in theſe Papers, have enough in them to make Humility very deſirable to us, and to provoke, animate and quicken us, carefully and diligently to make uſe of the Means and Directions for our becoming humble, which have been deſcribed in this Diſcourſe, and of all other we can think of, and to be upon the continual Practice of it as well as we can, without which we ſhall never learn to be humble by the beſt Directions in the World.

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A
PERSUASIVE
TO
Peace and Unity
AMONG
CHRISTIANS,
NOTWITHSTANDING
Their different Apprehenſions in LESSER THINGS.

BRITISH MUSEUM

THE PREFACE

TO

Such READERS as are in any publick Capacity of reſtoring Peace to our Church, and to the Diſſenters alſo.

THIS I take for an undoubted Truth, That the Peace of the Church depends upon ſcarce any thing ſo much under God, as upon the prudent Management of Eccleſiaſtical Affairs relating thereto, by them that have the publick Conduct of them. Suppoſing which, and ſuppoſing alſo the Peace of our Church to be in a great meaſure loſt; there are none more concern'd to enquire into the reaſon of it than they who are in that publick Capacity. Nor are any more concern'd to ſtudy and to find out fitting Remedies for the Cure of this great Diſtemper, and to apply them, than they are, for that none are in ſuch a Capacity of doing it as they. Thoſe doubtleſs owe more to the Peace of the Church than others, who have more Ability and greater Opportunities than others to promote it. All this I take for granted.

Now more, I think, need not be ſaid than has been ſaid, and that abundantly and by many, to evince both the Neceſſity and Utility of Peace and Unity in the Church, and the Miſchief of Diviſion, Strife and Contention. And although both the Parties divided ſeem to be full of the ſenſe of all this, yet we find by ſad Experience, how little all that hath been ſaid, and all that hath been done, hath prevailed towards the Cure of this great and threatning Diſtemper, thus long predominant among us. What then? Muſt we ſit down in Deſpair, and give up our Church in this Nation as incurable? Or is there no Remedy unleſs God will work a Miracle to effect it? Has all been done that can ſafely be done to reſtore Peace to our Church? It is, doubtleſs, a thing moſt worthy our Superiours ſerious Conſideration, whether or no they have done all that they in Honour and Prudence can do towards ſo neceſſary and deſirable a Work.

Is the diſſenting Party weak, or are they wayward in that they have not complied with thoſe Terms of Peace which our Superiours have thought fit to appoint? Suppoſe they have been ſo: Yet their not paying what they owe to the Peace of the Church, and what depends thereon, does not diſcharge our Debt on the other hand, nor do we owe any whit the leſs to the Peace of the Church, and the Honour and Safety of Religion, and Succeſs of the Goſpel, which depends very much upon that Peace. The Peace and flouriſhing Eſtate of the Church is a matter of that huge moment, that for the ſake of it, if not for their ſake who diſturb that Peace; thoſe that have power ſhould do any thing they can without wrong to our holy Religion, to put an end to our diſhonourable and uncomfortable Contentions, and the many very bad Effects that are conſequent upon them. And when they find by long experience that one Method will not do it, why ſhould it be grievous to them to make uſe of another, until they find out one that will? God himſelf did not think it unbecoming his Wiſdom to evacuate and make void his own Inſtitutions when Circumſtances rendred others more accommodate and more proportionate to his end, though they had been of uſe for many Ages before. There is verily a diſanulling of the Commandment going before, for the Unprofitableneſs of it, *ſaith the Divine Author to the Hebrews. And again,* He taketh away the firſt, that he may eſtabliſh the ſecond, *ſaith the ſame Author. The Alteration of Times, Circumſtances and Temper of the People, are thought a ſufficient reaſon to make Alteration in* Civil *Government; though not of the Government it ſelf: And why may it not be ſo in the Eccleſiaſtical,*

ſiaſtical, in reference to thoſe things which are indifferent and alterable in their own nature? When the Reaſon of Uſages is altered, it cannot be unreaſonable to make alteration in the Uſages themſelves. That which was a reaſon of retaining ſome things in the beginning of the Reformation, may be a reaſon now of laying them aſide; and that is for the better bringing People to Church.

And if our Superiours ſhall think fit to make uſe of this Remedy, when we have ſuch ſmall hopes in any other without this, as we ſeem to have; they will thereby have the honour and the ſatisfaction of having done what in them lies to heal the Church's wounds, and to remove the ſuſpicion of blame from themſelves. And whenever they ſhall reſolve to try this, they have great reaſon to promiſe themſelves ſucceſs in it, if managed as it may be, by removing the principal occaſion of our Diviſions; for where there is no Wood, the Fire goeth out, *as the wiſe Man long ſince obſerved.*

If it ſhall be thought that it will not ſtand with the honour of our Superiours ſo far to condeſcend to the Humours or the Scruples of thoſe from whom they might expect Obedience; yet it may be conſidered, that though they cannot think them worthy of it, yet the Churches Peace thereby to be ſought is worthy of it, if by that means it may be obtained: And it is not meet That ſhould be neglected for the ſake of any Mens unworthineſs whatſoever. There is no good Chriſtian, how great ſoever he may be, can think it any diminution to his Honour to ſerve the Church's Intereſt, to which we all owe even our very Lives. What though this cannot be done, perhaps, without ſome regret, in regard of that diſturbance which has been occaſioned by them? Yet the good which in great probability they may do to them, and to the whole Church by procuring its Peace by ſuch their Condeſcenſion, is matter of far more weight and moment, than the gratifying their own Will in the contrary, and matter of more honour too. For in doing thus, they will have both the honour and the comfort of treading in the ſteps and imitating the example of the great Lord and Maſter of us all, Chriſt Jeſus, and of his Apoſtles: A thing worthy the Ambition of the higheſt among Chriſtians. We then that are ſtrong ought to bear the Infirmities of the weak, and not to pleaſe our ſelves; for even Chriſt pleaſed not himſelf, *ſaith St.* Paul. *And St.* Paul, *whoſe Chriſtian Behaviour hath procured him Renown through the whole Chriſtian World, propoſeth his own Example thus to all, high and low;* even as I pleaſe all Men in all things, not ſeeking mine own profit, but the profit of many. *Beſides, the more eminent any is in the Church, the more he is obliged thereby to be ſerviceable to them that are beneath him in it, at what diſtance ſoever Circumſtances have ſet them; becauſe he hath that Eminency for that very end.* Whoſoever, *ſaith our Saviour,* will be great among you, ſhall be your Miniſter; and whoſoever of you will be the chiefeſt, ſhall be the Servant of all. Even as I came *(ſaith he)* not to be miniſtred unto, but to miniſter. *Theſe laſt words open the meaning of the former, which do intimate, that ſuch is the nature and deſigned end of Eminency and Precedency in the Church of Chriſt, that whoever deſires to be chief there, deſires the greateſt burthen; that is, of being ſerviceable to all the reſt ſo far as his Capacity will extend: Even as our Lord, the greateſt of all,* was among his as one that ſerveth, *as himſelf ſaith. Beſides, if by ſuch a Condeſcenſion any ſhall obtain to be called the* Repairers of the Breach, *eſpecially of one ſo great as is made in our Church, it will be an Honour ſo great, as may well make the higheſt among Chriſtians ambitious of it.*

In order to Peace-making, it is worthy the impartial Conſideration of our Superiours, whether it can be duly thought, that the Church is like to receive more benefit by continuing thoſe things in the Church, without alteration, which are ſuppoſed to be the occaſion of the wide Breach that is in it; though the Breach be continued thereby; or by a procuring Peace and Unity in the Church, by removing ſome of them, and by an eaſie alteration in ſome other: Or whether the Church is like to receive more hurt by ſuch an alteration, than it does by our diviſions for want of it. For I doubt not but the proſpect of profit or loſs in this caſe ought to determine their Reſolution in whom is the power. Now the things about which our Differences have principally riſen, are granted by our Church to be but indifferent in their own nature, and alterable whenever the Church ſees occaſion: But ſo is not the Peace of the Church, and what depends thereon. God has no where commanded Church-Governours to impoſe the one, but has commanded them and all others to follow after the things that make for Peace, and to endeavour to keep the Unity of the Spirit in the Bond of Peace. Had the one been as uſeful and beneficial to the Church as the other, there's no queſtion but the one would have been as expreſly commanded as the other. The one may be lawful, but cannot be *ſo neceſſary, becauſe not ſo beneficial as the other. All things conſidered then, it is highly probable, at leaſt, that we ſhall not be ſet farther from Peace by ſuch an alteration, but be brought much nearer to it, if not in full poſſeſſion of it: However, that the gain will be more one way, than the loſs can be another; and if ſo, that's enough to turn the ſcale of Reſolution. Since then ſome things which have been impoſed with an intent to preſerve Peace, Unity, and good Order in the Church, have produced the contrary effects; that Peace, Unity, and good Order ſeem to call loudly for ſome Relaxation in theſe things.*

Two things ſeem very neceſſary for the preſervation of the Church in Peace: The one reſpecting the terms of entring into the Miniſtry and Communion of the Church; the other the due exerciſe of Diſcipline. As touching the Miniſtry, two things ſeem neceſſary in order to Peace. The one, that ſuch as are admitted into the Miniſtry be duly qualified for it, to the end the People may be under no temptation of leaving them upon account of their inſufficiency, and ſo ſet up others in more private Aſſemblies. For Experience ſhews, that the failure of Miniſters, either in reſpect of Gifts or a good Life, has in many places greatly tended to multiply Diſſenters, and to divide the Church. For when all is otherwiſe done, that can be done, it will be a difficult thing to confine Men to attend an inſufficient Miniſtry, wherein the intereſt of their Souls is ſo much concerned, as they will apprehend it to be: That's one thing. Another is, that nothing be required of them, as a Condition of entrance into the Miniſtry, that is of doubtful Interpretation, or apt to create Doubts and Scruples, and but only ſuch which every good Man, though otherwiſe nice and ſcrupulous, may without heſitation ſubmit unto. And the reaſon hereof is, becauſe by this means that pretence will be taken away, of the neceſſity of exerciſing their Gifts and Function in ſeparate Congregations; for that the terms of obtaining the publick Allowance are ſuch, as they cannot with ſatisfaction of Conſcience ſubmit to. This Tenderneſs ſeems the more neceſſary to preſerve Peace and Order, becauſe when Men of Miniſterial Education and Abilities have that to pretend, that the terms of taking upon them the publick Miniſtry are ſuch as they cannot comply with and keep a good Conſcience; many well-meaning People, partly out of pity to them, and partly out of an opinion that they are Men of more tenderneſs than others, will be, as we ſee they are, apt to follow them, by which they are and will be encouraged to ſet up ſeparate Congregations. The Peace of the Church depends much upon the eaſe of the Miniſters Minds in reference to the terms put upon them in their Miniſtration; becauſe the ſatisfaction of the Peoples Minds depends moſtly upon the ſatisfaction of ſuch Miniſters as they moſt affect.

Then as concerning the People, the Peace of the Church depends very much upon the Unexceptionableneſs of the Terms of their Communion in the publick Worſhip. And therefore, in order to the preſervation of this Peace, it ſeems neceſſary that care be taken to decline as much as may be, the impoſing under penalties, the uſe of ſuch Circumſtances in publick Worſhip as are apt to create Doubts and Scruples in the weaker ſort: And to follow the plaineſt general Rules in Scripture, relating to publick Worſhip, and the Example of the primitive Church in the pureſt Times; which muſt needs tend moſt to general ſatisfaction both of the weak and ſtrong, and to the holding them together in Peace and Love. The weak in the Faith ſhould not be troubled with matters of doubtful Diſputation, eſpecially in the publick Worſhip, to avoid a Breach and to preſerve Peace. Many things may be lawful in the publick Worſhip, which yet for Peace ſake may not be convenient to be impoſed, as that of Kneeling at the Sacrament for inſtance. The things that make both for Peace and Edification are to be followed, as in other things, ſo eſpecially in the publick Worſhip. Our bleſſed Saviour in his Doctrine had reſpect to what his Diſciples were able to bear, leſt otherwiſe they ſhould be ſcandalized at his Doctrine: And the ſame rule, and for the like reaſon, would be obſerved in things relating to the publick Worſhip.

As touching the Diſcipline of the Church in relation to Peace, ſpecial care would be taken ſo to exerciſe and manage it, as that it may beſt attain this End, and not hinder it. To this purpoſe it may be conſidered, whether to uſe the ſeverity of Diſcipline for doing or omitting to do things neither good nor evil in their own nature, antecedent to that Humane Authority which forbids or commands them, does not tend more to hinder than to ſecure the Peace of the Church. And whether it does not more hinder than farther the Peace of the Church, to uſe the ſeverity of Diſcipline upon Perſons, otherwiſe innocent and peaceable, for their non-compliance with ſome Injunctions of the Church, when ſuch their non-compliance proceeds only from ſcruple of Conſcience, and want of *ſatisfaction in their own minds touching the Lawfulneſs of what is required though in it ſelf and in the Judgment of wiſer Men, it ſhould be lawful. For ſuch Severity towards ſuch Perſons, when otherwiſe well meaning, creates a prejudice in their minds againſt that Church from which they find ſuch Uſage, and becomes a Temptation to them to withdraw themſelves from it, and to fall in with others of their mind. For in this caſe they will look upon themſelves as perſecuted for endeavouring to pleaſe* God *in not acting againſt Conſcience, and be apt to conclude it a ſufficient ground of their Separation as driven away. Whereas if ſuch were indulgently dealt withal and tolerated in their different perſuaſion, as ſuppoſe for inſtance, in their not kneeling at the Sacrament, or the like, they might be brought in time to be better informed, as many by that means have been; or however the Peace of the Church would be thereby better preſerved, and Separation prevented. For ſuch little differences in the opinion and practice of Perſons in Communion in the ſame Church, may well enough conſiſt with the Peace of the Church ſo long as they agree in the Subſtantials of the Chriſtian Religion. The difference between the believing Jews and the believing Gentiles, about Meats, and Days, and Circumciſion, were far greater than many, if not than any of our differences in the Circumſtances of Worſhip: And yet they were to bear with one another in that difference, and not to divide in Communion about it, nor rigidly to impoſe their different ſentiments and practice upon each other. And is it not great pity, that ſo excellent an Apoſtolical Canon as this* (Rom. xiv. Acts 15.) *ſhould be overlookt in Eccleſiaſtical Conſtitutions, and that the Church ſhould ſuffer ſo much in its want of Peace, as it has done for want of obſerving this?*

But beſides, this Severity of Diſcipline about things indifferent or not neceſſary in their own Nature, or of Divine Inſtitution, hinders the Peace of the Church, and perhaps the Purity of it too, by rendering the Cenſures of the Church leſs auguſt and leſs regarded. For when Men come to be excommunicated for not obſerving ſome little things which are confeſſed not neceſſary in their own Nature, and which yet they really ſcruple; their Conſciences are not at all affected with the Cenſures of the Church in this Caſe, as they would be if it were for ſuch notorious Crimes as for which, and not for leſs than which, Excommunication was inflicted in the Primitive Church. And if the Conſcience be not affected with it, as believing they have not deſerved it, they will take themſelves but wronged thereby, and be ſo far from being brought more to reverence the Government, as that their minds and affections will be more alienated from it, and from the Church for the ſake of it, as experience hath abundantly ſhewed. And when Excommunication is made ſo common as to be inflicted for matters of doubtful Diſputation, as well as for ſcandalous Offences and groſs Immoralities, if not rather and more frequently for thoſe than for theſe; the Efficacy and Authority of the Churches Cenſures is thereby weakned in the minds not only of the leſſer Offenders, but of the greater alſo who will ſoon learn from the other to make no great matter of Excommunication farther, than as it is expenſive to them, the ſhame of their Excommunication being much leſſened in their ſenſe, as being nothing but what they ſee is inflicted on other Men, who do not take themſelves at all diſgraced thereby. Now the Cenſures of the Church are as a guard to it, to ſecure both its Peace and Purity: And therefore by how much the Authority and Dread of theſe is weakened by any Miſapplication of them, by ſo much is both the Peace and Purity of the Church expoſed to ſuffer. When the nature and degree of Church Correction is diſproportionate to the nature of the Offence, as when made as heavy for the leaſt or leſſer Offences as for the greateſt; it is very apt to diſcourage and provoke the ſufferer, and to do him more hurt than good: To diſcourage him in the way of willing and chearful Obedience, and to provoke him to caſt off the care of Duty. Fathers provoke not your Children, leſt they be diſcouraged, *ſaith* St. Paul. *If too much ſeverity in Fathers to their Children will produce this ill effect, it is no wiſe likely to have a better effect, when the like is uſed by Superiours to Inferiours in the Church.*

The Government of the Church is the Government of Chriſt, when it is managed according to his mind and direction: And his Government is a mild and gentle Government: His Yoke is eaſie and his Burthen light. *His Diſciples* fulfil his Law when they bear one another's Burthens, *and do what they can to eaſe one another: But to burthen one another unneceſſarily, and with Burthens which he has not laid upon them, is doubtleſs another thing than the fulfilling the Law of Chriſt. The weaker any Chriſtians are, the more gently and tenderly they ſhould be dealt withal,* leſt that which is lame be turned out of the way, *as the Apoſtle's Phraſe is. Thoſe that are diſeaſed and would be well if they could, are not to be beaten becauſe they are not: No more* *are they that are of weak minds becauſe they are no ſtronger, but ſcruple that which thoſe of ſounder Judgments do not, nor would they if they knew how to help it.* We were gentle among you even as a Nurſe cheriſheth her Children, *ſaith St.* Paul: *And that muſt needs be with a great deal of Care and Tenderneſs, and with a patient enduring of ſome Frowardneſs alſo.*

For my part, I doubt not in the leaſt but that Chriſtian Forbearance and not Church Cenſures, is to be uſed towards all that profeſs belief of ſo much of the Chriſtian Doctrine as is neceſſary to Salvation, and do not contradict it by a wicked Life, how many and how great ſoever their differences among themſelves in leſſer matters may otherwiſe be. And this forbearance is to be uſed for that very reaſon, becauſe it is a proper means of keeping the Unity of the Spirit in the Bond of Peace. For ſo I underſtand thoſe words of St. Paul *taken together, when he ſays:* With all Lowlineſs and Meekneſs, with Long-ſuffering, forbearing one another in Love; endeavouring to keep the Unity of the Spirit in the Bond of Peace. *That is, I conceive, endeavouring thereby to keep the Unity of the Spirit in the Bond of Peace; to wit, by Lowlineſs and Meekneſs, by Long-ſuffering, and by forbearing one another in Love. For otherwiſe conſidering the different Apprehenſions and Sentiments, the different Tempers and great Defects and Imperfections that ever have been, and are like to be among Men in the Church; it is impoſſible to keep them all in Peace in the ſame Church without this Forbearance: Without this they will certainly fall in pieces, of which we need no other proof than experience. And there is no ſuch way not only of keeping Peace, but alſo of reconciling the weak to the ſtrong in their Opinions and Apprehenſions, and the peeviſh and the froward to the lowly and meek in their Affections and Goodneſs of Deportment, as by long-ſuffering and forbearing them in Love; in Conjunction with meek and loving Applications to them. The Body of the Church, as St.* Paul *notes,* does edifie it ſelf in Love: *It is increaſed and beſt built up in that way. Thoſe Applications in Church Rulers which ſavour moſt of Love to the weaker ſort, and ſuch as are in moſt danger of dividing, are of all other the moſt effectual to bind them faſter to the Church and to their Duty in it:* For Love is the Bond of Perfectneſs, *as the Apoſtle calls it. And where this way of dealing will beſt reach the Churches end, it's pity any other ſhould be uſed inſtead of it.*

When Circumſtances about God's Worſhip undetermined by him though commanded by Men, do prove an occaſion of ſin againſt Peace and Charity in a conſiderable part of the Church in this Nation, though it be through their Weakneſs that it is ſo: And when all other means uſed to cure this Weakneſs, have proved unavailable and unſucceſsful; in this caſe it would be conſidered whether the Law of Charity to ſo many Souls, be not a Call to them that have power, to remove that ſtumbling-block and occaſion of ſin out of their way, when it may be done without damage to the Church, or occaſioning of ſin in any other. And the reaſon why this ſhould be thought on is, becauſe according to the Scriptures, the uſe of things indifferent is in Charity to our Brethrens Souls, to be forborn when they cannot be uſed without occaſioning or endangering their ſinning. If Meat make my Brother to offend, I will eat no Fleſh while the World ſtands, leſt I make my Brother to offend, *ſaith St.* Paul. *And again,* Let no Man put a ſtumbling-block or an occaſion to fall in his Brother's way. *If then the uſe of things indifferent is to be forborn when ſuch uſe of them will prove an occaſion of ſin in any; then the queſtion is, whether in parity of reaſon the impoſing upon Men the uſe of ſuch indifferent things be not to be forborn, as does apparently occaſion Diviſion, Strife, Contention, Separation, Heart-burning, and great Uncharitableneſs among Chriſtians?*

But to proceed; as Forbearance and not Church Cenſures would be uſed towards Men of different Opinions in leſſer things, for the ſake of Peace and Love in the Church which cannot be preſerved without it; ſo to the ſame end Diſcipline would not be neglected nor remiſly uſed towards groſs Sinners. And the reaſon is, becauſe if it be, bad Men will be emboldened to make a Faction in the Church againſt the good to the hindrance of Peace and Love: And likewiſe becauſe it is one great occaſion of Separation. For when the Church is overgrown with ſuch ſcandalous Perſons, and no regular courſe taken to purge it; experience hath taught us, that it makes many out of love with the Communion of the Church for their ſakes, and becomes a Temptation to them to forſake it: Though that be no more juſtifiable perhaps than the Toleration of ſuch ſcandals is which does occaſion it. 'Tis true, Church Government by Dioceſan Biſhops is contended againſt by ſome Diſſenters: But I have ſome reaſon to believe, that if the Church Government by them were but as effectually managed as it might be for the promoting of Godlineſs, and for the encouraging of good Men and all good Miniſters, and for the ſuppreſſing of Vice *and diſcountenancing vicious Perſons; there are but few would forſake the Church upon account of that kind of Government. If the main ends of Church-Government were but duly purſued, no great matter would be made of it by whom it is done. If ſome Obſtructions then were but removed, which make the due exerciſe and execution of Diſcipline difficult and uneaſie, and the Execution of it committed to faithful hands, and due care taken that every one do their duty in their ſeveral places, without partiality or corruption, it would certainly tend greatly to the Peace of the Church, as well as to its Purity, and to its flouriſhing Eſtate in both.*

Having ſaid thus much to our Legiſlators and Governours in behalf of the Church's Peace; I ſhall now turn my Diſcourſe to the Diſſenters themſelves. For doubtleſs they do as truly owe what is in their power to the Peace of the Church, as any other whatſoever: Nay, they are obliged more than others to endeavour to repair the Breach in it, by how much they have been more concerned than others in making it. Not to mention what might or ſhould have been done to have kept things from running to ſo great an extream as we have ſeen; I ſhall only crave leave to offer a few things referring to the future in order to Peace.

1. *Firſt then in order to their procuring Eaſe where they are pinch'd, and Peace to the Church, it is adviſable that they abſtain from, and forbear all provoking Language by word or writing, and what tends to render their Adverſaries odious to their own party or to others. For if their Adverſaries uſing ſeverity to them be an unlikely way to gain or reconcile them to themſelves, or to work them to a compliance with their terms, as I know they think it is, and ſo do I too; then their uſing ſeverity towards them in another way, and their provoking them, is as unlikely to reconcile their Adverſaries to them, or to procure from them any yielding for their Eaſe and Accommodation. The manner of our bleſſed Saviour, the Prince of Peace, was not to revile again, when he was reviled: And St.* Paul *tells us what the manner of his Apoſtles was when they were ill treated, when he ſaith,* Being reviled we bleſs, being perſecuted we ſuffer it, being defamed we intreat. *And another Apoſtle gives this Reaſon why the Chriſtians ſhould* be ſlow to ſpeak and ſlow to wrath; becauſe the Wrath of Man worketh not the Righteouſneſs of God: *It is no fit Inſtrument or Tool in labouring for Peace.* For the fruit of Righteouſneſs is ſown in Peace of them that make Peace. He that hath knowledge ſpareth his words, and a Man of underſtanding is of a cool ſpirit, *ſaith* Solomon. *And again,* There is that ſpeaketh like the piercings of a Sword, but the Tongue of the Wiſe is health.

2. *What our Saviour taught his Diſciples for the ſecuring themſelves in caſe of Perſecution, may well and prudently be obſerved by the Diſſenters in order to the ſecuring Peace to the Church; that is, to be* wiſe as Serpents, but innocent as Doves: *To go as far to ſecure Peace in the Church as ever Innocency will carry them and ſuffer them to go: For ſo much in Wiſdom they might do to avoid Perſecution; and the Peace of the Church ought to be as valuable to them as the Safety of their Perſons. What is lawful to be done ſhould be yielded to by them, though in ſome reſpect they ſhould deem it inconvenient, rather than the Peace of the Church ſhould be loſt. When the Peace of the Church comes in competition with only matter of Conveniency, and not of abſolute Neceſſity, ſuch matters of Conveniency ought to give place to the publick Peace of the Church. There are ſo many, and ſuch great Evils of Strife, Contention and Uncharitableneſs (Evils that prey upon the Vitals of Religion) which break in upon the Church at the Breach that is made in its Peace, that any thing that is not ſinful in it ſelf ſhould be yielded to, rather than the pulick Peace of the Church ſhould be abandoned, and the Church thereby expoſed to all the miſchief which is conſequent upon the loſs of the Church's Peace.*

3. *In order to returning to Peace, they ſhould remember and much conſider, that it is as truly their Duty to be for Peace as it is to be for Truth; and that it is more pleaſing to God, and more uſeful to Men, and tends more to the honour of Religion, that they ſhould be ſo, than when their zeal for Truth makes them neglect Peace. There are too many that lay out all their Zeal in a manner for Truth, without due regard to Peace and Love; and think that ſo long as they contend for Truth, they do well and worthily enough, though they take little care for Peace in the manner of doing it: Whereas the Scripture makes Peace as well as Truth a great and conſiderable part of the Chriſtian Religion. When the Apoſtles did ſo frequently exhort the Chriſtians to Peace, in contending for their different Opinions, under the notion of contending for Truth; their meaning doubtleſs was to perſuade them ſo to plead for Truth, in thoſe leſſer matters about which they differed, as not to deſtroy Peace one with another. And if this Rule*

of Duty be but obſerved by the Diſſenters, it will make them ſtudious how to manage their different apprehenſions with ſuch moderation and diſcretion, as that the Subſtantials of Religion, Peace and Charity may not ſuffer by it. And this Rule, if obſerved, will lead them likewiſe to conſider how far they may, without wronging Religion or their Conſcience, yield for Peace ſake, and to preſerve Love; and in doing ſo, that is, in ſtudying to be quiet, as the Apoſtle exhorted Chriſtians to be, they may perhaps find juſt cauſe in many a caſe to comply farther than they were aware of, or at firſt ſight of things thought they might have done. When our Saviour ſays, Judge not according to appearance, but judge righteous Judgment, *it implies, that a right Judgment in many Caſes is not to be made by the firſt appearance of things, nor unleſs they be narrowly look'd into, and the ſeveral Circumſtances weigh'd which relate to them. Men many times that have taken up with the firſt appearance of things, have gone away with a great deal of ſatisfaction, and much confidence for ſome time, who yet, when they have afterwards been drawn more narrowly to ſcan the ſame thing over again, and to ſearch into it throughly, have found cauſe to make another and a better Judgment of the ſame thing than they did before. And well-meaning Men are never more in danger of being deceived by the firſt appearance of things, than when thoſe appearances ſeem to carry in them a zeal for God, and for his Laws, and for the purity of his Worſhip. We ſee how zealous and forward the Phariſees were to cenſure ſeveral Actions of our Saviour and of his Diſciples, which at firſt ſight ſeemed to them no better than a prophaning of the Sabbath-day Which yet they would have found to have been quite otherwiſe, if they had been able to have penetrated into thoſe parallel Caſes, by which our Saviour juſtifies his own and his Diſciples Actions againſt their unjuſt Accuſations. And thus ſome well-meaning People ſhew their Zeal for God, as they think, againſt the Common-Prayer-Book, becauſe it is of humane Contrivance, and becauſe nothing is to be done in the Worſhip of God which he has not commanded or appointed, as they are wont to alledge: And has not this a ſpecious appearance at firſt ſight? And yet a very little looking narrowly into this matter, will diſcover the miſtake in it. For, firſt, the intrinſick Subſtance of the Prayers are certainly appointed by God, being either matter of Confeſſion, Supplication, Petition, Interceſſion, or Thankſgiving. And then for the Cloathing the internal Subſtance with an external Mode of Performance, though there be humane Contrivance in it, yet that Contrivance correſponding with God's general Rules of Prayer, being made in a known Tongue, and to Edification, and in decent and reverent Geſtures, it does agree with every right-made publick Prayer whatſoever. For what Prayer is there that any uſe in publick Aſſemblies, or in private either, if vocal, but is of humane Contrivance, unleſs the Lord's Prayer? For God has not determined by the Scriptures, that publick Prayer ſhall be made without a ſet Form, nor in a ſet Form without any other, nor whether only in one Prayer or more, nor if in more how many they ſhall be, nor how long, nor in what method. Theſe things muſt be ordered by humane Contrivance, one's own or others, if Men will pray at all in any other words than the Lord's Prayer. And ſo long as the Prayers do but agree with the foreſaid general Rules, they are of God's appointment ſo far as he has made any appointmentt at all, whether they be contrived in a ſet Form or without, in one or more, or in various methods, or kneeling, or ſtanding, or the like.*

Others, though they will not ſay the Common Prayers are unlawful, yet think others better that are made without any ſuch limitation and reſtriction as the Common Prayers are. And becauſe we are bound to worſhip and ſerve our God with the beſt, and in the beſt manner we can, they think it ground ſufficient to leave the Parochial Aſſemblies to join with thoſe that worſhip God in a better mode. Here's another fair appearance at firſt ſight, as they no doubt do think. I ſhall not here diſpute which of the two is the better way of Praying; but ſhall argue the undueneſs of their Practice that withdraw from the Parochial Aſſemblies upon the foreſaid ground, though it ſhould be ſuppoſed that that's the better mode of Prayer which they take to be ſo. That we are to worſhip God with the greateſt Devotion of Soul we can, whenever we do worſhip him, we are agreed in: And likewiſe that we are to worſhip him in the beſt external mode of Worſhip we can, when Circumſtances concur to make it beſt to do ſo, But doubtleſs it is a great miſtake, if we think Almighty God expects that we ſhould imbroil the Church, diſturb its Peace, and ſet on foot Uncharitableneſs (the inſeparable effects of Separation) and by diviſion weaken that united ſtrength by which Religion is ſupported in the World, and all this only to preſent him with a mode of Worſhip ſomewhat better than another, when yet the other is competently uſeful to the ſame end, and without the forementioned Inconveniencies attending it. In ſuch a caſe we have great reaſon to believe, that God *deſires Mercy, Peace, and Charity, with a leſs convenient Mode of Worſhip, rather than a more convenient one without theſe, or in the neglect or loſs of theſe. He has ſaid,* that he deſires Mercy and not Sacrifice: *He had rather have no Sacrifice than to have it upon ſuch terms as the loſs of Charity, Peace and Mercy comes to. And if ſo, how much more then will a leſs Sacrifice with Mercy, Charity and Peace pleaſe him better, than a greater with the loſs of theſe? Theſe inſtances are given as a taſt to ſhew how eaſily well-meaning People may deceive themſelves by firſt appearances of things; and how neceſſary it is to look into the inwards of things, and to view them round, before we make a Judgment of ſuch things as at firſt ſight ſeem to part* Truth *and Peace.*

4. *If the Diſſenters would give a proof of their real* Love *to* Peace, *and ſincere deſire to bring things to a peaceable iſſue in the Church, then let them be perſuaded to accept of reaſonable Satisfaction. And that I mean by reaſonable Satisfaction, which is ſufficient to convince their Judgment and ſatisfie their Conſcience touching the Terms of Communion in our Pariſh Churches, as that they are none other than ſuch as make that Communion lawful, though they ſhould not be able to obtain what would make it fully adequate to their affection and deſire in all things. And that I reckon makes Communion with a Church lawful, when there is a conſent or an Agreement among the Members, in the ſubſtance of ſaving Doctrine and Worſhip, and nothing made the condition of that Communion which is ſinful in it ſelf. For in ſuch a conſent were the Churches planted by the Apoſtles founded, by which they were diſtinguiſhed from the Infidel World. And no after difference among them about leſſer things was ever allowed as a ſufficient cauſe of breaking Communion. And upon theſe terms are our Pariſh Churches founded. Now a taking up with ſatisfaction touching the* Lawfulneſs *of Communion upon theſe terms, is neceſſary to the keeping of the* Unity *of the Spirit in the Bond of Peace in any Chriſtian Church whatſoever. And the reaſon is, becauſe if a conſent in thoſe things which are eſſential to the being of a true Church, be not ſufficient to hold the parts together in Communion: And if nothing leſs be ſufficient but what every one ſingly judges beſt, not ſimply to the being, but better being of the Church and Communion in it in all Circumſtances relating to outward Adminiſtration of Worſhip and Government, it would be impoſſible to keep them from running into confuſion and multiplying Separations, upon theſe two accounts. Firſt, becauſe all Matters and Circumſtances about theſe leſſer things are not ſo particularly ſtated and determined in Scripture, as thoſe Subſtantials of Doctrine and Worſhip are, which are eſſential to the being of a Church and Communion in it. And ſecondly, becauſe of the different apprehenſions and affections that are among Chriſtians in reference to the betterneſs of ſuch circumſtances in Church Affairs, as are no otherwiſe ſtated than by general Rules. For in meaſuring particular caſes and circumſtances by general Rules, that which one judges moſt agreeable to ſuch Rules, another will judge otherwiſe. And indeed the not taking up with ſuch a ſatisfaction as I have deſcribed, is the true reaſon at the bottom of the many Sects into which our Church of* England *is now divided. For the Presbyterians firſt brake with thoſe that were for Epiſcopal Government, and the Browniſts firſt, and then thoſe of the Congregational way after departed from the Presbyterians, and the Anabaptiſts from them, and the Quakers from them, as alſo ſome of the Fifth Monarchy Men. All of theſe originally were agreed in the ſubſtance of ſaving Doctrine and Worſhip, and all continue to be ſo ſtill for ought I know, except the Quakers. But each of theſe have divided from the other in Communion (except the Quakers) upon the account of their different opinions about ſome leſſer things, than that ſubſtance of ſaving Doctrine and Worſhip which are eſſential to a Church and the Communion of it. In every remove they had as they thought ſomething better in proſpect than was in uſe or in opinion among them from whom they departed; which was ſtill the ruling Principle in their ſeveral Separations and Subdiviſions. And if ever Almighty* God *ſhall have ſo much favour for us who are now ſo miſerably divided, as to bring us unto any conſiderable Conſiſtence and* Union, *it muſt in all probability be by perſuading us all to take up with an agreement and conſent in the ſubſtance of that ſaving Doctrine and Worſhip on which the Apoſtolical Churches were firſt founded, and which were the Terms alſo of their Communion. For ſo long as agreement and conſent, not only in Subſtantials but alſo in leſſer matters, and ſuch as are more diſputable and uncertain, are made the condition of Communion, it is impoſſible to keep the Church in Peace, and free from Diviſion upon Diviſion, and Separation upon Separation, as we have ſeen abundantly verified in the forementioned Inſtances here in this Nation. If there be an Agreement in the Subſtantials, Chriſtian* Forbearance *muſt be uſed towards one another in our differences about leſſer matters, and we muſt*

never ſeek to endeavour a ſupply of what we think is wanting in the Church, farther than ſuch endeavours will conſiſt with keeping Unity in the bond of Peace, and ſo far we may. To accept of ſuch a ſatisfaction as has been deſcribed, and to acquieſce in it as a condition of Peace, is hugely neceſſary to a publick ſettlement in a Nation Chriſtian by profeſſion, which yet doubtleſs is the moſt advantageous method to propagate and promote the Chriſtian Religion in general. For in ſuch a ſettlement it is not to be expected that only ſuch matters and circumſtances can be pitcht upon as every one will count beſt; it were well if that could be hit upon which every one would count tolerably good. Some, for inſtance, would count it beſt to have the publick Prayers without any Liturgy, if they could obtain it. Others they are of another mind, and will think it is beſt for the people in general, and more accommodate to the capacity of the weaker ſort which are always the major part, to have part at leaſt of the publick Prayers in a fixed Form. Becauſe by ſuch a Form, Prayer-matter is prepared with more advantage to affect ſuch Peoples minds, than otherwiſe it would be. For by their being familiarly acquainted with the words and matter of a ſet Form, that matter has a more ready acceſs to their minds, and is more likely to abide with them than what they are leſs acquainted with, and which more tranſiently paſſes away. And though another way of praying may be more ſuitable to ſome, yet if this be better for more, regard to their edification ſhould ſway much with all good Men, who ſhould not ſeek their own things, nor their own profit only, but the profit of many that they may be ſaved, as St. Paul *ſays he did. However, the Peace of the Church muſt not be violated for the betterneſs of an external mode of Worſhip, provided that which ſome eſteem not ſo good do not defeat its own end, but is competently uſeful to it. This ſtill ſhews the neceſſity in order to Peace of taking up with that which I have called reaſonable ſatisfaction. As for the preſent Liturgy, though I do not underſtand but that it is generally agreeable to the Liturgies in uſe in the pureſt primitive Times after the Apoſtles, and long before the riſe of Popery; yet if it may in any reſpects be made better, and to more general ſatisfaction, I could then wiſh for Peace ſake and to remove prejudice, that ſome Emendation might be made in it, or elſe ſome latitude indulged to Miniſters in the uſe of it.*

5. *And that which I ſhall chiefly commend to them, and which I have oft hinted at, both before and in the following Diſcourſe, and which I ſhall now a little more fully inſiſt upon is this,* viz. *That in all their differences with others about leſſer things in Religion, ſpecial care may be taken that leſſer things may be over-ruled by the greater, and not the greater by the leſs. That is, that other leſſer matters give place to Love and Peace, and not Love and Peace to them. By leſſer things, I mean Doctrines concerning points not neceſſary to ſalvation, and things relating not to the inward ſubſtance but outward circumſtances of God's Worſhip, and ſuch things likewiſe as concern not the being but better being of the Church in point of Government, Governours, and Diſcipline, and the like. Now though there are ſome circumſtances more convenient than other, relating to the external part of God's Worſhip, and other circumſtances likewiſe which tend more than other to the perfection of Government and Diſcipline in the Church, yet when Chriſtians are of different opinions about theſe, ſome holding theſe, others holding other to be beſt to the ends and purpoſes to which they relate; in this caſe neither the one nor the other are to ſtand ſo ſtifly for what they think beſt in theſe leſſer things, as to break Communion and ſeparate, and thereby deſtroy Love and Peace rather than not carry it according to their own mind. Men may endeavour to have things of this kind run according to their own private opinion, ſo long and ſo far as Charity and Peace govern in ſuch endeavours. But when they chuſe rather to break the Church in pieces, and to put all into a flame, and to make a Church War of it rather than not to have their will and their way in theſe leſſer things: This is not to keep the Unity of the Spirit in the bond of Peace, but to make the leſſer things over-rule the greater, and the greater to truckle to the leſs. Now Love and Peace are next to the Love of God the great Chriſtian Duties: The firſt and great Commandment is to love God, and the ſecond is like it, which is to love our Neighbours, and eſpecially our Chriſtian Brethren, and is therefore called the Royal Law. To promote Love and Peace wherein our likeneſs to God conſiſts, is the very ſcope and deſign of the Goſpel.* The end of the Commandment is Charity, *ſaith* St. Paul, *ſpeaking of the Goſpel.* The Kingdom of God is Righteouſneſs, and Peace, and Joy in the Holy Ghoſt, *as he ſaith in another place. The introducing and eſtabliſhing of theſe, is the end and deſign of Chriſt's Kingdom and Government by the Goſpel. The Adminiſtration of this Government by preaching and praying, by Sacraments and Church Aſſociation, and all Orders*

and Officers in God's Houſe, are but means appointed to this end, to bring Men to Love and Peace with Faith.

But when Preaching, Praying, and Aſſociating are ſo managed, as that they become Inſtruments of drawing People from their Pariſh Churches, and of keeping up ſuch a diviſion and ſeparation, as by which the Peace of the Church is violated, and which naturally tends to hinder Love in them to others, and in others to them, they ſeem to run counter to the end for which God has deſigned them. And though Men may preach up Love and Peace, and pray for it, and preſs Men to it never ſo much, yet if they put themſelves into ſuch Circumſtances of doing this, as naturally tend to Strife, Diviſion, and Diſaffection among Chriſtian Brethren, they ſeem to act inconſiſtently, and to croſs the true end of Preaching, Praying, and Aſſociating, and to deſtroy one way what they build up another: And though Men by theſe may increaſe in Knowledge and in Zeal for purity of Ordinances, and regular Diſcipline and Government in the Church, yet if their Religion terminate in this, or if their Zeal for theſe be not acted in ſubordination to Charity and Peace, but rather in oppoſition to them, and without due care to preſerve theſe between themſelves and the Brethren from whom they ſeparate or diſſent, many may eaſily be deceived by this means, and be far from being what they take themſelves to be. If any Man among you ſeem to be religious, and bridleth not his tongue *(from unchriſtian vilifying, reproaching, ſlandering, and cenſuring)* he deceives his own Heart, and his Religion is vain. *Thoſe in the Church of* Corinth *were zealous of ſpiritual Gifts, and abounded in them; yet becauſe they laid waſte Charity in a great meaſure by their Diviſions and Contentions, by their Envying and making of Parties, and by being for one Teacher againſt another; St.* Paul *did not ſtick to pronounce them* carnal; *yea, and gave them to underſtand that their gifts of Tongues and Propheſying, of Knowledge and underſtanding all Myſteries, of Faith alſo; yea, though they ſhould add thereto the giving their Goods to feed the Poor, and their Bodies to be burned: Though their Zeal ſhould riſe ſo high, yet if they had not Charity, all would profit them nothing.*

Since then Charity and Peace are ſo conſiderable in the Chriſtian Religion, as that the whole Miniſtration of the Goſpel, Preaching, Praying, Sacraments, and Church Aſſociations, are ordained and deſigned to promote them; and ſince all the other without theſe will not avail Men, nor ſo much as denominate them good Chriſtians; great reaſon there is then, that we ſhould never be ſo much for ſuch a uſe of the one, as will deſtroy, hurt, or hinder the other. Theſe of Charity and Peace are the End, as I have ſhew'd, the other are but the Means; and it is prepoſterous to prefer the Means before the End, or to make the End give place to the Means. If Differences do ariſe about the leſſer things of Religion, or about ſome Circumſtances relating to the Inſtruments of Religion, Peace and Charity are to umpire the difference in ſuch Caſes, and the other things to be overruled by them: No ſide of the difference may carry it againſt Peace and Love, but all ſuch differences muſt be managed as that Peace and Love may be preſerved whole and entire. Let the Peace of God rule in your Hearts, *or* umpire, *as the word is rendred: That muſt be Moderator in all Differences between Chriſtian Brethren about the leſſer things. St.* Peter *ſpeaks a great word when he ſays,* Above all things have fervent Charity among your ſelves. *And St.* Paul *likewiſe when he ſaith,* Above all theſe put on Charity, which is the Bond of Perfectneſs. *In all our Zeal about the inferiour things in Religion, and about the Inſtruments of it, we ſhould always be moſt zealous for Charity, becauſe all other without this will profit nothing, as I ſhew'd before: Zeal for other things may make a noiſe, and cauſe Men to be cry'd up among Men, but will never obtain them approbation from God where Charity and Peace are laid aſide. We ſhould therefore ſooner let go ſome other things for a time, though otherwiſe truly valuable for their end and uſe, than to loſe theſe of Peace and Love to retain thoſe.*

It is very true, there is no Evil to be done, that Good may come: But yet a leſſer Good not only may but ought to be omitted for the doing or procuring a greater. Sacrifice was an Ordinance of God, and yet when this at any time hindered Mercy, it was to be omitted or ſuſpended for ſo long as it did ſo, that Mercy might take place: I will have Mercy and not Sacrifice, *ſaid God by his Prophet. And for like reaſon Circumciſion, another Ordinance of God, was diſcontinued for forty Years in the Wilderneſs. And this puts me in mind of the Caſe of the old Non-Conformiſts: For they ſuffered deprivation and ſilencing by the Biſhops, as thoſe of the Miniſtry among the Diſſenters have done by Act of Parliament: And I confeſs it is a very great Calamity that it has been ſo, and that things had not otherwiſe been compoſed. But why did not thoſe old Non-*

Conformiſts, for the exerciſe of the Miniſtry and Function they had received, and for the general good of the People who ſtood in need of more ſuch Miniſters as they were: I ſay, why did not they for theſe reaſons gather Aſſemblies, erect ſeparate Congregations? but on the contrary, zealouſly oppoſe the Browniſts for endeavouring to do ſo, but that they thought they ſhould have done the Church and the Chriſtian Cauſe more hurt one way than good another, if they had not forborn to do ſo. And when the hurt which has been done in ſeveral reſpects, and which is yet farther like to follow, by our dividing, and contending, and ſeparating, ſhall be put in the ballance againſt the good that hath been done by it, and the manner of it, it will be found a difficult thing for them that have been active in it, to demonſtrate to their own ſatisfaction, much more to the ſatiſfaction of others, that the advantage will fall on the latter ſide.

Upon the whole matter then, ſince our Diviſions are of ſuch an ill tendency as they are, to hinder that Love which is eſſential to the Being of a good Chriſtian, two things I am ſure are very neceſſary for the Diſſenters to do in this caſe. Firſt, That they be very jealous over themſelves, leſt the Temptation they have put themſelves under, by making the Breach ſo wide, ſhould be too hard for them, in leſſening their love to them who differ from them but in leſſer things. Secondly, That nothing be wanting in them which they may or can do to take themſelves off from continuing that ſtumbling-block which they have laid in their way that differ from them; partly by occaſioning Uncharitableneſs in them towards themſelves, and partly by occaſioning ſome to queſtion the Truth of Chriſtianity it ſelf upon account of their difference about it that pretend moſt knowledge in it, and moſt zeal for it. It is an awakening word, that of our Saviour, when he ſaid, Wo unto the World becauſe of Offences, and wo unto them by whom they come. *By which we are taught, that the Offence which the World takes at the Chriſtian Religion, ſo as never truly to receive it, proceeds very much from the unwary and unworthy Behaviour of many that are of the Church by Profeſſion; and that they have a ſad account to make that lay this ſtumbling-block before them. That our Diviſions and Unchriſtian Contentions have been ſuch a ſtumbling-block and offence unto many to cauſe them to fall; ſome into Atheiſm, ſome into Scepticiſm, ſome into Popery, and to ſtagger and unſettle many others, is every wiſe Man's thought. And not only ſo, but that the malignity of this Diſtemper has been ſo diffuſive, as that ſcarce any Man among us is ſo good and happy, as not either actively or paſſively to be made worſe by it; or at leaſt hindred from being ſo good as otherwiſe he would or might have been, by having the fervency of his Charity due to Chriſtian Brethren interrupted and leſſened more or leſs, and his Joy proportionably diminiſhed. Our Zeal about things but little comparatively, hath eaten up the comfort of Love in a great meaſure, and made the Chriſtian Temper and Genius of Men to become leſs pure and refined, and leſs genuine and kindly by our uncharitable Differences about them. And if theſe things are and have been the effects of our Diviſions, what need then is there of Repentance in every one of us who have done any thing unneceſſarily towards the firſt making, or after maintaining of them? If we would retrieve then what we have loſt by our Diviſions, and reſtore to the Church the Peace we have robb'd her of, and thereby manifeſt the Truth of our Repentance for what is paſt, and prevent the farther growth and ſpreading of this Plague for the future; we muſt every one in our places be doing what in us lies to remove the cauſe, by abating what may be abated on the one hand, and by yielding what may be yielded to on the other hand. Theſe things are of that nature, that there is no Man I ſhould think that is really concerned in his own Mind for the ſucceſs of the Goſpel in its main deſign, and for the honour of our Religion, and the true Intereſt of Men's Souls, but will conſider them and be affected with them.*

6. *Separation is no good method or fitting means to procure ſuch a Reformation as the Diſſenters aim at, or a Reformation of Corruptions, either in Perſons or Things, in any ſuch Church as does maintain ſuch Doctrine and Worſhip as is neceſſary to the being of a true Church, as all Reformed Churches do. Which Aſſertion may be made good upon ſeveral accounts.*

As firſt, Becauſe we have no Command from God for ſuch a method of Reformation in any ſuch Church, nor any approved Example of uſing ſuch a method in all the Book of God. Neither the holy Prophets of old, nor our Saviour in his time, ever attempted a Reformation of the many Corruptions that were crept into the Church of the Jews, by ſeparating from Communion in the ſubſtance of the true Worſhip of God which was retained, notwithſtanding thoſe Corruptions. Nor were the Churches in the Apoſtles time free from all Corruption and Diſorder: But yet a redreſs thereof was never preſcribed *or attempted by Separation. But of this I have diſcourſed more particularly in the following Treatiſe.*

Secondly, It is no fit means to obtain a Reformation of what the Diſſenters deſire may be reformed in our Church, becauſe it tends to weaken that Intereſt by which it is to be obtained. For firſt it tends to diſoblige thoſe more than before, who are in a better Capacity than others to farther or hinder ſuch a deſign. Secondly, it divides thoſe that ſeparate, from thoſe within the Church from which they ſeparate, that were moſt likely to favour ſuch a deſign of Reformation, ſo far as juſt, reaſonable, and prudential, and by that weakens the means by which ſuch a thing ſhould be effected. For they ſtood in a fairer capacity of promoting any publick good in the Church while they kept in it in conjunction with others, than they have put themſelves into by rending themſelves from it, to the Grief and Diſcouragement of thoſe whom they deſert.

Thirdly, Such a ſeparation as that under conſideration, hinders Reformation by hindering Charity. If Charity towards all that are concerned in a Reformation, do not appear in all endeavours of procuring it, ſuch endeavours are deſtitute of that which is moſt likely to make them ſucceſsful. Charity towards thoſe that differ from us, is a powerful means of reconciling them to us in time, and to draw them to be of our mind if we have Truth *on our ſide, and to join with us in promoting any honeſt and worthy deſign. It is God's own method of reconciling us unto himſelf, and of Enemies to make us to become his* Friends, *and to affect and deſign the ſame things as he does. And we cannot uſe a better method to gain upon Men, and to win them to be on our ſide in any worthy deſign, than by writing herein after his Copy. Which doubtleſs is one ſpecial reaſon why St.* Paul *in one place ſays,* Let all your things be done with Charity; *and in another,* edifying it ſelf in Love, *ſpeaking of the Church:* And forbearing one another in Love, *is enjoined in order to the* keeping of the Unity of the Spirit in the Bond of Peace, *as I ſhew'd before. To be actuated by Love in our Tranſactions and Converſe with Men, as it is the true Genius of a Goſpel-Spirit, ſo it is the beſt and moſt effectual way of effecting and bringing to paſs thoſe things in the Church which are moſt agreeable to the Goſpel. And if this* Heaven-born Principle *did but powerfully govern and influence all thoſe which I hope fear God, in all they do in ſeeking a Reformation, I ſhould not doubt but the happy effects of it would be very viſible, at leaſt in a few Years. I doubt not but there will come a time before the end of the World, in which there will be a Reformation, not only in all Chriſtendom, but throughout the World in general. And I am perſuaded whenever it ſhall be brought about, it will be chiefly by the mighty Operation of the Spirit of God upon the minds of Men, in cauſing Charity ſo much to abound among them, as ſhall carry all before it by degrees; and render Chriſtianity ſo lovely a thing, both in the Governours and governed, that ſcarce any ſhall dare to oppoſe it, or to make parties againſt Reformation in its Perfection. And we who now live can take no better courſe to haſten on thoſe happy times by removing out of the way by degrees that which hinders, than to govern all our endeavours of a Reformation by ſuch prudent Charity and Meekneſs, as may be ſufficient to convince Men that there is nothing done or endeavoured of this nature, out of a Spirit of Oppoſition, Humour, or Peeviſhneſs, of Envy, Ambition, or Selfiſhneſs, but all with a real and ſincere reſpect to the common good of Men, and the honour of God and his excellent Religion which we profeſs. And if this were but really done by as many as would be aſhamed profeſſedly to own themſelves Enemies to ſuch a Method of Reformation, we ſhould quickly have an end put to our undue Separations, and Unchriſtian Contentions.*

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This being ſo, that Charity is ſo greatly neceſſary to the proſpering of all endeavours that ſhall at laſt end in a kindly, but not violent and conſtrained Reformation; whatſoever then tends to hinder Charity among Chriſtians, or to obſcure it in their endeavours in ſeeking a Reformation, muſt needs proportionably obſtruct the ſucceſs of ſuch endeavours, and croſs their deſign. If there be any thing in the endeavours themſelves of a Reformation, or that does accompany ſuch endeavours, that miniſters any juſt occaſion of Suſpicion that ſuch attempts proceeds from any worſe principle than Charity, or are deſigned for any worſe end than the common good of the Community of Chriſtians in general, and not only of this or that party, that very thing whatever it may be, will mightily enervate and weaken ſuch attempts. But now Separation in the Diſſenters from our Parochial Communion, is in it ſelf an Act of great Uncharitableneſs; and tends to ingender Uncharitableneſs between them and ſuch as they ſeparate from; and therefore can be no good method or fitting means to procure the Reformation they deſign and ſeek. If the Diſſenters either be, or think themſelves to be, any better than thoſe they *ſeparate from (and their Separation it ſelf does beſpeak them ſo to think) then ſuch their Separation is as really and truly an uncharitable Act, as it is for the healthy in Family to withdraw from the ſick, or the ſtrong from the weak, and the Men and Women from the Children, and to leave them to ſhift for themſelves. For the better ſort in particular Churches to ſeparate and withdraw from thoſe in it which are not ſo good, and to embody themſelves apart, is ſuch a piece of Uncharitableneſs, as is croſs to one principal end of Churchſhip, which is the edifying one another, the watching over and taking care one of another, the better to be helpful to the worſe to make them better, the ſtrong and more lively to encourage, quicken, and ſtrengthen the weaker, and thoſe that are dull and backward. And indeed the Apoſtle by the ſimilitude of a natural Body,* and of God's having ſo tempered the parts thereof together, as to give more abundant Honour to that part which lacketh, *doth intimate that more care and pains ſhould be beſtowed on thoſe Members in the Church that are more defective than upon others that are leſs, ſo far ſhould they be from being withdrawn from and neglected. And our Saviour's ſerious Caution is to be taken notice of and remembred upon this occaſion :* Take heed that ye deſpiſe not one of theſe little ones. *And as ſuch Separation is uncharitable in it ſelf, ſo it tends alſo to ingender Uncharitableneſs between thoſe that ſeparate and thoſe that are ſeparated from. The Truth of this alas is too too manifeſt, in that inſtead of diſcourſing of good Sermons and other edifying Subjects, as good People were wont to do when they met together before our unhappy times of Diviſion and Separation; now it is too common among many, to entertain one another with Diſcourſes of what they have pickt up or conceived in their own minds, tending to leſſen the eſteem, if not to make odious ſuch as are not of their party, eſpecially ſuch Miniſters as are not, as if they had a mind to make others diſaffected towards them. And ſuch things as theſe as they grate hard upon the Ears of ſober and moderate Men, and fill their minds with Grief; ſo they prove matter of great Provocation to others to retaliate. And thus by toſſing Firebrands to and fro, the minds both of Men and Women come to be put into a flame, and exulcerated : And all this in a great meaſure at leaſt, as the moſt unhappy effect of Separation and Diviſion. And thus Separation inſtead of proving a method of Reformation, proves in the effects of it to be a method of corrupting the minds and manners of Men with far worſe things than thoſe for the ſake of which they ſeparate. In this way abundance of People ſeem to loſe the ſubſtance by contending for ſhadows; ſo far is ſuch a Separation as is now diſcourſed of, from being a fitting means of Reformation. For indeed this remedy ſeems to be much worſe than the Diſeaſe.*

I know indeed that it is ſuppoſed and objected, that in caſe ſomething ſhould be done for the eaſe of the Diſſenters, yet it would bring but few of them into the Church who now have ſetled themſelves in another way. But I would fain hope, that this is but a ſuſpicion in reference to moſt of them. However, leſt there ſhould be found any backwardneſs in any of them as to this, I ſhall add a few words more to what I have ſaid already, farther to incline them all gladly and thankfully to accept of moderate Terms of Union whenever they can have them. And to this end I would in the firſt place convince them that thoſe who have ſeparated and withdrawn themſelves from Communion in our Pariſh Aſſemblies, have thereby departed from the primitive Pattern, while they have thought they have been reforming according to it. For that in our Pariſh Churches, which was ſufficient to hold the firſt Chriſtians together in Communion, has not been ſufficient for them: And that it is an Agreement in profeſſing thoſe principal points of Faith and Worſhip which are neceſſary to Salvation, and are wont to be called Fundamentals; of which I have ſaid ſomewhat before. Let them ſearch and ſee throughout the whole New Teſtament, if the Churches planted by the Apoſtles themſelves, were not all founded in ſuch an Agreement; and whether this was not the meaſure and band of their Communion alſo. They were uſually baptized after ſo little and ſhort a time of teaching, that they could not be inſtructed in more than the general and chief Doctrines and Heads of Chriſtianity. And yet their Baptiſm upon ſuch a Profeſſion as they made upon ſuch little teaching, was their entrance into the Church. And nothing more was neceſſary to their Communion in a particular Church, but mutual conſent. See what Heads of Doctrine the Apoſtles Sermon conſiſted of in Acts ii. *Upon receiving of which, three thouſand were preſently baptized, and the ſame day added to the Church. And then upon this they continued in the Apoſtles Doctrine and Fellowſhip, and in breaking of Bread and Prayer. The ſumm and ſubſtance of the Doctrine preached to them and received by them, upon which their Baptiſm, Incorporation, and Communion followed, was, that* Jeſus *of* Nazareth *whom they had crucified, was* *by God raiſed from the dead, and made both Lord and Chriſt: And to perſuade them to repent and be baptized, in order to their obtaining the Forgiveneſs of their Sin. See likewiſe what Doctrine was preach'd to the* Eunuch, Cornelius, *and the* Jaylor, *before they were baptized. The firſt Principles of the Doctrine of Chriſt, called by the Apoſtle the* Foundation, *were ſuch as conſiſted of ſuch Doctrines as* Repentance from dead Works, Faith towards God, Baptiſm, the Reſurrection of the Dead, and Eternal Judgment. *For upon a conſent in ſuch Points as theſe, the Churches were founded.* St. Paul *perſuaded the Church of* Epheſus *by all means to keep Unity upon this very ground, that they had all one and the ſame God and Father, and one Lord Mediator, and were influenced by one Spirit, were of one Faith and one Hope, and had all one Baptiſm. And are not the ſame Doctrines of Chriſtianity profeſſed by thoſe of our Pariſh Churches, and the ſame Ordinances of Worſhip uſed? Have they any other* God *or Mediator than the firſt Chriſtians had? or any other Articles of Faith, or any other Worſhip than they had? Have they not the ſame Sacraments? And do they not pray for the ſame things? Or is there any thing added in Doctrine or Worſhip that is contrary to that in which the firſt Chriſtian Churches were agreed, as there is in the Church of* Rome? *And can they find that ever any good Chriſtians of the firſt Churches did break Communion upon any difference that was among them about any leſſer matters than thoſe upon agreement in which they were firſt united? And were not all their Contentions, that had any tendency towards ſuch a thing, ſharply reproved by the Apoſtles? And if theſe things be ſo, then what can be plainer than that a Separation from our Proteſtant Pariſh Churches, and the Worſhip therein performed, is a manifeſt* Innovation, *and a departing from the Primitive Pattern laid down in Scripture? And if this be not Schiſm, and that in a high degree, I would fain know what is. From all which it cannot but be inferr'd, that thoſe who have made themſelves guilty of ſuch a Separation, are as much obliged to repent of what they have done, and to return to Parochial Communion, as they are to make the Scripture their Rule, and not to live and allow themſelves in a manifeſt deviation from the primitive Pattern.*

Our Differences and Separations are not for want of any thing in our Pariſh Aſſemblies that are eſſential to the Being of a true Church, nor for any exceſs or redundancy of matter, deſtructive of the Eſſence of ſuch a Church, or of the Worſhip of God in it. Nor is the Queſtion in difference, whether a Miniſtry and Ordinances are neceſſary in the Church; but the Queſtion is, who ſhould Rule and Govern in theſe Affairs, who ſhould ordain the ſeveral Paſtors to their Office, and who ſhould overſee them, that they do their duty in it, or call them to account for neglect or diſorder; whether Dioceſan Biſhops, or the ſeveral Claſſes of Preſbyters, or whether the People of each Church. Not whether the beſt method is to be uſed in a Chriſtian State, to propagate and promote Chriſtianity; but whether or no to allow any that will to gather Congregations, without publick approbation, be that beſt method. Not whether publick Prayers and Sacraments are neceſſary, but whether the form and method of Adminiſtration preſcribed by our Liturgy be tolerable, or rather, whether it be ſo convenient as another is or might be. Not whether Baptiſm be neceſſary, but whether it be neceſſary to adminiſter it to thoſe born of Chriſtian Parents in their Infancy or at Age, or which of theſe was practiſed in the Apoſtles days. Now theſe things in which our ſeveral differences lie, are far from thoſe Fundamentals, in agreement, in which the firſt Churches and their Communion were founded. And the nature of them, and of our different Opinions about them is but ſuch as may well enough conſiſt with their joint Communion in the ſame Church who are of thoſe different Opinions, when the Eſſence of a true Church, Miniſtry, and Ordinances of Worſhip is there, as it is in our Pariſh Churches. And Men of all the foreſaid different Opinions may be born with, although they do endeavour to promote their ſeveral Notions, while in Communion in the ſame Church, ſo long as they do it in a regular way, and without breach of Peace or Charity. But to ſeparate, divide, and to break all into ſeveral pieces, as we have done, upon the account of theſe different Apprehenſions, while yet we all agree in the main, is doubtleſs an effect of intemperate Zeal, and ſuch as carries Men off from following the primitive Pattern. So great is the Inconvenience, ſhall I ſay? or Miſchief rather, of making leſſer things the Condition of Communion, than were made ſo in the Primitive Church. The Diſſenters great Complaint is, that in our Pariſh Churches ſuch things are made the Condition of Communion which the Scripture has not made ſo; but are not aware that they themſelves do ſo too, while they make their doubtful and diſputable Opinions the band of their Union. Though it may not be convenient to make more the Condition of Communion than is neceſſary, yet it's much better to obſerve, *that Condition being made, ſuppoſing it lawful to do ſo, than it is to ſeparate. And ſeparate we may not where the Eſſentials of a true Church and Goſpel-Miniſtration are, and nothing made the Condition of Communion that is ſinful, though ſomething more ſhould be impoſed than in ſimple Conſideration is convenient. But without all doubt, the better and more certain way to preſerve the Church in Peace and Unity, and to cut off all pretence of Cauſe of Separation, is to make no doubtful or diſputable Opinion or Thing the Condition of Communion, but ſuch great, neceſſary and unqueſtionable things, as in which all Orthodox Chriſtians have always been wont to be agreed. And the like might be ſaid touching Confeſſions of Faith.*

Secondly, I would beſeech them ſeriouſly to conſider, whether there be ſo much as a moral poſſibility of ever curing our Rents and Diviſions, without making a conſent in ſuch Doctrines of Faith and Worſhip as are neceſſary to Salvation, the Rule and Boundary of Church-Communion. Can any one of thoſe ſeveral Parties that have ſeparated, ever expect that all the reſt that differ from them ſhould ever unite by an agreement in thoſe minute Points and Opinions that difference, diſtinguiſh, and divide them from one another? Can the Preſbyterians, or the Congregationaliſts, or the Anabaptiſts, or any other Party, expect that ever all the other that differ from them ſhould ever concenter and agree in that by which they are differenced from all the reſt? If our Lord and Saviour has not made thoſe leſſer Opinions, wherein the foreſaid Parties differ one from another, the Standard of Communion in all his Churches, as undoubtedly he has not, then it muſt needs be an unreaſonable thing for them to expect that he ſhould ever by his Grace draw all his Diſciples and faithful Followers to concenter in any one of them, as ſuch a Standard. That which our Saviour hath made the Standard of Communion in his Churches, is that ſubſtance of Doctrine and Worſhip in which the whole Catholick Church has ordinarily been agreed, in all times and places of the Chriſtian World. And therefore the Primitive Churches, and ſo downward, have always had ſuch Creeds and Liturgies in uſe among them, as by which they declared not only the agreement of each Church among themſelves in Faith and Worſhip, but alſo their conſent and agreement with the whole Catholick Church therein. And the old Non-Conformiſts, though they were diſſatisfied in ſome things required in order to their entering upon the Miniſtry, yet always held as well as any other, that an agreement in the main and principal Doctrines, or Points of Faith and Worſhip, ought to keep Men from ſeparating from one another. The Profeſſion and Preaching of the true Doctrine in all Fundamental Points, is the only proper and certain note of a true Church, *ſaith Mr.* Arthur Hilderſham, *one of the moſt Eminent among them. And again,* Thoſe Aſſemblies that enjoy the Word and Doctrine of Salvation, though there remain many Corruptions in them, are to be acknowledged the true Churches of God, and ſuch as none of the Faithful may make Separation from: *His Lectures on* John iv. p. 165, 167. *This being ſo, it ſtill ſhews how unreaſonable a thing it is to make ſuch By-opinions the Teſt and Standard of Communion, that ſtand off from the general Subſtance of Faith and Worſhip, by agreement in which the Catholick Church is united: And how unreaſonable it is to refuſe all terms of Concord and Communion that are not commenſurate to theſe By-opinions, which are ſuch as but very few of the whole Body of Chriſtians would ever own, much leſs make the Condition of Communion. If the ſeveral diſſenting Parties then would but give themſelves liberty diſpaſſionately and calmly to conſider ſuch things as theſe, methinks they ſhould not have the heart to think it better to keep open our lamentable Breaches, till this or that of their different Opinions carry it from all the reſt, which is never likely to be, than it is to concenter in thoſe generals, by agreement in which the Primitive Chriſtians were united.*

And that they may not think it better to do ſo, I ſhall in the third place beſeech them to reflect upon, and to lay more to heart the Conſequence of dividing upon ſuch private and narrow Opinions or Principles as thoſe are which have carried the ſeveral Parties off from Parochial Communion that are off; and what ſuch Diviſion and Separation has already produced, and is likely farther to produce. The beginning of ſuch Diviſion has in its progreſs been an inlet to the many Sects among us. The old Non-Conformiſts, tho' they did not ſeparate from Parochial Communion, but always oppoſed it with as much zeal as any; yet they uſing certain Arguments for ſome Emendation in Church-affairs, the Browniſts they come and improve thoſe Arguments againſt the Non-Conformiſts themſelves, and inferred from them the neceſſity of ſuch a Separation as the Browniſts themſelves made. And after this, thoſe for the Congregational way ſprang out of the Browniſts, and uſed their Arguments for themſelves, only became ſomewhat refined from their

Rigidneſs. And then the Anabaptiſts who agreed with the Browniſts and Congregationaliſts in all other Principles, advanced one ſtep farther and denied Infant-Baptiſm to be lawful, and upon that account ſeparated from them alſo. And then in our late unhappy Troubles, a great Party was drawn off from thoſe that adhered to the publick Eſtabliſhment by Law, and ſet on foot a Work of Reformation in the Church, as they reckoned. Upon this others from among them, thought they might as well divide again from them to carry on the Work of Reformation farther, as they had divided from the other to begin it. And a third party ſerved the ſecond as the ſecond had done the firſt, and a fourth the third, as the third had done the ſecond, and ſo on. And thus the firſt Diviſion multiplied and brought forth others of ſeveral ſorts, until it iſſued at laſt in a Babel of Confuſion: From all which, alas how many have come to conclude at laſt, that there is no certainty in Religion, inſomuch as that they will be ready to laugh at us when we talk to them of Religion, and ask us of which Religion we would have them to be. And I think it's little queſtionable, but that the numerous Iſſue and Company of Atheiſts, Infidels, Scepticks, Papiſts, and Quakers in this Nation, will be found owing, at leaſt in great part, unto the ſeveral Separations and Diviſions, which took their riſe from but a ſmall beginning at the firſt. All which things conſidered, I would appeal to the wiſeſt and beſt of the Diſſenters, whether ever they would have acted ſo venturouſly in ways and methods unuſual and extraordinary as they have done, had they been able but to have foreſeen the ſad Conſequences of it in the Inſtances forementioned, and in expoſing the Nation thereby to the danger of the return of Popery. And if not, with what ſatisfaction can they perſiſt and proceed therein now they have ſeen the ſad events of ſuch doings? Though their good Intention and meaning might mitigate, though not excuſe their actings extraordinarily, and at all Adventures before they knew how ſad the Conſequence of it would prove; yet it is very much to be queſtioned, whether it will do ſo now, if they ſtill perſiſt in it after they have ſeen the dreadful effects of it. I greatly fear the Diſhonour that has been done to the Chriſtian Religion and the Proteſtant Cauſe, both at home and abroad, by theſe multiplied Diviſions and Separations among the Proteſtants themſelves, is not ſufficiently laid to heart, nor that advantage which is made of them by the common Adverſary at home and abroad againſt the Proteſtant Intereſt. Nor can I believe, but that if theſe and other the doleful effects of theſe Separations and Sub-ſeparations, were duly conſidered and laid to heart, it would much abate of that Confidence and Satisfaction which the ſeveral ſeparating Parties ſeem to have in their own ways, and make them willing to make the difference as little as ever poſſibly they can for the preſent, and ſo long after a general Reconciliation and Union among all Proteſtants, and willing to accept of any reaſonable Terms to attain it, and in the mean time to carry it with more Modeſty and Humility than many of them have done, towards thoſe who have not thought fit to make ſuch deſperate Adventures as they have done.

Theſe things I cannot ſeriouſly think on without Grief of Heart, nor would mention them now (though they cannot be hid) were it not to provoke the Diſſenters to a Jealouſy in themſelves of their well doing, in doing that which hath produced ſuch ſad effects, and to put them upon conſidering whether that can be a good Tree which brings forth ſuch bad Fruit. For if it could be but obtained of them impartially to conſider the monſtrous effects their many Separations have produced, and the things by which we have endeavoured to evince, that their ſo ſeparating has been no matter of neceſſity or duty, but the contrary, it could hardly fail to ſtartle ſuch of them as have any true ſenſe upon their minds how great a ſin it is without very clear and undeniable reaſons, to be acceſſary to the bringing upon the Church ſuch great Miſeries and Calamities, and upon Men ſo much ſin, and to Religion ſo much damage, as has been occaſioned by the foreſaid Separations: Nor could it then fail to encline them to ſtudy as much how to come to a lawful Union with thoſe that differ from them but in ſuch things as are tolerable, as ever they have done to draw themſelves and others into Separation, or an unpeaceable Diviſion, upon account of difference of Opinion about tolerable things. Were there not ſomething worſe which too much prevails amongſt us, than ſuch a Spirit of Humility and Charity, by which the true Diſciples and faithful Followers of our Saviour are above all things known, we ſhould not find it ſo difficult a thing as we do, to live peaceably together, and to enjoy comfortable Communion one with another, notwithſtanding our different ſentiments about thoſe things which have little or no influence upon the mind to make Men really better in the Frame and Conſtitution of their Souls, but much worſe when their Affection for them is turned into bitter Zeal, Strife, and Contention, and a deſpiſing of others. If I did not know, or verily think, that Men would be no Loſers but great Gainers in the true Spirit of Chriſtianity, by that general Communion I drive at, the other due Care and Diligence in the uſe of means, and opportunities of receiving and doing good concurring, I ſhould not dare to appear for it as I have done. And now if beſides theſe things, the difficult and dangerous Circumſtances we have brought our ſelves into by our Diviſions, will not awaken us and make us ſenſible of a neceſſity of uniting as well as we can, if not ſo well as we could wiſh, I know not what will, unleſs a terrible ſcourge by the hand of a common Enemy, which perhaps may make us ſenſible of our paſt folly, if nothing leſs will do it.

I have not, you ſee, at all inſiſted upon the Evil of Separation from Parochial Communion, as it runs counter to the Government that forbids it, but only from the evil Tendency of it in the nature of the thing, if there had been no humane Law againſt it. And although I could ſay very much to ſhew how much wrong is done to Chriſtianity, when the beſt Chriſtians, or thoſe that pretend to be ſo, do not manifeſt, that their Religion makes them more averſe than any other Men from thwarting the Government they are under, except in ſuch caſes where the Commands thereof do contradict God's: Yet the publick ſcandal brought upon Religion, by our Separations, as if we were of ſo many Religions, would have been nothing ſo great as now it is in the ſight of the World, both in this and other Nations, though the Diſſenters had held by-Meetings and Religious Exerciſes, if they had withal continued their Communion in the Pariſh Congregations; but of this I have ſpoken already in my Addreſs. And now I have done, I do expect to be cenſured both on the right and on the left, by ſuch as run into extreams on either hand; but am well aſſured, that ſuch are the Men by whom the Church has ſuffered moſt, and who are never like to have the honour of healing the Wounds which they have made; unleſs they change their minds, and become of more moderate and peaceable Tempers. And do not doubt, but that one time or other, when the noiſe is huſht, and the ſtorm of Paſſion and furious Zeal is over, the ſtill Voice of peaceable Men will be heard.

Theſe things I thought good to add by way of Preface to the following Diſcourſe, upon this occaſion of reprinting it, as moſt congruous to the deſign of it. And indeed, I know nothing more conducive to the recovering Peace to the Church in this Nation, than for our Legiſlators and Governours on the one hand, to do what in prudence they may do towards it, by ſuch Alteration and Abatements as tend only to healing and no hurt: And for the Diſſenters on the other hand to manifeſt their real and ſincere deſire of Peace, by accepting reaſonable Satisfaction. And without ſuch Moderation on both ſides, as the caſe now ſtands, I ſee little hope of Peace, notwithſtanding all pretend to love it, and blame each other for depriving the Church of it. And for want of this Moderation, and for the manifold ſins which have followed thereupon, I am indeed afraid that we are under the Tokens of God's Diſpleaſure at this Day, as well as for many other grievous Provocations.

What I have ſaid in theſe Papers, tends much to illuſtrate many things in the following Diſcourſe, more briefly touch'd: For which cauſe I have called what I have ſaid herein a Preface, though diſproportionate indeed in length to the Diſcourſe it ſelf.

POSTSCRIPT.

IN order to the regaining and preſerving Peace in the Church, a thing much deſigned in the enſuing Treatiſe; two things would be carefully avoided, to wit, unneceſſary Scrupuloſity in thoſe that are to obey, and unneceſſary Impoſition in thoſe that give Laws. Tenderneſs of Conſcience in refraining from all known ſin, though never ſo ſmall, is very commendable, and ſo is a care to diſcern all that to be ſin which is ſo indeed, in order to the avoiding of it. But for Men deliberately to ſcruple things when required, in order to Peace, without being able to give a good reaſon why, neither commends them nor their Religion. It's true, whatſoever is not of Faith is ſin. But then, whatſoever is believed to be unlawful without being able to give ſome good account of ſuch a belief, is Superſtition. And Men ſhould be as ſcrupulous to make more ſins or duties than God has made to be ſo, as they ſhould be to commit the one or neglect the other of thoſe that are declared to be ſuch by God, Many of Mens ſcruples are owing only to their fancy, which in Religious as well as in other Caſes, has a ſtrong Operation on the mind, when there is no foundation in reaſon for it, and reaſon will hardly ſatisfie ſuch. And here let me ſay, that thoſe who employ their Parts and Learning in removing ſuch Scruples, and ſatisfying ſuch Doubts as are ſolvable, and *thereby ſettle Mens Minds, and procure Peace in the Church, do make a far better uſe of their Parts and Learning, than thoſe who employ theirs in raiſing thoſe Doubts and Scruples in the Minds of Men, to the unſetling of them, and to the diſturbance of the Peace of the Community. For the one tends to leſſen the difference among us, and to reduce it into a narrow compaſs, and by degrees to conciliate and reconcile Diſſenters; when as the other tends to widen the Difference, and to keep open the Breach; and there is as much difference between them, as there is between healing and wounding.*

The other thing to be avoided, in order to the Church's Peace, is unneceſſary Impoſition. By which I mean the impoſition of unneceſſary things, or at leaſt unneceſſary as Conditions of Communion. Such things ſhould never be impoſed as Conditions of Communion, which tend to Diviſion. The Peace of the Church ſhould give Laws even to the Lawgivers, as the End does in the choice of means. Things indifferent in their nature ſhould never be impoſed farther than will conſiſt with the Peace of the Church. One main end of Eccleſiaſtical Rules and Orders is the Peace of the Church: And nothing is more improper to uſe, as a means to attain it, than ſuch an impoſition of things as of all other is moſt likely to hinder it. If it ſhall be ſaid, So long as nothing is impoſed but what is lawful, though not neceſſary in it ſelf, but yet convenient for Uniformity ſake, and as a proof of the Governableneſs of ſuch as are fit to be owned as Members of the Church, and admitted to the Privileges thereof; and it may well be hoped, that ſo many as are truly conſcientiouſly ſcrupulous for the preſent, will be convinced and ſatisfied in time by ſuch endeavours as are ſufficient to that end. Yet it may be conſidered withal, that this way and method of reconciling Diſſenters, is more uncertain and more hazardous, and not ſo near and ready a way to come unto ſo deſirable an end, as the reconciling Diſſenters is, as the taking off ſome Impoſitions would be, without any hurt to Religion in general, or damage to the juſt Intereſt of the Church, but much to the advantage of both. For it is a thing well known, that the generality of the People are but little ſkilled in Argumentation pro *and* con *about things Controverſial, and cannot eaſily make a Judgment on which ſide Truth lies: And we ſee, after many Years Experience, how little this method of reconciling Diſſenters has prevail'd. And whether we can promiſe our ſelves any better ſucceſs in this way for the future than has been found hitherto, is a queſtion would be thought on. The generality of People among the Diſſenters, I conceive, do much acquieſce in the Judgment of thoſe Guides and Leaders whom they moſt affect, touching the things in difference between us and them. Which ſeems to make it neceſſary in order to the reconciling the generality of the Diſſenting People to Parochial Communion, to do ſomewhat alſo for the eaſe of their Leaders and Guides, in reference to their Reconciliation likewiſe. And thus I end as I began.*

And truly methinks the bad influence our Diviſions and hot Contentions have upon the Spirits of Men on both ſides, and the great Scandal which is thereby brought upon our Religion in the eyes of foreign Nations, and the Conſideration of what a Bar is thereby put in the Way of the unbelieving World, againſt their imbracing of our Religion and the Goſpel we profeſs, ſhould not fail to provoke every Man on both ſides, who has any Love or Zeal for the honour and ſucceſs of his Religion in the World, and for the good of Mens Souls, to do what in him lies towards the putting an end to this Church-War, beſides the other ſtrong motives which every one knows, do perſuade and oblige us all to haſten an Union on the beſt Terms we can, if not the beſt we could wiſh. When our bleſſed Saviour prayed for his Diſciples and Followers, that they all might be one, *and for this reaſon,* that the World might believe that the Father had ſent him, *he knew and foreſaw that their Diviſion would tend to keep the World in unbelief, by obſcuring the Excellency of his Religion, and by rendring the Divinity and Truth of it ſuſpected.*

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A PERSUASIVE TO Peace and Unity AMONG CHRISTIANS.

BRITISH MUSEUM

THE deep Senſe of the very ill Effects of our Church-Diviſions hath put me, as it ſhould do every good Chriſtian, upon healing Conſiderations. An account of ſome of which I ſhall give in the following Diſcourſe; which I ſhall ground on the words of St. *Paul*, Eph. iv. 3. *Endeavouring to keep the Unity of the Spirit in the Bond of Peace.* Which contain that Behaviour, in part, by which Chriſtians may, and ought to walk worthy of that Vocation to which they are called: Unto which the Apoſtle doth, with the greateſt Earneſtneſs, exhort and perſuade them, in this and the two former Verſes. And the words give us occaſion to enquire into two things. 1. What is meant by the Unity of the Spirit. 2. How this Unity is preſerved by Peace, and how we are to endeavour ſo to preſerve it.

1. What is meant by the Unity of the Spirit? The Unity of the Spirit is that Oneneſs among Chriſtians, which the Spirit of God worketh, or effecteth by the Goſpel, which is the Miniſtration of the Spirit. For by the Spirit's Operation through that, Men become one in Faith or Perſuaſion, one in Profeſſion, one in Affection, and one in Communion. And by their Union and Agreement in theſe, or the three former of theſe, they become one Body or Spiritual Corporation under Chriſt the Head of it. *By one Spirit they are all baptized into one Body, and are made to drink into one Spirit*, 1 Cor. xii. 13.——*For the Work of the Miniſtry*——*till we all come to the Unity of the Faith, and of the Knowledge of the Son of God*, Eph. iv. 12, 13.

1. They are, by the Spirit, made one in Faith or Perſuaſion, touching the great fundamental Truths in the Chriſtian Religion; ſuch as the Apoſtle doth inſtance in, in the three following Verſes: *Even as ye were called in one hope of your Calling: One Lord, one Faith, one Baptiſm, one God and Father of all, who is above all, and through all, and in you all.* Firſt, they are all called by the Goſpel to embrace Chriſtianity, in *One Hope* of obtaining Forgiveneſs of ſins, and eternal Life. Secondly, they all agree in profeſſing Faith in *One Lord Jeſus Chriſt*, as the only Mediator, in Oppoſition to *the Lord's many*, the many Mediators the Heathen profeſſed to have, and to worſhip, 1 *Cor.* viii. 5, 6. Thirdly, they all agree in the Belief that the Doctrine of the Goſpel by Chriſt, and his Apoſtles, contained in the Holy Scriptures, is a Revelation from God touching what Men ought to *believe*, and how they ought to *live*; called the [*one Faith*] and *the common Faith*, from the Chriſtian's unanimous Agreement in it, *Tit.* i. 4. Fourthly, they all agree, and are one in the Belief of *One God and Father of all*, in Oppoſition to the many Idol Gods worſhipped by others. Fifthly, there is alſo *One Baptiſm*, by which all the Chriſtians, with one conſent, make Profeſſion ſolemnly of their Belief in, and Dedication to the Worſhip and Service of the Father, Son, and Holy Ghoſt, into whoſe Name they were baptized, and by which, as by a ſacred Rite, they are ſolemnly declared to be of the *one Body* the Church. *By one Spirit are all baptized into one Body.*

2. They all agree, and are one, in the *Profeſſion* of the *common Faith*, the fundamental Doctrines of the Goſpel, the Belief of which is of neceſſity to Salvation. Which Profeſſion is called *The acknowledging of the Truth which is after Godlineſs*, Tit. i. 1. 2 Tim. ii. 25. *The acknowledgment of the Myſtery of God, and of the Father, and of Chriſt*, Col. ii. 2. As with the Heart they believe unto Righteouſneſs, ſo *with the Mouth Confeſſion is made unto Salvation*, Rom. x. 10.

3. So far as they are Chriſtians indeed, they are all one in Affection, or Brotherly Love. They love all Men, even thoſe that are not Chriſtians, with a Love of Compaſſion, deſiring, and ſeeking their good; but they love their fellow Chriſtians with a ſpecial kind of Love, for the appearance of good in them, for their Oneneſs with them in the Faith, called, *a loving for the Truth's ſake which is in them*, 2 John i. 2. And *a loving them in the Faith*, Tit. iii. 15. By which they become *One Heart, and one Soul knit together in Love*, Acts iv. 32. Col. ii. 2. And hence it is that *Faith in our Lord Jeſus Chriſt, and Love to all the Saints*, are frequently joyned together in Scripture.

4. All they that rightly be of the Unity of the Spirit, are alſo one in Communion. One in their Communion in *Grace*, mutually loving one another, and praying one for another: One in Communion in *Gifts*, edifying one another as they have opportunity: And one in Communion in *Ordinances*; communicating together in Ordinances of Divine Worſhip, ſpiritually with all, and locally with thoſe among whom they live; 1 *Cor.* x. 17. *For we being many are one Bread, and one Body; for we are all Partakers of that one Bread.*

Theſe are the things in which the Unity of the Spirit doth eſpecially conſiſt. Not that I limit it to theſe only: For it is the Work of the Spirit, in the Goſpel, to be bringing the Believers to *ſpeak all the ſame thing, and to be perfectly joyned together in the ſame mind, and in the ſame Judgment*; in the leſſer things of Religion as well as the greater; but their actual Agreement lieth moſtly in the greater.

2. How this Unity is preſerved by Peace, and how we are to endeavour ſo to preſerve it.

Unity in the whole Community of Chriſtians, is preſerved by each Member's obſerving the Laws and Rules made for the Government and good Order of the whole in their Carriage towards each other. For while every Man acts his own part only, and keeps in his own Rank according to Rule, there is no Confuſion, no Diſturbance, no Diviſion: And Peace and Confuſion, or Diſorder, are put in Oppoſition to one another, 1 *Cor.* xiv. 33. Chriſt, the Head of the Church, or ſpiritual Corporation, hath made ſeveral excellent Laws and Rules, to govern the Members of his Body in their Behaviour one towards another, for the common good of the whole, and for the Honour of their Religion, and of him who is the great Founder of it. As that all their things ſhould be done in Charity: That they be gentle and courteous, humble and condeſcending, in Honour preferring one another: That they put on Bowels of Mercy and Kindneſs: That they forbear one another in Love: That the ſtrong bear the Infirmities of the weak: That they bear one another's Burthens: That they forgive one another: That they admoniſh, exhort, and comfort one another, as there is occaſion: That they have the ſame care one for another: That they provoke not one another: That they lay no ſtumbling-block in one another's way: That all things be done to edifying: That they join together in ſolemn Acts of God's Worſhip as they have opportunity: That the Paſtors teach and rule the People well, and that the People learn of them, and obey them; and the like.

Now, ſo far as theſe, and other like Laws are kept and obſerved, ſo far Peace and good Order is kept, and thereby Unity preſerved. For there is no rent or diviſion in the Body, till Men break the Laws of good Order. But ſo far as the Laws of good Order in the Chriſtian Community are broken, ſo far the Peace thereof is diſturb'd; and to what degree the Peace thereof is diſturb'd, to that degree is the Unity thereof weakned, and threatned to be broken, if it be not thereby broken indeed. As for inſtance, in caſe part of the Members of this Community differ in their Opinions from the reſt, about undetermined Circumſtances of Order or Worſhip; ſome holding theſe, and others holding thoſe beſt to agree with general Rules: If then either the one or the other do urge, or impoſe their own Apprehenſions, or oppoſe the others that differ from them, to the apparent Breach of the great Laws of Charity, and general Edification; then is the Churches Peace thereby diſturb'd, and the Unity thereof more or leſs broken; and then eminently ſo, when it proceeds to Separation.

But when Chriſtians that agree in the Eſſentials of Chriſtianity, do manage all their different apprehenſions about leſſer matters, eſpecially about undetermined circumſtances, and matters of doubtful Diſputation, with ſuch Humility, Charity, Meekneſs, Gentleneſs, Tenderneſs, Condeſcenſion and Forbearance, as is no ways apt to diſcover in them any ſlighting of their Brethren, or Uncharitableneſs towards them, nor is any ways apt to beget ſuch like Diſtempers in their Brethren towards themſelves, to the interrupting of their mutual Communion; then may they be truly ſaid to keep the Unity of the Spirit in the Bond of Peace, though they otherwiſe differ in their Thoughts about ſuch things: Becauſe by ſuch a Behaviour they obſerve the Laws of good Order, provided by our Lord and Maſter in ſuch caſes, as I ſhall ſhew more particularly afterwards.

In the mean time, by what hath been thus ſaid in general, you may underſtand how we are to endeavour to keep the Unity of the Spirit in the Bond of Peace; and that is, by a prudent and careful keeping cloſe to the Laws which our Bleſſed Saviour hath given thoſe of his great Houſhold to govern themſelves by, in their Carriage one towards another, under all their different Apprehenſions and Opinions in ſuch-like things as aforeſaid.

And for the manner of endeavouring it: The phraſe and manner of ſpeaking, uſed in Scripture in preſſing this Duty of Peace and Unity, plainly ſhews that the preſervation or recovery of it is moſt induſtriouſly to be endeavoured. *If it be poſſible, and as much as in you lieth, live peaceably with all Men*, Rom. xii. 18. *Seek Peace, and enſue it*, 1 Pet. iii. 11. *Follow Peace with all Men*, Heb. xii. 14. Though it flie from us, yet we muſt follow after it, and, if it be poſſible, overtake and bring it back again. Nay, we are not only to follow after Peace, but alſo to *follow after the things that make for Peace*, that tend to it, *Rom.* xiv. 19. And becauſe this is that which I principally deſign in theſe Papers, I ſhall enlarge my Diſcourſe the more about it. And what I ſhall ſay in ſhewing yet more particularly how we are to endeavour to keep the Unity of the Spirit in the Bond of Peace, may paſs under the name of *Directions*, if you pleaſe.

I. Direction.

If we would endeavour it to purpoſe, we muſt lay the Foundation in the peaceable Government of our own Spirits, in Humility and Charity, baniſhing thence ſuch Paſſions and evil Humours as will otherwiſe betray Men into unpeaceable Practices, and make them diſturbers of the Church's Peace, and conſequently breakers of her Unity.

As firſt of all, we muſt lay aſide Pride and Vain-glory, and manage all our matters one with another, with lowlineſs of Mind, Meekneſs and Modeſty. For Unchriſtian Contention, which is contrary to Peace, ſprings from Pride and height of Spirit: *Only by Pride cometh Contention*, ſaith *Solomon*, Prov. xiii. 10. By Pride a Man over-values himſelf, and under-values another: He over-values his own Underſtanding, Reaſoning, and Judgment; and as much ſlights and under-values another's. This makes him impatient of Oppoſition, and to think hardly of them that will not bow to his Reaſonings and Judgment, and ſay as he ſays. The immoderate deſire to maintain the Reputation of his own Judgment, of which he hath ſo high a conceit, makes him overlook or but ſlightly conſider what is offered by another in oppoſition to it, or differing from it. And hence ariſe immoderate and unpeaceable Contendings, eſpecially when the Parties contending are both ſick of one Diſeaſe; though the one may have a better cauſe in hand than the other. This St. *Paul* cautioned the Chriſtians againſt, *Gal.* v. 26. *Let us not be deſirous of Vain-glory, provoking one another, envying one another.* When Men are ambitious and vain-glorious, would be thought ſome-body, or to appear conſiderable in the account of others, every little oppoſition is apt to provoke their Paſſion; and they in that Paſſion are apt again to ſay and do that which tends to provoke others. And when the Fire is by this means kindled, it is not eaſily quenched. For, *Where envying and ſtrife is, there is confuſion, and every evil work*, Jam. iii. 16.

But where Humility, Meekneſs, and Modeſty of Mind bear ſway, there the Peace of the Church is in little danger of ſuffering by ſuch. Such will eſteem others better than themſelves, when they are ſcarce their Equals: They will have a better opinion of their Wiſdom and Piety than of their own. And this diſpoſes them to *look, not every Man on his own things, but alſo on the things of others*; and as impartially, and with as much fairneſs to conſider and weigh what is offered by them, as what is offered by themſelves, and to be as willing and ready to receive, as to give ſatisfaction. St. *Paul* well knew how conducible ſuch a Temper is to the Peace and Tranquillity of the Church, and to the comfort and benefit of Church-Communion, when he ſaid, *Let nothing be done through ſtrife or vain-glory, but in lowlineſs of mind let each eſteem* *other better than themſelves. Look not every Man on his own things, but every Man alſo on the things of others*, Phil. ii. 3, 4. And if, after all this fairneſs of proceeding to give or to receive ſatisfaction, there yet remains a difference in Judgment about things which are not of the Eſſence of Chriſtianity, yet there will be no unpeaceable Striving nor Contending, no ill and provoking Reflections among ſuch as are of this humble and modeſt Temper; but they will quietly and patiently bear with one another in Love, as knowing themſelves not to be infallible. *The Servant of the Lord muſt not ſtrive, but be gentle unto all Men, patient, in meekneſs inſtructing thoſe that oppoſe themſelves, ſhewing all meekneſs to all Men*; 2 Tim. ii. 24, 25. Tit. iii. 2. It was ſaid of our Lord himſelf (who was meek and lowly in heart) that *he ſhall not ſtrive, nor cry, neither ſhall any Man hear his voice in the ſtreets*, Matth. xii. 19. And if this way of proceeding will not reconcile the different-minded to our Judgment, when we have Truth on our ſide, much leſs will any thing that we can do in a more imperious and paſſionate way of proceeding. For *the Wrath of Man worketh not the Righteouſneſs of God:* It is no fit Inſtrument or Tool for that Work, *James* i. 20. Whereas by a patient and peaceable forbearance, not only Unity in Affection and Communion is preſerved, but many times the diſſenting Party wone upon, and brought to a better Underſtanding. *By long forbearing is a Prince perſuaded, and a ſoft Tongue breaketh the Bone*, Prov. xxv. 15.

And as for Charity, there is nothing qualifies a Man more to keep the Unity of the Spirit in the Bond of Peace than this. The ſeveral properties of it, as deſcribed by St. *Paul* in 1 *Cor.* xiii. 4——7. do as it were conſpire, and naturally tend to promote peace and good agreement. To what degree Charity dwells in any Man, to that degree it diſpoſeth him to *ſuffer long*, and to forbear revenge; to be *kind*, and ready to do good; and indiſpoſeth him to *envy* others in what they excel him; to *vaunt himſelf*, or to be *puffed up*; or to *behave himſelf unſeemly*, or unbecomingly in word or deed, or to *ſeek his own*, with neglect of others benefit; or to be *eaſily provoked*; or to think or ſurmize *evil*, or to interpret things to the worſt ſenſe, or to rejoice in another's halting, though an Adverſary: But inclines him to *rejoice in the Truth*, and when Right takes place; it enables a Man to *bear with all things* in another ſo far as is conſiſtent with his and the general good; to *believe all things* that are any ways credible, that tend to excuſe or commend others; to *hope all things*, and not to deſpair, but that a Neighbour may by Charitable Endeavours be recovered, though he hath miſcarried; and to *endure all things*, labour, pains, and many inconveniencies to himſelf, ſo he may but be ſerviceable to others. And if theſe be the properties of Charity, well may it be called the Bond of Perfectneſs, and Chriſtians exhorted above all things to put it on. How can it be thought that they can ever divide or ſeparate, in whom Love with theſe properties dwells.

And as Charity is of a healing, ſo it is alſo of a comprehenſive Nature: I can ſcarce propoſe any Endeavours properly uſeful to keep the Unity of the Spirit in the Bond of Peace, but more or leſs of theſe properties of Charity will be found in them. And it is ſo univerſally uſeful for the right conduct of all affairs in the Church, that St. *Paul* gives it in charge thus, (1 *Cor.* xvi. 14.) *Let all your things be done with Charity*; a Line and Vein of this ſhould run through all. And if all Chriſtians had but this *Salt in themſelves* (to allude to *Mark* ix.) it would ſo ſeaſon their Converſe, that they would *have peace one with another.*

Where there is entireneſs of Affection and a peaceable Correſpondence among Chriſtians, it makes them unwilling to differ from one another in Judgment or Practice. There is ſuch a *comfort in Love*, (as the phraſe is, *Phil.* ii. 1.) that it makes them very unwilling to admit of any difference that may diminiſh that Comfort, or weaken that Love. And this diſpoſeth them *to look, not on their own things only, but alſo on the things of others*, and to weigh, without Prejudice or Partiality, what each offers to other; which is the way to have the weaker brought over to the ſtronger, in any thing wherein they differ. And in this way doth the Church *edifie it ſelf in love*, Eph. iv. 16. *Being knit together in love, even unto all riches of full aſſurance of underſtanding*, as the phraſe is, *Col.* ii. 2. And indeed it is a common thing for one Man to be brought over to another's Judgment through Affection to him, being prepared thereby to give his Reaſonings the greateſt liberty and ſcope in his Judgment. Whereas, on the contrary, it is a ſtrong Temptation to Men to differ from them in Judgment and Practice, from whom they have departed in Affection. St. *Paul* could eaſily believe there were Diviſions in the Church of *Corinth*, when he foreknew there would be Hereſies among them, the one being the fore-runner of the other, and a leſſer Difference making way for a greater, as by ſad Experience we have ſeen in our days, 1 *Cor.* xi. 18, 19. St. *Paul* obſerved it in ſome, who having firſt *ſwerved from Charity, they quickly turned aſide into vain jangling*, 1 Tim. i. 5, 6. Whereas Love is the Bond of Perfectneſs, as it is called; it is the ſtrongeſt Bond, it holds the parts longeſt and faſteſt together, *Col.* iii. 14, It being a Maſter Grace, and of a benign Nature, it hath a kindly influence upon a Man's Judgment and whole Practice. As *the Integrity of the Upright doth guide them*, ſo will their Charity too. *He that loveth his Brother abideth in the Light, and there is no occaſion of ſtumbling in him*, 1 John ii. 10. It is doubtleſs then more for want of Love than want of Light, when the Unity of the Spirit is not kept in the Bond of Peace.

This then is the firſt Direction: That we would by a diligent uſe of all good means and motives, cheriſh and nouriſh Humility and Charity in our Minds and Spirits, as Principles of ſuch a peaceable Behaviour, as directly tends to preſerve Unity in the Church.

II. DIRECTION.

This Unity is to be endeavoured to be kept in the Bond of Peace by all good Chriſtians, by their being careful to abſtain from *deſpiſing and cenſuring* one another upon account of their different Apprehenſions about the leſſer things in Religion, ſo long as they are agreed in the main. Unleſs theſe be forborn in ſuch caſes, it's next to an Impoſſibility to preſerve Peace and Unity among them. Theſe Unchriſtian Practices, as they are the effects of Pride and Uncharitableneſs, ſo they are and have been two great Peace deſtroyers and Church-dividers. There is, and ever hath been, and will be different meaſures of Knowledge, Underſtanding, and Grace in the ſeveral Members of the ſame Body: Some are weak in the Faith, and ſome ſtrong; ſome Babes, and ſome ſtrong Men. Upon account of which difference of Knowledge and Grace, Differences are apt more or leſs to ariſe among them. The weak are apt to be more ſcrupulous than the ſtrong, as being more in the dark, and ſo apter to ſtumble. Whereupon the ſtrong, if they be not reſtrained by Humility and Charity, are apt to deſpiſe them when they cannot make them underſtand what is plain and evident to them themſelves. And the weak, again, if they be not reſtrained by Humility and Charity, are apt to judge and cenſure the ſtrong, as if they were not ſo conſcientious, becauſe not ſo ſcrupulous as themſelves. And upon this deſpiſing and judging one another, the Bond of Peace is broken, and a way prepared for dividing. For when the weak ſee themſelves neglected, ſlighted, not regarded, and ſet at nought by the ſtrong, it diſcourages them, and takes off the pleaſure of their Society and Communion, and makes them weary of it, and becomes a Temptation to them to forſake it, and to follow any oppoſite Party that will head them. And when the ſtrong, again, find themſelves judged and cenſured by the weak, as if they were Men of little Conſcience, they are apt to look upon themſelves as being, by ſuch prejudice taken up againſt them, put out of a capacity of ſerving them; which becomes a Temptation to them to neglect them, and ſomewhat to eſtrange themſelves from them: Or, however, though that Temptation ſhould not prevail ſo far upon them, yet all endeavours of the ſtrong to help and cure the weak, are by the prejudice which the weak have againſt them when they once fall to judging them, made very much ineffectual; ſo miſchievous and baneful to the Church's Peace and Unity, is proud, deſpiſing, and uncharitable Cenſuring one another.

This was the caſe between the believing Jews and Gentiles, upon which the firſt conſiderable Breach we read of brake out in the Chriſtian Church; of which we have an account in *Acts* xv. and *Rom.* xiv. and other places. The believing Jews durſt not uſe ſuch liberty in Meats as the believing Gentiles did: Nor did the believing Gentiles think themſelves obliged to be Circumciſed, and to obſerve Jewiſh Feſtivals, as the believing Jews thought they were. Hereupon the believing Gentiles, which underſtood their Liberty, deſpiſed the believing Jews when they could not make them underſtand it too. And the believing Jews, on the other hand, fell to judging the believing Gentiles, as looſer than themſelves, and as Men of no Conſcience, becauſe they did not make Conſcience of Meats, and Days, and of Circumciſion, as well as themſelves. And upon this Unchriſtian Carriage of one towards another, under the different Apprehenſions in theſe things, great diviſions, ſidings, and diſturbances among them did enſue.

Now that all ſuch deſpiſing and judging one another, and dividing from one another about their difference in leſſer matters of doubtful Diſputation, ſhould be forborn by Chriſtians, ſo long as they agree in the Eſſentials of Chriſtianity, St. *Paul* declares, upon theſe two grounds, among others.

1. Becauſe upon the common Faith wherein they were both agreed, they were at the firſt received by the Lord into his Church, and ſo into a near Relation to himſelf. And therefore their After-differences which did not deſtroy that Foundation upon which that Relation was firſt built, were no ſufficient ground of deſpiſing, or judging one another, or of dividing, or withdrawing one from another. This is plainly ſet down in theſe words: *Let not him that eateth, deſpiſe him that eateth not; and let not him which eateth not, judge him that eateth, for God hath received him*, Rom. xiv. 3. And this reaſon is farther backed and urged again, *Chap.* xv. 7. *Wherefore receive one another, as Chriſt alſo received us to the Glory of God.* Thoſe whom God hath received into his Church upon ſuch and ſuch grounds, we may not, we ought not to diſcourage, or reject, by deſpiſing, or judging, or withdrawing from, ſo long as that remains in them upon which God at firſt received them. Which holds in all other caſes of difference between Chriſtians that agree in the main, as theſe did, as well as in this between the believing Jews and Gentiles. It is upon the like reaſon and ground that our Apoſtle, in the words upon which I found my Diſcourſe, and thoſe following, (*Epheſ.* iv.) preſſeth upon Chriſtians the great Duty of endeavouring to keep the Unity of the Spirit in the Bond of Peace, *viz.* becauſe they were at firſt incorporated into one Body by a Profeſſion and Acknowledgment of one God and Father of all, of one Lord Jeſus Chriſt, of one Holy Spirit of the Father and the Son, of one Doctrine of Faith, of one Hope, of one Baptiſm. Which fundamental points believed and lived to, are ſufficient to Salvation. And if ſo, they are ſufficient Bonds of Union, and Boundaries of Communion, whatever difference in leſſer things may otherwiſe occur. For more, in Profeſſion, cannot be abſolutely neceſſary to Church-Communion, than what in reality is abſolutely neceſſary to Salvation. For as the one doth conſtitute the Church as inviſible, ſo doth the other the Church as viſible. And the ſame thing which conſtitutes the Church as viſible, muſt needs inveſt the Members thereof in a right to its external Privileges. And if the Church had kept this her ground upon which ſhe was firſt built, and not made more conditions of Communion, ſhe had never been cut, mangled, and torn into (I know not how many) pieces, as ſhe hath been, and at this day is. And I ſee not any Probability of her recovery to her primitive Union and Communion, till ſhe return to this her firſt Foundation of Union, and Boundary of Communion. But a return to this would quickly do it, if all Chriſtians would acquieſce therein. And why they ſhould not as well as the primitive Chriſtians [the beſt Chriſtians that ever the World ſaw] did, I underſtand not, nor ever could hear any good reaſon to make me underſtand it.

2. St. *Paul*'s other reaſon, why Chriſtians that agree in the main, as aforeſaid, ſhould not deſpiſe, or judge, or withdraw from another, for their differing in leſſer things, is this: Becauſe both Parties differing but only ſo, are to be preſumed, in the Judgment of Charity, to aim at the pleaſing of God in what they differently hold and do. For Charity, according to which we are to guide our ſelves in all ſuch caſes of difference, *thinketh no evil*, but *believeth*, and *hopeth all things* concerning others, in the beſt Senſe and Conſtruction their Actions are capable of. This was the caſe of the believing Jews and Gentiles; they both aimed at the pleaſing of God even in thoſe things wherein they differed. *He that regardeth the day, regardeth it to the Lord; and he that regardeth not the day, to the Lord he doth not regard it. He that eateth, eateth to the Lord*, (ſaith he) *for he giveth God thanks; and he that eateth not, to the Lord he eateth not, and giveth God thanks*, Rom xiv. 6. Both aimed at the approving themſelves to God in their contrary ways. And if the Lord in ſuch a caſe will not deſpiſe, or judge ſuch an one, ſo as to condemn him, though under a miſtake but of that Nature, as certainly he will not, but pity and pardon him, (for *he hath Compaſſion on them that are ignorant, and out of the way)* much leſs ſhould we, who are fallible our ſelves, and *compaſſed about with Infirmities. Who art thou that judgeſt another Man's ſervant?* (ſaith our Apoſtle) *to his own Maſter he ſtandeth or falleth: Every one of us ſhall give an account of himſelf to God:* Let *us not therefore judge one another any more*, ver. 4, 12, 13. for that is a Judgment belongs not unto us. *There is one Law-giver, and one Judge*; who art thou that judgeſt another? *Jam.* iv. 12. That is, what doſt thou make thy ſelf to be, that dareſt to undertake ſuch a thing?

And as we ſhould be afraid to judge one another, ſo we ſhould of deſpiſing one another in any caſe like that before mentioned; for our Saviour's ſerious caveat againſt it, argues it to be both much againſt his mind, and of dangerous Conſequence to our ſelves and others: *Take heed that ye deſpiſe not one of theſe little Ones*, Matth. xviii. 10. He knew that his little Ones, becauſe but little Ones in Knowledge and Grace, that have little of theſe to render their Fellowſhip much deſirable, are apt to be neglected and ſlighted, and to be thereby diſcouraged, and turned aſide: He therefore cautions thoſe that are ſtronger, to take heed leſt they ſhould be betrayed into any ſuch Carriage towards them as ſignifies their ſlighting of them. Our Saviour had ſhewed before, how ſad a thing it would be for any Man to be inſtrumental in turning any weak Chriſtian aſide by any undue Carriage towards him; when he ſaid, in *ver.* 6. *Wo be to the World becauſe of Offences*, &c. *and wo be to him by whom the Offence cometh.* And it would be far more Chriſt-like (of whom it is ſaid, *He ſhall not break the bruiſed Reed; nor quench the ſmoaking Flax*) to uſe more Care, Pains, and Tenderneſs towards the weak and feeble, to preſerve and increaſe that little ſpark of Chriſtianity in them, though it be no more, and though there be no more appearance of it, than there is of Fire when only Smoke can be diſcerned, than towards thoſe that are ſtrong, and do not ſtand in ſo very much need of Tenderneſs in our Carriage, and Applications to them. Which alſo agrees excellently well with St. *Paul's* Metaphorical Diſcourſe, in 1 *Cor.* xii. 23, 24, 25. *Thoſe Members of the Body, which we think to be leſs honourable, upon theſe we beſtow more abundant Honour, and our uncomely parts have more abundant Comelineſs. For our comely parts have no need: But God hath tempered the Body together, having given more abundant Honour to that part which lacked, that that there ſhould be no Schiſm in the Body:* Implying, that certainly there will be, where ſuch Care, and Tenderneſs of proceeding is not uſed towards ſuch as are leaſt accounted of in the Church. *Wherefore lift up the hands which hang down, and the feeble knees, and make ſtraight paths for your feet* (by removing all diſcouraging Impediments out of the way) *leſt that which is lame be turned out of the way, but rather let it be healed: Looking diligently, leſt any fail of the Grace of God*, Heb. xii. 12, 13, 15. How far all Parties of Men among us have made themſelves guilty of breaking the Peace and Unity of the Church, by this Unchriſtian deſpiſing, and judging one another, concerns them to conſider; and the guilty to repent of what is paſt, and to reform for time to come, that they may not be judged and condemned by God for what they have done. That's the ſecond Direction.

III. Direction.

Thoſe that would keep the Unity of the Spirit in the Bond of Peace, muſt be careful to forbear all hard Speeches, and ill Reflections on them that differ from them; eſpecially Tale-bearing, Back-biting, and Whiſpering. They muſt make no ill Repreſentation of one another behind their backs, by raking up, and then ſcattering abroad all the Evil they can, or whatever may tend to the Diſparagement, or Reproach of ſuch as differ from them. Becauſe, if they ſhould be guilty herein, though they may think thereby to weaken the Reputation of the Cauſe they oppoſe, yet in Truth they will be ſo far from reconciling their Opponent to *their* Cauſe, as that they will thereby diſhonour it, and render it the more ſuſpected; and Communion with themſelves ſo much the leſs deſirable, and all their own Arguings the leſs available, and By-ſtanders the readier to fall in with thoſe of a better Behaviour, as judging thereby their Cauſe to be better, though in it ſelf it ſhould be worſe: For a good Cauſe may be ſpoiled in the handling. All ſuch Unchriſtian Carriage tends to exaſperate, imbitter, and provoke the Spirits of their Opponents, both againſt them and their Cauſe, and to widen the Breach more and more, and to ſet them at the greater diſtance, and to make them the more irreconcileable. *A froward Man ſoweth Strife* (ſaith the Wiſe Man) *Prov.* xxvi. 28. *Grievous words ſtir up anger, and the forcing of wrath bringeth forth ſtrife: And the words of a Tale-bearer are as wounds*, Prov. xv. 1. and xxvi. 22. and xxx. 33. So true it is that *the wrath of Man doth not work the Righteouſneſs of God*, Jam. i. 20. It is not for the Intereſt of the Truth, nor doth it any ways advantage the Cauſe of God. No, if any Man would ſee any good effect of his endeavours towards the Uniting of Men, if he would ſee the Seed he ſows come up; let him be ſure to avoid all harſh and unpeaceable Proceedings therein. *The Fruit of Righteouſneſs is ſown in Peace of them that make Peace*, Jam. iii. 18. *The Servant of God muſt not ſtrive, but be gentle to all*, 2 Tim. ii. 24. As we muſt follow Peace with all Men, *Heb.* xii. 14. ſo, in order thereto, we muſt *ſpeak evil of no Man*, Tit. iii. 2.

IV. Direction.

In order to our keeping the Unity of the Spirit in the Bond of Peace, we muſt ſtudy rather to agree with, than to differ from one another: And be more ſollicitous to find out what will bring us nearer together, than what will ſet us at a greater diſtance. And this is one way of *following after the things which make for peace*; and of *ſtudying to be quiet*; to both which we are exhorted, *Rom.* xiv. 20. 1 *Theſſ.* iv. 11. And to this end I ſhall recommend theſe three things.

1. To make Conſcience of endeavouring as truly and ſincerely to find out what may make us of their mind that differ from us, if it be to be found out, as what may tend to make them of our mind. We ſhould be as much afraid of offending againſt the publick Peace and Charity of the Church, as againſt Truth; of being guilty of Schiſm in Practice, as of Error in Judgment; and take as much pains to keep our ſelves from a cauſleſs differing from others, as to make them agree with us.

2. That we do as impartially weigh what thoſe that differ from us do offer for our ſatisfaction, as what we our ſelves do offer to ſatisfie them. In doing of which we ſhall in part diſcharge that Duty enjoined us in *Phil.* ii. 4. *Look not every Man on his own things, but every Man alſo on the things of others.* And by this we ſhall make it appear, that we are willing to agree with thoſe that differ from us, as far as poſſibly we can, as far as any reaſon or ground appears to bear us out in ſo doing. And if we herein begin to thoſe which differ from us, it will induce them, if there be any Candor in them, to return the like to us. And this is the way to reduce the difference to a narrow compaſs, and to make it as little as may be. And when it appears to be but little, it will be the eaſier to ſatisfie one another about it; or, however, we ſhall then be the better able peaceably to bear with one another in it. But if this be not done, it will beget a ſuſpicion that we affect to differ, and to ſtrive for Victory more than for Truth and Peace; and that it is more from a Spirit of Contradiction than Conſcience, that we differ.

3. When any alter their Judgment either upon grounds found out by their own ſearch and ſtudies, or offered to them by others, ſo that they come over to them in whole or in part, from whom they differed before, then beware of repreſenting this as matter of Odium and Reproach to them, ſo long as they are not worſe in their Morals. The contrary, that is, the doing ſo, hath been an ill Practice, and ſuch as hath tended greatly to block up the way of a due and Chriſtian Compliance with them from whom, through miſtake, they have once profeſſedly differed. While it hath been repreſented as matter of Reproach to Men, not to ſtand their ground, and to be true to their Principles they have once received, though found erroneous enough when better conſidered and looked into, it hath proved a great Temptation doubtleſs unto many, to neglect an impartial and thorow Examination of the Grounds of their Opinion and Practice, and to be prejudiced againſt all that is offered by others to convince them of miſtake. Mens Reputation among their Party is a dangerous ſnare to hold them faſt in Error, and a great impediment to their underſtanding and diſcerning the Truth when it is declared to them, when it tends to draw them off, and to expoſe them to Reproach among their Party, and a great prejudice and bar againſt their receiving and owning of it. *Why do ye not underſtand my Speech? Even becauſe ye cannot bear my Word*, ſaith our Saviour to the Jews, *John* viii. 43. They had no mind to embrace his Doctrine, which would bring them into diſgrace with their Party, the Phariſees, and therefore they had no mind ſo to conſider it, as to underſtand it. Which made our Saviour ſay again, *How can ye believe which receive honour one of another, and ſeek not the honour that cometh from God only?* John v. 44. But if Men would but underſtand and conſider, that it is truly honourable and praiſe-worthy in the ſight of God and wiſe Men, to love and own Truth where-ever they find it, and however diſguiſed by its Adverſaries, and to be of open and free minds to conſider and try all things; and when they diſcover Truth, to buy it at any rate, though it coſt them more than the loſs of their Reputation among an erring Party; they would then neither fright others, nor be ſcared themſelves from exchanging Error for Truth, Schiſm for Peace and Unity, by reproachful Nick-names.

V. DIRECTION.

Thoſe that would keep the Unity of the Spirit in the Bond of Peace, had need to be of publick Spirits, and ſtill to ſeek their own perſonal and private Satisfaction, in ſubordination to a publick Good, and not in oppoſition to it: To prefer the publick Peace and Unity of the Church, and the Benefits that depend thereon, before the pleaſing of themſelves in things not abſolutely neceſſary, but convenient only. If this be not obſerved, there will be no avoiding Diviſions and Separations. And the Reaſon hereof is taken from the different Apprehenſions, Capacities, and Tempers of the ſeveral Parts and Members of the Church. By reaſon of this, thoſe Circumſtances about the Adminiſtration of Holy Things, which will beſt pleaſe ſome good Men, will not ſo well ſatisfie others. This we find to be true by the different uſages of the parts of the Reformed Church in ſeveral Nations, and by the different Perſuaſions and Inclinations of the Parts of the Church in one and the ſame Nation, yea, in one and the ſame City, Town and Pariſh, as is well known. So that if one part of the Church ſhould refuſe Communion with the other in the ſame Ordinances, unleſs they can have them adminiſtred upon terms beſt pleaſing to themſelves; and if the other part of the Church, of a different opinion therein, ſhould do ſo too; Separation follows of courſe, till they can all be of one mind in thoſe diſputable things.

But in all ſuch caſes the publick Concerns of Religion ſhould ſway more with us, than what otherwiſe would be more to our liking. The profit of the whole is more to be attended, than the pleaſing of our ſelves, when the queſtion is not, Which is good, and which is ſimply bad, this or that? But only, Which is better, this or that? St. *Paul* walked by this Rule, in bearing with, yea, in chuſing ſome things for publick Edification ſake, when Circumſtances made them neceſſary thereunto, which out of thoſe Circumſtances he would not have choſen, nor could well bear with. *Even as I* (ſaith he) *pleaſe all Men in all things, not ſeeking my own profit, but the profit of many, that they may be ſaved*, 1 Cor. x. 33. Under ſome Circumſtances he would forbear things, which under others he would not: And thus he would *eat no meat while the World ſtands, rather than make his Brother to offend.* He choſe to labour with his own Hands for his ſupport, rather than to take Money from others when he ſaw the Intereſt of the Chriſtian Religion would be diſadvantaged thereby. And he circumciſed *Timothy*, purified himſelf, and took on him a Vow, after the Jewiſh mode, when ſo to do tended to publick good, though otherwiſe the doing of ſuch things could not be without ſome regret to him, conſidering how ſlightingly he ſpeaks of them at other turns. And thus he took up and laid down many things, even as the publick Intereſt of Religion led him to it. To them that were under the Law, he became as one under the Law; and as without *Moſes*'s Law, to them that were without it: And all this he reckoned to be conſiſtent with his being *under the Law to Chriſt.* To the weak he became as weak, that he might gain the weak: He was made all things to all Men, but it was *for the Goſpel's ſake*, as he ſaith; and that he might by all means ſave ſome: It was, that he might gain the freer Paſſage and readier Reception of the Goſpel, for the Salvation of Men, 1 *Cor.* ix. 2, 23. And accordingly he exhorted others to walk by the ſame Rule, and to conſider and do what would beſt conſiſt with publick benefit, rather than what would beſt pleaſe and gratifie themſelves. *We that are ſtrong ought to bear the infirmities of the weak, and not to pleaſe our ſelves*, Rom. xv. 1. *Look not every Man on his own things, but every Man alſo on the things of others*, Phil. ii. 4.

If Chriſtians on all hands among us had but acted and walked according to this Rule; nay, if the Diſſenters would but have done it, when the other could not be prevail'd with, the publick Intereſt of Religion would not have been expoſed to that loſs and damage as it is at this day. And therefore as that publick benefit, which might have been procured and ſecured by ſuch yielding and condeſcending, as Circumſtances made not only lawful but neceſſary, might have been a forcible Motive ſo to have done: So the publick damage and miſchief which a non-compliance under our Circumſtances tend to, may and ought alſo to be a powerful diſſuaſive from maintaining and continuing our diſtance upon ſuch ſlight grounds as thoſe are which have brought us to it. For ſuch a diſtance tends to keep open a wide Breach in the Body of the Nation, to the weakening of it, and rendring it obnoxious to the Envy, Ill-will, or Ambition of any publick Adverſary; or to create one, if there were none: It tends to the Diſhonour and Reproach of the Nation: It tends to weaken the Proteſtant Intereſt, and to bring a Scandal and Reproach upon our Religion it ſelf, and to put an Advantage into the hands of the Adverſaries of it: It tends to lay a ſtumbling-block in the way of ſuch as are Atheiſtically inclined: It tends to diſtract and unſettle the People's Minds about the more neceſſary points of Religion, or at leaſt to divert them from the ſerious practice of them; and it tends to the diſtraction of Chriſtian Charity. And that which tends to any one of theſe, tends to a publick hurt and damage; how much more that which tends to them all? And in good ſadneſs, are the things on either hand about which we differ of ſuch neceſſity or value, as that for the ſake thereof the publick Intereſt of Religion and of the Nation ſhould run ſuch hazards, and ſuſtain ſuch apparent damage, by contending for them as they do? Or can it be thought, when ſeriouſly conſidered, that God, who hath ſaid, *I deſired Mercy, and not Sacrifice*; *and the Knowledge of God rather than burnt offerings* (which yet were his own Inſtitutions) is ſuch a Lover of thoſe things which are but Circumſtances of Inſtitutions at moſt, wherein our difference as to Communion of private Members lies, as that he had rather the Intereſt of Religion in the main, and of National Societies of Men ſhould deeply ſuffer, than that thoſe Circumſtances ſhould be either waved, or born withal? Methinks, thoſe who have not Love and Zeal enough for Religion to be reſtrained from ſuch dividing Ways and Practices as evidently tend to its great prejudice, ſhould yet be reſtrained therefrom upon account of their own ſecular Intereſt, as that is expoſed thereby to great Hazards, as that is involved in the common Fate of the Nation; always remembring who hath ſaid, *A Nation divided againſt it ſelf, is brought to Deſolation.*

VI. DIRECTION.

Thoſe that would keep the Unity of the Spirit in the Bond of Peace, had need to be careful not to impoſe upon their Chriſtian Brethren, as Conditions of Communion, things of doubtful Diſputation, or which are not ſome way neceſſary to farther the great ends of Religion. Becauſe, though ſome ſuch things may not be unlawful in themſelves, yet ſo long as they are thought to be ſo by many, it will occaſion a Breach, as Experience ſhews that from time to time it hath done. And when the Impoſition of any thing that is apt to do ſo, may be forborn without any detriment to Chriſtianity in its end or means, without any Diſhonour to God, or wrong to Mens Souls; it ſeems altogether incongruous, then to impoſe it. When the believing Gentiles would impoſe upon the believing Jews to uſe the ſame Liberty in Meats which they themſelves did, when thoſe Jews were perſuaded it was unlawful for them ſo to do: And when, again, the believing Jews would impoſe upon the believing Gentiles the Obſervation of Days, and other legal Rites which the Gentiles ſcrupled, and that they fell to judging one another hereupon; St. *Paul* interpoſed, and directed, and perſuaded them, that inſtead of this, they would judge this rather, as better becoming them, that *no Man put a ſtumbling-block, or an occaſion to fall in his Brother's way:* That they would not by Impoſitions, tempt one another to do that which they could not do with Satisfaction of Conſcience, or elſe to ſeparate: And to put one another upon a neceſſity of doing either the one or the other, argued great Uncharitableneſs, *Rom.* xiv. 13. And when he had, in *ver.* 1. exhorted the ſtrong to receive the weak into their Communion, he cautions them, that by no means they would trouble them with Matters of doubtful Diſputation.

That Agreement of Chriſtians in the Subſtance of Doctrine and Worſhip, upon which they became one Body at the firſt, is doubtleſs ſufficient, without any Addition, to continue that Union in Communion. And upon this very thing was the Communion of the Apoſtolical Churches founded: And the going off from this, and the adding ſuch Conditions of Communion as are not found in Scripture, hath been fatal to the Churches Peace, and that which hath, from time to time, broken it into pieces. Men ſhould always make choice of means fitted to their end. And therefore thoſe who deſign the eſtabliſhing of Peace and Unity in the Church, ſhould beware of impoſing ſuch things on their Brethren as are like to prove a Bone of Contention, when they may be forborn without prejudice to any. The contrary many times proves (as I have ſaid) very miſchievous to the Church. As Parents tempt their Children to withdraw that Reverence and Obedience which is due in things neceſſary, by impoſing upon them unneceſſarily, out of humour, (againſt which they are cautioned, *Col.* 4.) So Mens greater Extravagances in the Church, frequently take their firſt riſe from the impoſing of ſuch things on them which might well have been forborn.

In the choice of Circumſtances about Worſhip wherein there is a liberty of Choice, it would always, for Peace and Unity ſake, be conſidered, what the People are able to bear: A thing which our firſt Reformers had an eye to; and *Moſes* would never have permitted Divorce, but that the Temper of the People led him to it: *He ſuffered it for the hardneſs of their hearts.* Our Saviour alſo in his Conduct had reſpect to the Capacity and Temper of the People; he preached to them *as they were able to bear*, Mark iv. 33. And did forbear to declare many things to his Diſciples which he had to ſay, *Becauſe they could not bear them then*, John xvi. 12.

Chriſtians of all Capacities, whether their ſtanding be higher or lower in the Church, are to do nothing to one another, but what doth well conſiſt with Love. The Precept is Univerſal both in reſpect of Perſons and things: *Let all your things be done with Charity*,

Charity, 1 Cor. xvi. 14. *By Love ſerve one another*, Gal. v. 13. *Forbearing one another in Love*, Eph. iv. 2. The very Severities of Excommunication are to proceed from Love to the Delinquent's Soul; *That the Spirit may be ſaved in the Day of the Lord Jeſus.* And therefore nothing ſhould be impoſed that ſavours of want of Love or Tenderneſs; no burthening of one another's Conſciences, but rather *bearing one another's Burthens, and ſo fulfilling the Law of Chriſt:* Imitating St. *Paul*, who ſaid, *I was gentle among you, even as a Nurſe cheriſheth her Children.* And without doubt, this is the beſt Method to preſerve and increaſe Peace, Love, and Unity, and the Edification of the Church; *Eph.* iv. 16. Edifying it ſelf in Love.

VII. DIRECTION.

Thoſe that would endeavour to keep the Unity of the Spirit in the Bond of Peace, as they ought, muſt not ſo contend on any ſide for external Circumſtances about the Adminiſtration of holy things, as thereby to expoſe the Subſtantials of Chriſtianity, Peace, Charity, and Unity, to Ruine and Deſtruction. For the Preſervation of that which is moſt eſſential to the keeping of the Unity of the Spirit, as Peace and Charity are, is more to be endeavoured, than the retaining what is but circumſtantial to it, as a more or leſs convenient Mode of Adminiſtration is. The Unity of the Spirit may be kept in the uſe of a leſs convenient Mode of Adminiſtration, when a more convenient cannot be had without the loſs of Peace, Charity, and Unity: But the Unity of the Spirit cannot be kept where Peace and Charity are baniſhed.

Peace, Charity, and Unity, are Duties of a higher Nature than Circumſtances about Adminiſtrations that are not abſolutely neceſſary, but only more convenient. To love our Neighbour as our ſelves, is *the Royal Law*, (Jam. ii. 10.) one of the two great Commandments, (*Matth.* xxii. 39.) *the fulfilling of the Law*, (Rom. xiii. 10.) *the more excellent way*, (1 Cor. xii. 31.) greater than Faith or Hope, 1 *Cor.* xiii. laſt *ver.* And ſo, Peace is that in which, together with Righteouſneſs, and Joy in the Holy Ghoſt, the Kingdom of God conſiſts, (*Rom.* xiv. 17.) and which is to *rule* in our Hearts, and to over-rule in many caſes, *Col.* iii. 15. Charity and Peace are great moral Duties, in which much of the Chriſtian Religion, in the power of it, doth conſiſt, as being that wherein a Man moſt reſembles God, and by which God dwells in him, and he in God, 1 *John* iv. 16. And when theſe fall into Competition with Circumſtances relating not to the being, but only to the better Conſtitution of Churches and Miniſtry, and the Adminiſtration of Ordinances in a better Mode, and to the better Exerciſe of Diſcipline and Government; they are to give place to Peace, Love, and Unity; and not Peace, Love, and Unity, to them.

1. Becauſe thoſe are but means ſubordinate and ſubſervient to theſe as their end: And the means, as ſuch, are no farther uſeful than they are ſerviceable to their end. Which may be the reaſon why waſhing of Saints Feet, the Kiſs of Charity, the anointing the ſick with Oyl in the Name of the Lord, have been diſuſed, though otherwiſe once enjoyned.

2. Thoſe controverted Points about the Betterneſs of Ways and Modes of Adminiſtration, on which ſide ſoever the Truth falls, are not things wherein the Glory of God, the Honour and Succeſs of Religion, and the Good and Salvation of Men are ſo much concerned, as they are in the great Duties of Love, Peace, and Unity, and what depends upon theſe: And therefore it muſt needs be a Duty of a higher Nature, and of greater Obligation, to ſecure and promote Love, Peace, and Unity, which are the greater, than the Betterneſs of Modes of Adminiſtration, which are but the leſs. And a Man's Duty in the leſs is to be pleaded only in Subordination to his Duty in the greater, but never in Oppoſition to it. And therefore well might St. *Paul* ſay, [*above all theſe things*] *put on Charity, which is the Bond of Perfectneſs*, Col. iii. 14. And St. *Peter* likewiſe: [*above all things*] *have fervent Charity among your ſelves*, 1 Pet. iv. 12. And if above all things, then above the Circumſtances relating to the Conſtitution of Churches, to Miniſtry, Adminiſtration of Holy things, and Diſcipline. I might both amplifie, and exemplifie this, and over-prove it, in ſhewing how that Duties which become ſo only by Inſtitution, are always to give way to Moral Duties, when they come in Competition. *I will have Mercy, and not Sacrifice*, Hoſ. vi. 6. Matth. ix. 13. and xii. 7. *Go, and be firſt reconciled to thy Brother, and then come and offer thy Gift*; Matth. v. 24. Circumciſion waited upon, and was ſuſpended, upon a Moral Neceſſity, forty Years in the Wilderneſs, being intermitted ſo long, *Joſh.* v. Now then, if poſitive Precepts themſelves are ſuperſeded by Moral, when they come into

Competition; then ſo are thoſe things much more, which are but Circumſtances relating to Inſtitutions, and ſuch Circumſtances too, as that it is matter of diſpute among wiſe and good Men on both ſides, which, whether theſe or thoſe, do beſt agree with the Nature and Ends of thoſe Inſtitutions.

Now, that our dividing, ſeparating, and running into Parties, upon the account of the leſſer things fore-mentioned, does tend to the decay and deſtruction of Love, as well as Peace and Unity, is a thing too apparent in our own Experience to need proof. That which is an occaſion of Separation will certainly leſſen, if it do not quite deſtroy Love. The Law of Commandments contained in Ordinances, which was a Wall of Separation or Partition, between Jews and Gentiles, is called the *Enmity*, *Epheſ.* ii. 15. Becauſe, as it did ſeparate them, it was the cauſe of Enmity, and laid waſte Charity, as all Separation upon a Religious account ever hath done, more or leſs. And to deny this, whatever one of late hath ſaid to the contrary, is to contradict the general Senſe and Experience of Men. And therefore what is our dividing upon the terms before deſcribed, but a method of ſeeking to purchaſe little things in Religion with the loſs of great; of ſecuring Circumſtances, with the loſs of Subſtance; of obtaining ſuppoſed Conveniencies, with the loſs of what is certainly and abſolutely neceſſary? It is as if they ſhould have robbed the Temple to build a Synagogue. And I fear this will be found an ill way of trading with our Maſter's Talents, and ſuch as will turn but to a bad account, when profit and loſs is computed. The want of a due care to prefer Charity before things leſs conſiderable, hath betrayed many a one into that which St. *Paul* calls *vain jangling*, 1 Tim. i. 5, 6. *The end of the Commandment* (ſaith he) *is Charity, from which ſome having ſwerved* (or not aiming at, as it is in the Margin) *have turned aſide to vain jangling.*

VIII. DIRECTION.

To the keeping of the Unity of the Spirit in the Bond of Peace, it's greatly neceſſary to take heed of dividing Principles. Becauſe theſe eſpecially are the ſpring of irregular motion, of breaking aſunder inſtead of uniting. There are indeed other Cauſes of unlawful Diviſions and Separations; but they ſcarce ever proceed to any height in producing ſuch effects, without this. Pride, Self-conceitedneſs, Uncharitableneſs, and Affectation of Singularity, are alſo Cauſes of this Evil: But theſe uſually Act under the colour of ſome one or more miſtaken Principles. I ſhall inſtance in ſome of them, and inſiſt the longer upon them, becauſe they are the Weapons in which Church-dividers do uſually put their truſt. Some of them relate to the Qualification of Church-Members, and the Conſtitution of Churches; ſome to the Worſhip performed in Churches; and ſome to the Magiſtrates Authority enjoining that Worſhip. I ſhall begin with what concerns the Qualification of Perſons of which Churches are conſtituted.

I. *Dividing Principle to be avoided.*

That Churches founded in Infant-Baptiſm, are not to be held Communion with.

This Tenet is built upon a ſuppoſition, that Baptiſm adminiſtred to Infants is a Nullity, is invalid, and no Baptiſm; and that therefore Churches made up of *Pædobaptiſts* are no true Churches. To this I have two things to ſay: 1. That they of this way will never be able to prove Infant-Baptiſm a Nullity. 2. That if they could prove it an Error, yet they cannot prove it to be an Error of that Nature, as will be a ſufficient ground of Separation.

Firſt, They will never be able to prove it a Nullity; and till they do prove it to be ſo, they will never be able to juſtifie Separation upon account of it. For if they pronounce them no true Churches, and renounce Communion with them upon that account, they muſt prove their Charge, or lie under the blame of a falſe Accuſation, and an unjuſt Separation. It lies on their part to prove their refuſing Church-Communion with ſuch, to have a ſufficient ground to juſtifie their practice. If ever they prove Baptiſm adminiſtred to the Infants of Believers to be a Nullity, it muſt be, 1. By diſproving their Church-Relation: And, 2. By proving their Excluſion out of Chriſt's Commiſſion to Baptize; and, 3. By proving that the ends of Baptiſm are not attained, when adminiſtred to them. And that they are never like to do this, conſider what I have to offer to make you think ſo.

1. That they cannot diſprove ſuch to be of the Church. If they ſhould attempt it, I have two things to lay in their way.

Firſt, that the ſame Jewiſh Children, which were viſibly of the Church immediately before their Parents became Chriſtian at the firſt, continued to be ſo after. The reaſon of which Aſſertion is this: Becauſe they were not under the Diſchurching Cauſe of as many of the Jews as were Diſchurched, and that was Unbelief and wilful Diſobedience in rejecting the Goſpel; of which they could not be guilty by any Act of their own, or of their Parents, as imputed to them. *Becauſe of unbelief*, ſaith St. *Paul*, *they were broken off*, Rom. xi. 20. See alſo *John* viii. 35. If it be ſaid they were Diſchurched in the Diſſolution of the Jewiſh Church-ſtate in general; it is but an Evaſion which will not help them: For the fore-cited Text is flatly againſt them. For all that were not broken off by Unbelief, did continue unbroken off; that is, they ſtill kept their place and ſtanding in the Church of God. And therefore to aſſign any other Cauſe of Diſchurching any than the Scripture hath aſſigned, or at leaſt any other without this here aſſigned and determined by the Apoſtle, is too great Preſumption, and ſuch as will not ſatisfie an impartial Mind.

Secondly, our Saviour hath declared little Children to be of the Church, when he ſaid, *Of ſuch is the Kingdom of Heaven*, Matth. xix. 14. If any by *Kingdom of Heaven* have a mind to underſtand it of the *Kingdom of Glory*, yet they may remember, that none are of the Kingdom of Glory, who were not firſt of the Church, firſt of the Kingdom of Grace here. So that it comes all to one, underſtand it of which you will.

If they ſhall ſay, that by *Such* here is not meant ſuch in Age, but ſuch in Quality, ſuch as are like Children in Humility and Innocency: The ſcope of the place, and the purpoſe to which the words are implied, will not ſuffer them ſo to underſtand them. For the words, *Of ſuch is the Kingdom of Heaven*, are our Saviour's Reaſon by which he would take off his Diſciples from hindering little Children, properly taken, from being brought unto him, and of juſtifying their Practice that brought them. *Suffer little Children to come unto me, and forbid them not*, ſaith he, *for of ſuch is the Kingdom of Heaven.* And if we ſhould underſtand by ſuch, not ſuch Children properly, but Men, like ſuch in quality, we deſtroy the force and ſenſe of our Saviour's Reaſon, and render it wholly inconſequent. For it doth not follow at all, that becauſe the Kingdom of Heaven is of other Perſons like little Children in ſome other things, but altogether unlike them in what was the matter of Exception againſt their being brought to Chriſt, which was their Minority or Infancy, that therefore little Children, properly underſtood, ought to be ſuffered, and not forbidden to be brought to Chriſt. Such a rendring the ſenſe would faſten a Fallacy of four terms on our Saviour's words, of putting one thing in the Premiſſes, and another in the Concluſion, as you will ſee if you caſt them into a Syllogiſm.

Beſides, our Saviour plainly declared the Relation of little Children to himſelf, when at another time he taking a little Child, ſaid, *Whoſoever receiveth* [this] *little Child in my Name, receiveth me*, Luke ix. 48. For how could a little Child be received in his Name, if it were not viſibly related to him? To receive one in Chriſt's Name, and to receive one becauſe he belongs to Chriſt, is one and the ſame thing, *Mark* ix. 41.

1. If ſuch Children then are of the Church, and related to Chriſt; to baptize them cannot be proved unlawful. And the reaſon is, becauſe the ſame thing which qualifies any Perſons for Church-Memberſhip, qualifies them for Baptiſm. And Baptiſm is a ſacred Rite of Chriſtianity, inſtituted by Chriſt, ſolemnly to publiſh and declare ſuch to be of the Church as are baptized: It is a Chriſtian Badge to declare to whom they do belong. There is one Body, and one Baptiſm for all of that one Body, *Epheſ.* iv. 4, 5. 1 *Cor.* xii. 13.

2. If the Infants of believing Parents be of the Church, it cannot be proved that they are excluded out of Chriſt's Commiſſion to be baptized, *Matth.* xxviii. 18. And the reaſon is plain, becauſe they can never be diſproved to be Diſciples of Chriſt, in one ſenſe or other, that are viſibly of the Church. For the Church is Chriſt's School; and all that are of the Church are Chriſt's Scholars. If they ſay, Infants are no Diſciples, becauſe they are not in a capacity to learn. I anſwer: Although they are not in the propereſt and neareſt capacity to learn, yet it doth not therefore follow, that they are in no ſuch capacity of it, as that they may be called and reputed to be Diſciples, or Learners. The Scripture uſeth to reckon or impute the doing of things to Children, when yet they have been but in as remote a capacity of doing thoſe things themſelves, as they are of learning. Thus little Children were ſaid to *enter into Covenant*, Deut. xxix 11, 12. to *keep Covenant*, and to *break Covenant*, Gen. xvii. 10, 14. And the Children of the *Kohathites* of a Month old, were ſaid to *keep the Charge of the*

Sanctuary, Numb. iii. 28. And *Levi* to pay Tithes in *Abraham*, while he was yet in his Loins, *Heb.* vii. 9, 10. Doubtleſs, they were ſaid to do theſe things, either becauſe they did them virtually in their Parents, as being morally one with them until they could chuſe for themſelves: Or elſe, becauſe they were under the viſible Circumſtances of being certainly taught by their Parents to do them themſelves, when they ſhould be in the neareſt, and propereſt Capacity ſo to do, and to own what their Parents had done on their behalf in the mean time, as much as if they had done it in their own Perſons. But for whether of theſe Reaſons, or for both, or for any other they were ſaid to do ſuch things while but Children, for the ſame reaſons may little Children while but ſuch, be as truly ſaid to be Diſciples or Learners. And upon one account or other, Children as well as Parents, are called Diſciples, in *Acts* xv. 10. Where ſome urging the neceſſity of the Gentiles being circumciſed after the manner of *Moſes*, that is, to be proſelyted by Circumciſion, is called, a laying a Yoke upon the Neck of the Diſciples. Seeing then, the manner of *Moſes* was to circumciſe Proſelytes, both Fathers, and Male Children, and the preſſing the continuance of this among all Gentiles proſelyted to Chriſtianity, is called, a putting a Yoke upon the Neck of the Diſciples; it is impoſſible to prove but that the Children, as well as the Fathers, are meant by the Diſciples, upon whoſe Neck the Yoke would have been laid, becauſe it is manifeſt they, as well as their Fathers, were the Perſons, whoſe Circumciſion was urged as neceſſary. For theſe Reaſons I conclude they will never be able to prove little Children to be no Diſciples: And if not, they can never be able to prove them excluded out of Chriſt's Commiſſion for baptizing Diſciples.

3. They cannot prove that the ends of Baptiſm are not attained when adminiſtred to Infants of believing Parents. Firſt, One great end of Baptiſm, is to ſignifie to all Men by viſible Sign and Repreſentation, the ſame thing which God's Covenant in the Goſpel doth by Word. Baptiſm conveys to the Mind by the Senſe of ſeeing, the ſame thing as the Word of the Goſpel doth by the Senſe of hearing, which is the Covenant of Salvation, or the Terms on which God hath promiſed to ſave Men. Chriſt's Death, Burial, and Reſurrection, as the means by which Pardon and Salvation are conditionally obtained for, and promiſed to all Men, are ſignified in Baptiſm. And our dying unto Sin and riſing to a new Life, as the Condition upon which that Pardon and Salvation are promiſed, are likewiſe ſignified in Baptiſm. Hence we are ſaid to be buried with Chriſt in Baptiſm into Death, and to be raiſed with him, *Rom.* vi. 3, 4, 5, 6. *Col.* ii. 12. And to be ſaved as by a Figure by Baptiſm, as it ſignifies the Reſurrection of Chriſt, and the Anſwer of a good Conſcience, 1 *Pet.* iii. 21. And becauſe the Subſtance of the new Covenant is repreſented in Baptiſm; thence it is that Baptiſm is called the ſign of the Covenant. And becauſe it is an Inſtitution of God to aſſure Men that upon the Terms ſignified by it, they ſhall be pardoned, and ſaved, thence it is called the Seal of the Covenant, as Circumciſion for the like reaſon was. For Circumciſion was a ſign to ſignifie upon what Condition God promiſed Men to be their God, and a Seal to aſſure them that upon their performing that Condition, he would be their God. And the Condition ſignified was Circumciſion in the Spirit, as St. *Paul* expounds it, *Rom.* ii. 28, 29. that is, Mortification, or the change of the Heart, the ſame for Subſtance with the new Birth, repreſented in Baptiſm. But then Baptiſm no more than Circumciſion, doth ſignifie that all that have received it, have performed the Condition of the Promiſe of Salvation therein ſignified, but to aſſure them and all others, that upon the Performance of it, the Benefits promiſed ſhall be conferred. For the ſign of the Covenant doth not ſignifie more to Men than the Covenant it ſelf: And the Covenant it ſelf doth not ſignifie to Men that they have performed the Condition of it. And to this end then, as Circumciſion was of a publick and common uſe to the Females as well as the Males, though they were not circumciſed themſelves; ſo is Baptiſm much more both to the Perſons themſelves who are baptized, and to all others, as well when it is adminiſtred to Children, as when to Men of riper Years.

2. Another end of Baptiſm is to oblige the Perſons baptized to perform the Condition of the Covenant in being born again, of making them new Hearts, and becoming new Creatures, as ever they hope to receive the Benefits of Pardon and Salvation, promiſed in the Covenant upon that Condition. It is from this Obligation that a holy Life is frequently preſſed upon Chriſtians from their having been baptized, and that it is called the *Baptiſm unto Repentance*, Rom. vi. Col. ii. and 3 *Chap.* Mark i. And Baptiſm can be no leſs an Obligation to Repentance and a Holy Life when adminiſtred to Infants, than Circumciſion was in like caſe: And yet St. *Paul* ſaid, that whoſoever was circumciſed, was bound to keep the Law, *Gal.* v. And thoſe baptized in their Infancy,

fancy, if when they come to Years of Diſcretion, do prove ſuch as make Conſcience of their own perſonal Obligation, they uſually take themſelves to be as much obliged by their Infant-Baptiſm, as they do who are baptized at Years of Diſcretion, and diſcharge it as well. All which conſidered, Infant Baptiſm cannot be proved a Nullity as to this end neither.

3. Another end of Baptiſm, if it be not the ſame with that before mentioned, is a ſolemn Dedication of the Perſon baptized, to the Worſhip and Service of the Father, Son, and Holy Spirit, called a being baptized in the Name, or into the Name of Father, Son, and Holy Ghoſt, *Matth.* xxviii. And is not ſuch an Act done by Parents as obliging to their Children, as that of the Jews was when *they took upon them, and decreed for their Seed, that they ſhould keep the days of Purim?* And as that of *Sampſon's* Parents was in devoting him to be a *Nazarite* from the Womb, *Eſth.* ix. 27, 28, 31. *Judges* xvi. 17. Or, as the Parents Covenant with the *Gibeonites*, was to their Children after them. Or, as *David's* and *Jonathan's* was to their Seed, 1 *Sam.* xx. 42. Or, as the Father's Act in circumciſing his Child, was obliging to the Child afterwards to keep the Law.

4. Another end and uſe of Baptiſm is ſolemnly to declare ſuch to be of the Church, who are baptized, and to ſignifie their Right to Church-Privileges, and as the Chriſtian Badge to be a Mark of Diſtinction between compleat Members of the Church, and thoſe which are not; even as Circumciſion was of old. Infants are as capable of theſe ends by Baptiſm, as they formerly were by Circumciſion.

If it be ſaid, there may be other ends of Baptiſm that cannot be attained in Infants Baptiſm, as they may in the Baptiſm of thoſe of riper Years: Yet, if this be granted, it will not therefore follow, that their Baptiſm is a Nullity, ſo long as other ends of Baptiſm are attained thereby. It might as well be ſaid, that more ends of Circumciſion were attainable in the Circumciſion of grown Proſelytes than of minor Proſelytes: But if there were, it did not make their Circumciſion null. Our Saviour did not by his perſonal Baptiſm profeſs Repentance and Mortification of any ſin of his, and Belief of Pardon of it, (as many others did of their ſins in their Baptiſm) becauſe he had none to repent of, to mortifie, or to be pardoned: And yet I hope none will ſay his Baptiſm was a Nullity. And if the abſence of ſuch a Profeſſion did not make his Baptiſm a Nullity, how can it be proved that the abſence of it will make the Baptiſm of Infants to be a Nullity? The abſence of one end of Baptiſm, doth no more make it uſeleſs as to all other ends; and, conſequently, no more a Nullity, than all ſuch Marriages are Nullities where Procreation of Children, which is one end of Marriage, is not attainable.

Now then, conſidering what hath been ſaid about Infants, Church-Memberſhip, and Diſcipleſhip, and the Attainableneſs of the ends of Baptiſm in their Baptiſm, I appeal to all who are not over-grown with Prejudice and Partiality, whether ever Infant-Baptiſm be like to be proved to be a Nullity: And if not, whether Separation upon Suppoſition that it is, be not a cauſeleſs rent in the Church, which is Schiſm in the Formality of it.

But beſides all this, I have another thing in the ſecond place to ſay, and that is, that if Infant-Baptiſm could be proved an Error, yet it can never be proved to be an Error of that Nature as will of it ſelf, and without any other cauſe, be a ſufficient ground of Separation, as to other Acts of Church-Communion. To make this out, I ſhall take one thing for granted, which I believe very few, if any, of the Anabaptiſts will deny, and that is, that many at leaſt, of the Pædo baptiſts are godly, both of Men and Women. *They are ſanctified in Chriſt Jeſus, called to be Saints, and ſuch as call upon the Name of Jeſus Chriſt our Lord:* And theſe, and ſuch like Characters are Churches deſcribed by in the Epiſtles, which the Apoſtles wrote to them.

1. I reaſon thus then: If Pædobaptiſts are godly Men, ſuch as believe in Chriſt, then they are Members of Chriſt: And if they are Members of Chriſt, they are of his Body, the Church: And if they be of the Church, then they have right to Communion with the Church, and they that deny it them, deny them their Right: Becauſe Union with the whole, creates a Right to Communion with the parts in all Bodies, Natural, Political, or Myſtical. The Miniſtration of Goſpel-Ordinances, which is given by Chriſt for the Edification of the whole Body, belongs to every part, *Eph.* xiv. 12. 1 *Cor.* iii. 21, 22, 23.

If it be ſaid, though ſuch Pædobaptiſts have a remote Right, yet without Baptiſm after Faith they cannot have an immediate Right to Church-Communion: I anſwer, That Baptiſm after Faith can be no more neceſſary to Church-Communion, than it is unto Salvation. For the Means cannot be more neceſſary to the ſubordiate End, which is Church-Communion, than it is to the principal, which is Salvation. And Baptiſm is neceſſary to Salvation but by way of Duty where opportunity occurs, but not by way of Means where opportunity of doing one's Duty is wanting. And if to be baptized after Faith were indeed the Pædobaptiſts duty, the true reaſon why they do not perform it, is the want of a Moral Opportunity, that is, the want of Conviction that it is their Duty, they verily believing they were ſufficiently baptized in their Infancy, and that it is not lawful for them to be re-baptized. And all the while they remain under this Perſuaſion, they can no more lawfully receive an after-baptizing by a voluntary ſubmiſſion to it, than they can who deſire to be baptized, but want the opportunity of that Health, or ſuch an Adminiſtrator, as is neceſſary thereto. And if their right to Salvation under theſe Circumſtances be not cut off, as doubtleſs it is not for the reaſon before given, then no more can their right to Church-Communion be thereby cut off for the ſame reaſon. I think I may very ſafely ſay, that there is no Error in Judgment about Baptiſm, nor about any other thing, which yet is conſiſtent with ſaving Faith and Love, and not pertinaciouſly perſiſted in after Conviction, for which a Man can duly be deprived of Church-Communion, that doth not by his voluntary Separation deprive himſelf of it: Which perſiſting in Error after Conviction is not the caſe of the honeſt-minded Pædobaptiſts, though they ſhould be ſuppoſed to be in error. Perſons erring upon no worſe terms, are doubtleſs the Objects of Chriſtian Forbearance in the Church, and not of ſuch Severity as to exclude them from Communion. This you may take as a farther account why I ſaid Baptiſm after Faith can be no more neceſſary to Church-Communion, than it is unto Salvation.

2. If very many of the Pædobaptiſts are ſuch godly Perſons, and true Believers in Chriſt, as are afore deſcribed, then it cannot be denied but they are ſuch whom the Lord hath received into Communion with himſelf: And if ſo, then thoſe who are likewiſe his People, ought to receive them into their Communion too; *Rom.* xiv. 1,-3. *Him that is weak in the Faith receive ye, for God hath received him.* Rom. xv. 7. *Wherefore receive ye one another, as Chriſt received us.* If it be ſaid, Theſe Scriptures concern ſuch as were duly baptized: I anſwer, That the reaſon why they ſhould receive one another, is not fetch'd from their having been baptized, but from the Lord's receiving them. And no ſuppoſed Error in Perſons about Baptiſm can be a reaſon why they ſhould not be received to Communion, farther than it is a reaſon to prove that the Lord hath not received them. St. *Peter* thought it a good reaſon why the Chriſtians ſhould make no difference between believing Jews and believing Gentiles, though they were of different Perſuaſions about the neceſſity and non-neceſſity of Circumciſion, (wherein the one erred) becauſe the Lord made no difference, but gave to one the Holy Ghoſt as well as to the other, and purified the Hearts of the one by Faith as well as the other, *Acts* xv. 8, 9. His Reaſon is not fetch'd from the Nature of the things wherein they differed, but from God's giving them an equal Intereſt in his Grace, notwithſtanding their difference. When God had vouchſafed the Gift of his Grace and Spirit to the Gentiles as well as to the Jews, St. *Peter* thought that if after this he ſhould have kept the ſame diſtance from them, as before he thought he was bound to do, he ſhould have withſtood God in ſo doing, *Acts* xi. 17. *For as much then as God gave them the like gift, as he did unto us, who believed on the Lord Jeſus Chriſt; what was I, that I could withſtand God?* To keep at a diſtance from thoſe to whom God draws nigh in the Communication of his Grace and Spirit, is it ſeems to ſteer a courſe againſt God, or to withſtand him.

3. The Anabaptiſts and Pædobaptiſts, if Godly, do by Faith hold Communion one with another, in eating the ſame Spiritual Meat, and drinking the ſame Spiritual Drink, the Body and Blood of Jeſus Chriſt, which is the thing ſignified in the Lord's Supper: *Except ye eat the Fleſh of the Son of Man, and drink his Blood, ye have no Life in you*, John vi. 53. And therefore they cannot duly deny Communion with them in the Lord's Supper it ſelf, which is the ſign.

1. Becauſe if they do, they thereby croſs one great end and deſign of God in that Ordinance; which is to increaſe and ſtrengthen Love and Unity among Chriſtians in communicating together in the Sign upon account of their joint Intereſt in, and Relation to Chriſt the Subſtance. Chriſtians by their Communion in that Ordinance are made *to drink into one Spirit*, or into oneneſs of Spirit, 1 *Cor.* xii. 13. But by their thus refuſing to communicate one with another, they do not only ſin in not uſing the Lord's appointed means to increaſe and ſtrengthen Love and Unity upon account of common Intereſt in the ſame Saviour, but alſo in that by ſuch their refuſing, they deſtroy

Unity, and weaken and diminiſh Love: They pull down, inſtead of building up, ſteer a contrary courſe to Chriſt in appointing that Ordinance.

2. Men's right to the Sign proceeds upon the beſt account from their right to the Thing ſignified, though not from that only. As thoſe who have right to ſuch or ſuch an Eſtate in Land, have thereby a right to the Deeds and Evidences by which ſuch a Right is to be declared: So thoſe that have a right to the Body and Blood of Chriſt through Faith, have thereby a right to the Lord's Supper, as an Evidence appointed by God, by which ſuch their Right is to be declared and acknowledged. And therefore as a detaining of ſuch Evidence from him who, by having right to the Land, hath right to the Evidence, would be an injury: Even ſo for any, as much as in them lies, to detain the Lord's Supper from them who, by having right to the Body and Blood of Chriſt, have right to the Lord's Supper, as an Evidence and Sign thereof, would be an injury likewiſe, and that ſo much greater too, as Spiritual things are of more value than Temporal.

3. It is abſurd, and againſt common Reaſon, for them to grant, that the godly Pædobaptiſts have communion with them in the greater and better part; and yet for a ſuppoſed Error conſiſtent with ſaving Faith and Love, to deny it them in the leſs, whenas the greater always includes the leſs. But for the Godly Pædobaptiſts to be Partakers of like precious Faith with them, and thereby to eat of that Fleſh which is Meat indeed, and to drink of that Blood which is Drink indeed, together with themſelves, (a thing which the Anabaptiſts will not deny) is certainly to have, hold, and enjoy Communion with them in the greater, better, more ſpiritual, and more ſubſtantial part of Communion; and therefore to deny it them in the out-ſide and letter of it, which is far leſs conſiderrble, is very incongruous and contradictitious.

What was objected by diſtinguiſhing between an immediate and remote Right, if it ſhould be here brought in again, hath been anſwered before, and the Anſwer need not be repeated, but only applied here. And let it be remembred always, that there is a vaſt difference between thoſe who deny, and thoſe that hold the neceſſity and uſefulneſs of Water-Baptiſm in theſe latter Ages of the Church. The Pædobaptiſts are as much for Water-Baptiſm as the Anabaptiſts are, and hold themſelves as firmly engaged by their Infant-Baptiſm, as they do by their after-Baptiſm. If this were not ſo, their caſe would not be ſo pleadable as now it is.

And for any to ſeparate from them upon account of their being baptized in their Infancy, as it is without ground from Scripture, I conceive, ſo it is without all precedent in the Church of Chriſt for the firſt fifteen hundred Years and more. Though ſome in the ancient Church were baptized in Infancy, and ſome at Age, yet there was never any breaking off Communion among them upon that ſcore, ſo far as ever I could learn, until a Reformation of a Reformation was ſet on foot; the one to puzle and confound the other: I mean, the attempt of the Anabaptiſts in *Germany* to reform the Reformation by *Luther* and others. Which may be a motive to reflect upon what they have done, and to review their grounds. Can they think to out-do the Church in her pureſt times in point of Communion? Methinks they ſhould greatly ſuſpect themſelves in their Undertaking, wherein they go ſo manifeſtly contrary to the Univerſal Church in all Places and Ages till ſo lately, as aforeſaid.

II. *Dividing Principles to be avoided.*

That it is unlawful to hold Communion with Parochial Congregations, notwithſtanding they have been baptized into the Profeſſion of the true Faith, and continue in that Profeſſion. This is another grand dividing Principle indeed. They who hold this, and practiſe accordingly, muſt prove ſuch Communion unlawful, or elſe lie under the guilt of a ſinful Schiſm, or cauſleſs Separation, and of all the evil and miſchievous Effects and Conſequences of it. And to prove it unlawful, they muſt prove it is ſo, either by proving, 1. That all the Members of each Parochial Aſſembly from which they ſeparate, are deſtitute of ſaving Grace: Or, 2. By proving that the mixture of bad with good, makes Communion unlawful: Or, 3. By proving the Conſtitution of ſuch Congregations bad, upon account of that diſtribution by which the whole Nation is divided into its Parts and Precincts: Or, 4. By proving the Worſhip in thoſe Aſſemblies to be ſuch as may not lawfully be joined in. Theſe contain either all, or the principal pretended Cauſes of a ſtated Separation from them. For the Plea upon account of the Inſufficiency of ſome Miniſters, is a thing but of an accidental Nature, and no univerſal Pretence of Separation. And whether they are like to prove all, or indeed any of theſe, you may pleaſe to conſider what follow, and then judge.

1. They cannot prove all the Members of each Parochial Aſſembly from which they ſeparate, to be deſtitute of ſaving Grace, much leſs to be ſo ſcandalous as to deſerve Excommunication. For,

Firſt, There is ſo little a difference between common Grace, and the loweſt degree of ſpecial and ſaving Grace, as makes it impoſſible for one Chriſtian to know another to be deſtitute of ſaving Grace, the Tenor of whoſe Life is not worſe than theirs, who are the moſt inoffenſive and beſt diſpoſed in the Pariſhes. And if they cannot make proof that they are all deſtitute of ſaving Grace; then,

2. It's utterly againſt the Rules of Charity, indeed of all Chriſtianity, to judge ſuch to be deſtitute of ſaving Grace, of which they cannot make certain proof. For *Charity thinketh no Evil*, but *believeth all things, and hopeth all things*. And for one Man to judge another to have no Grace, or to be in a damnable condition who is not manifeſtly guilty of living in ſuch ſins as for which the Scripture expreſly excludes Men out of the Kingdom of Heaven, is a thing which the Scripture expreſly condemns as a great ſin, *Matth.* vii. 1. *Judge not, that ye be not judged*, Jam. iv. 12. *Who art thou that judgeſt another?* And again, *who art thou that judgeſt another Man's Servant?* Rom. xiv. 4. And can they prove indeed (or will they undertake it) that all the Inhabitants of this or that Pariſh without Exception, are guilty of ſuch ſins, as for which the Scripture doth expreſly bar Men out of the Kingdom of Heaven? And if not, dare they judge them all to be in a reprobate or damnable condition? And if they dare not, or cannot judge ſo without manifeſt Breach of Charity, then to be ſure they cannot prove that they are ſo: And if they cannot prove it, what a horrid thing is it, or would it be to judge whole Pariſhes by the Lump to be ſuch?

3. I query how they will prove it is of abſolute neceſſity unto Lawful Communion with a Congregation that have been baptized into one Body the Church, that at leaſt ſome of them ſhould be ſavingly holy? As ſuppoſe the Church of *Laodicea*, for inſtance, had conſiſted all of ſuch as had only a form of Godlineſs; will they ſay, and prove it when they have done, that Communion with them had been unlawful? I ſuppoſe they will not, and am confident they cannot.

2. They cannot prove that a Mixture of the bad with the good makes Communion with ſuch mixt Aſſemblies unlawful. They can neither prove it by Scripture Prohibition, nor by Scripture Example.

1. Let them ſhew where Scripture forbids it. If they ſay there, where it ſaith, *If any Man that is called a Brother be a Fornicator, or Covetous, or an Idolater, or a Railer, or a Drunkard, or an Extortioner, with ſuch an one no not to eat*; 1 Cor. v. 11. And where again it ſaith, *Withdraw your ſelves from every Brother that walks diſorderly, and the like.* The Anſwer is ready, which is this; That theſe, and all other Scriptures of like Nature, are to be conſidered, either firſt, as Injunctions upon the Church as inveſted with the Power of Diſcipline; or ſecondly, as commands to particular Perſons a-part. So far as they belong to the Church in a publick Capacity, and as inveſted with the Power of Diſcipline, they impoſe the Duty of uſing the Power of the Keys for the reforming and Cure of the ſcandalous, and for preventing Contagion in the Church. But ſo far as they reſpect Perſons in a ſingle and private Capacity, they prohibit perſonal Familiarity and Converſe thereby to diſcountenance their Evil, and to work them to a ſenſe of it, and to caution others againſt it; and to ſecure themſelves from the Infection of it. But then there is a vaſt difference between abſtaining from a perſonal Familiarity and Converſe with ſuch, and a withdrawing from the Church for the ſake of ſuch: This is a Sin, but the other a Duty.

And whereas ſome have alledged the 2 *Cor.* vi. 17. *Come out from among them*, &c. This was no Call to the better ſort of Chriſtians to ſeparate from the worſer, and ſuch as were ſcandalous in the Church of *Corinth*, but a Call to thoſe that had in part embraced the Goſpel, to come quite off from Heatheniſh Idols, and from participating in the Sacrifices which were offered to them: Which is meant by *touch not the unclean thing*, there. This appears by the Context from *ver.* 14. and by comparing herewith, 1 *Cor.* viii. 7, 10. and x. 7, 14, 21, 22.

Others alledge, *Rev.* xviii. 4. Come out of her my People, &c. If this be meant of Myſtical *Babylon*, as they underſtand it; it is not a Call to ſeparate from thoſe that Worſhip the true God only, and in the Mediation of Chriſt Jeſus only, as the Pariſh Churches Proteſtant do; but from her who is ſtiled a Harlot, becauſe ſhe gives that Honour which is due only to God, and to our only Mediator Chriſt Jeſus, to

Creatures and to other Mediators together with God and with Chriſt. When it can be proved our Pariſh Churches do ſo, then, and not till then, will this Text be pertinently alledged to juſtifie Separation from them.

2. Let them ſhew, if they can, ſome approved Example in Scripture of ſuch a Practice. That there have been great Scandals in the Churches, both in that recorded in the Old Teſtament, and thoſe recorded in the New, is manifeſt, as is ſhewed particularly and at large by Mr. *Baxter* in his fifth *Direct. for Cure of Church-diviſions.* But where we do find any of the better ſort in thoſe Churches, withdrawing themſelves from the more carnal part, into ſeparate Bodies for Reformation ſake? We read indeed of ſome that *went out from the Church, becauſe they were not of them*; and of ſome that did *ſeparate themſelves being ſenſual, not having the Spirit*; but not a word of the good ſeparating from the Church becauſe of the bad in it. In the Church of *Sardis*, which *had a Name to live, but was dead*, there were but *a few Names*, but what had *defiled their Garments.* And thoſe few indeed are commended, and encouraged by promiſe of great Reward, for that they had kept their Garments undefiled amidſt ſuch a Society, but not in the leaſt encouraged to ſeparate from them, though all the reſt were defiled.

They plead indeed, that particular Churches ought to conſiſt of none but of viſible Saints, becauſe this is agreeable to the primitive Pattern: The Appellations or Titles which are given the Churches in the Epiſtles the Apoſtles wrote to them, declare them to have been ſuch when they ſay, *to the Saints in ſuch and ſuch a place.* This is not denied, but the Queſtion is, Upon what account they were eſteemed viſible Saints, and were ſo ſtiled? As whether it were, 1. Becauſe there were ſuch ſpecial poſitive ſigns of ſaving Grace, beſides their common Profeſſion of Chriſtianity, viſible in all the Members of thoſe Churches, as that there was juſt cauſe they ſhould be ſtiled Saints upon that account? Or, 2. Whether the whole were not denominated from the better part? Or, 3. Whether it was not becauſe they were all Saints by an outward Calling and Profeſſion.

1. It is no ways probable they had all ſuch poſitive ſigns of ſaving Sanctity upon them, as that they were all ſtiled Saints upon that account. Sure it was not for this cauſe that St. *Paul* ſtiled thoſe of the Church at *Corinth* Saints, 1 *Cor.* i. 2. 2 *Cor.* i. 1. When at the ſame time he ſaith there was *ſuch Fornication among them as was not ſo much as named among the Heathens*, Chap. v. 1. that there were ſome of them, *that with Conſcience of the Idol did eat of the Sacrifice offered to it*, Chap. viii. 7. that at the Lord's Supper *ſome were hungry, and ſome drunk*, for which with other Profanations of it, many of them had been viſited with Sickneſs and Death, *Chap.* xi. that *ſome among them had not the Knowledge of God*, and *did deny the Reſurrection*, Chap. xv. that *he feared that when he ſhould come among them, he ſhould not find them ſuch as he would, but that he ſhould find debates, envyings, wraths, ſtrifes, back-bitings, whiſperings, ſwellings, tumults among them, and ſome that had not repented of the Uncleanneſs, and Fornication, and Laſciviouſneſs which they had committed*, 2 Cor. xii. 20, 21. Theſe things according to St. *Paul*'s account, in *Gal.* v. 19, 20, 21. were rather ſigns of ſuch as ſhall not inherit the Kingdom of God, than of ſaving Grace. I doubt thoſe who plead the primitive Pattern for admitting none into their ſeparate Churches but who are under poſitive ſigns of ſaving Grace, would be unwilling to receive ſuch for viſible Saints as here we have found among thoſe to whom St. *Paul* writes as to Saints. But if Perſons under ſuch Characters as aforeſaid, paſſed with St. *Paul* for viſible Saints upon one account or other, how comes it to paſs that thoſe of our Pariſhes that make the ſame Profeſſion as the Church of *Corinth* did, will not paſs for viſible Saints too upon the ſame account, be it what it will? Is it becauſe they are under worſe Characters than thoſe already mentioned? I trow not, but rather becauſe they are partial that ſtick at it.

2. If they will ſay they were all denominated Saints from the better part among them in the Church of *Corinth*, and other Churches, then why may not our Parochial Congregations be ſo too? Unleſs they will ſay there is none good among them, and prove what they ſay, which to be ſure they can never do, if they had Hearts to attempt it. But this cannot be the reaſon why they are called Saints, becauſe theſe two Phraſes, *the Church of God which is at* Corinth, *and the Sanctified in Chriſt Jeſus*, are of equal Latitude and Extent, and both refer to all the ſame Perſons, as appears by the words themſelves, which are theſe. *Unto the Church of God which is at* Corinth, *to them that are ſanctified in Chriſt Jeſus, called to be Saints:* The latter Words being exegetical of the former, 1 *Cor.* i. 2.

3. If they were ſtiled Saints upon account of their external Calling by which they were ſeparated from the Pagan and Infidel World and Worſhip, unto a profeſſed Belief in, and Obedience to the Father, Son, and Holy Ghoſt, into which they had been baptized, then our Parochial Congregations conſiſt of viſible Saints too as well as thoſe: For they have been baptized into the ſame Faith, and continue to profeſs it: And by that Profeſſion are ſeparated from the Infidel and Pagan World. So that let our Opponents in this point take it in which Senſe they will, yet they will never be able to prove but that our Parochial Congregations are viſible Saints upon the ſame account, and in the ſame Senſe, in which thoſe of the Church of *Corinth* were ſtiled Saints.

And it is moſt probable, that the primitive Churches were ſtiled Saints upon this laſt mentioned account of an outward Calling and Profeſſion of Chriſtianity. Saints with them ſignified but the ſame thing as Chriſtians now doth with us, and was the common Appellation by which the Profeſſors of Chriſtianity were diſtinguiſhed from others then, as Chriſtian is now. Where they were once called Chriſtians then, they were twenty times called Saints, if we may eſtimate their Uſage by what is recorded. For we have the Appellation Saints above threeſcore times in the New Teſtament, and that of Chriſtian but thrice, as I take it. They were called Saints, as it is, *Rom.* i. 7. 1 *Cor*. i. 2. For the two words [to be] are added by the Tranſlators in both places. You will never find, I ſuppoſe, the Appellation, Saints, applied to the ſincere in Oppoſition to the unſincere of the Church, as by cuſtom now they are, but always in Oppoſition to thoſe that were not at all of the Church, or which made no Profeſſion of Chriſtianity at all. It was, I take it, in this Senſe, and by virtue of an outward Calling and Profeſſion, that thoſe were ſaid to be *ſanctified by the Blood of the Covenant*, who yet by Apoſtaſie *trod under foot the Son of God, and counted that Blood an unholy thing*, Heb. x. 29. All that were outwardly called ſo far as to profeſs Chriſtianity, were called to be Saints, Saints by Calling. Our Saviour hath told us over and over, that many are called, and but few are choſen: It's well if there be not abundantly more nominal than real Saints. The whole Body of the People of the Jews, by virtue of an external Calling to worſhip the true God, and to receive and obſerve his Law, were called *Saints*, and a *holy People unto the Lord*, Deut. xxxiii. 2, 3. and vii. 6. And a Congregation of ſuch are called a *Congregation of Saints*, and Aſſemblies of ſuch, *Aſſemblies of Saints*, Pſal. lxxxix. 5, 7. and cxlix. 1. And yet we know what ſorry Saints many of them appeared to be. And St. *Paul* ſeems to reckon the Church of *Corinth*, and other Churches, to conſiſt of ſomewhat alike Mixture as that of the Jews of old did, when he told them that they were Types of us upon whom the Ends of the World are come, and admoniſhed them by God's ſore Diſpleaſure expreſſed againſt moſt of them: And would by no means have them ignorant or unmindful of one thing, and that was, that thoſe with whom God was not well pleaſed, but overthrew them in the Wilderneſs, were of God's Church, and enjoyed ſpecial Privileges, as well as they themſelves: Which Privileges he expreſſeth in Terms more appropriate to their preſent Chriſtian State, when he ſaith, they were all baptized unto *Moſes*, and did all eat the ſame Spiritual Meat, and drank the ſame Spiritual Drink. By whoſe Example he would have them take warning, and not be flattered into a good Opinion of themſelves meerly upon account of their Baptiſm, and holding Communion with the Church in Holy Adminiſtrations, and being numbred among the Saints or Chriſtians; 1 *Cor*. x. And truly they ſeem to be much more in danger of being betrayed into ſuch a Self-flattery, who are not admitted to Church-Fellowſhip upon their Chriſtian Profeſſion, unleſs beſides that they can give ſuch a ſatisfactory account to the Church of their Converſion after they have been firſt received into the Church Catholick by Baptiſm, in which there may be great Miſtake in them that ſo receive them. And therefore the *New-England* Miniſters in their Anſwer to Mr. *Davenport*'s Apologetical Preface, *p*. 43, 44. ſay thus: *Indeed when Men confound theſe two, and do tye viſible Church-Memberſhip unto ſuch Conditions and Qualifications, as are reputed enough to Salvation: This may tend to harden Men, and to make them conceit, that if once they be got into the Church, they are ſure of Heaven; whenas alas it may be they are far from it.*

But in all this there is nothing againſt the great Uſefulneſs and Deſirableneſs of Diſcipline in the Church, for the Cure or Excommunication of the notoriouſly ſcandalous. But yet a neglect of this in them to whom it belongs, is no ſufficient ground of Separation from that Church where it is ſo neglected. For though Diſcipline be neceſſary for the better being of the Church, yet it is not of the Eſſence of the Church: It doth not ceaſe to be a true Church for want of it. And the neglect of it in a Church is ſo far from being a Reaſon why the better part in ſuch a Church ſhould ſeparate from the worſe, as that it is indeed a Reaſon againſt it why they ſhould not: Becauſe where publick Diſcipline is wanting, there is the more need of private Application to delinquent Members, which Separation takes Men off from, or at beſt puts them under a great diſadvantage of doing that good among them thereby, which otherwiſe they might. Such a Separation rather puts thoſe ſeparated from, under a Temptation of making a Party againſt them, as is frequently ſeen: And the Diviſion made and heightned thus on both ſides, tends more to weaken the Chriſtian Intereſt in the main, than all the exerciſe of Diſcipline in ſeparate Congregations tends to promote it. It's true, if Chriſtians were to mind only the pleaſing of themſelves, it would be a pleaſant thing for the Good indeed to converſe and hold Communion with ſuch only as themſelves. But it will turn to a better account at laſt, if by denying their Inclination in this, they help and bring on a worſer ſort, and *gain their Maſter ten Talents.* There ſhould *be more abundant honour given to that part which lacketh, that there may be no Schiſm in the Body*, 1 Cor. xii. 24. Our Saviour himſelf was chiefly for the bringing home of ſtraying *Sheep*, and as a Phyſician to be among the Sick rather than the Whole: Not becauſe he loved them better, but becauſe they had more need, and becauſe he could thereby be more ſerviceable as to the main end of his coming into the World. *He came not to call the Righteous, but Sinners to repentance*; *to miniſter, and not to be miniſtred to.* And to be this way employed, ſeems to be more acceptable to God, than to have to do only with the Righteous: *There is joy in Heaven over one Sinner that repenteth, more than over ninety and nine juſt Perſons which need no Repentance.* And thus much, I think, may ſuffice to ſhew how unlikely, yea, how impoſſible it is to prove that the mixture of the bad with the good in the Pariſhes, makes Communion with them unlawful.

3. They cannot prove the Conſtitution of Parochial Congregations to be bad upon account of that diſtribution by which the whole Nation is divided into parts, into ſo many Pariſhes, which they are wont to call Humane Inſtitution. For,

Firſt, they are of the ſame Inſtitution in the main, as thoſe were which were planted by the Apoſtles themſelves. For from what were thoſe called Churches, but from the Chriſtians uſual Aſſembling together for Communion in Goſpel-Ordinances? The Greek word tranſlated *Church*, properly ſignifying an *Aſſembly*. And if the Pariſhioners in a Pariſh do uſually Aſſemble together upon the ſame account, are not thoſe Goſpel-Churches as well as the other? and of the ſame Inſtitution?

Secondly, For the Chriſtians that live within the ſame Precincts or Pariſh-bounds to aſſemble together for Communion in Goſpel-Ordinances, and ſo to be of the ſame particular Church, and not of another, is a thing which beſt anſwers the ends of particular Churchſhip, and the primitive Pattern. For Vicinity of Neighbourhood and Cohabitation, (which generally are not to be had ſo well in any other way as in that of Parochial diſtribution) do beſt accomodate thoſe in Church-Relation, with the knowledge of each other's Condition and Converſation, and with opportunity and advantage, to watch over, confer with, and to admoniſh, exhort, and comfort one another, and to aſſemble together for publick Worſhip; which are the ends of particular Church-Aſſociation. And accordingly the Primitive Chriſtians which lived together within the ſame civil bounds of Cities and Towns, as of *Corinth*, *Cenchrea*, &c. were conſtantly of the ſame Church, and as ſuch were ſtill denominated by the places where they did reſide. And if ſome ſuch diſtribution of the Chriſtians in a Nation into ſeveral particular Worſhipping Congregations as is now made by Humane Authority, is neceſſary of it ſelf in reference to the Church-Aſſociation, though no Humane Authority had required it, then certainly the command of Humane Authority that it ſhould be ſo, cannot make it unneceſſary, much leſs unlawful.

4. They cannot prove the Worſhip now uſed in our Parochial Aſſemblies, to be ſuch as may not lawfully be joined in. The Lawfulneſs of Communion in the Worſhip of the *Engliſh* Liturgy, is the thing in queſtion. And if they cannot prove Communion in it unlawful, neither, 1. Becauſe it is a ſet Form: Nor, 2. Becauſe it is ſuch a ſet Form as it is: Nor, 3. Becauſe it is impoſed; then I ſhall take it for granted they cannot prove it unlawful any other way. And whether ever they are like to prove Communion in that Worſhip unlawful upon any of thoſe accounts, conſider what I have to offer, and then judge.

1. They cannot prove Communion in that Worſhip unlawful upon account of its being a ſet Form; becauſe they cannot prove all ſet Forms of Worſhip forbidden. We have Prayer ſeveral times commanded in Scripture, but no where determined that it

ſhall be extemporary, that ever I could learn. And therefore if the want of an expreſs Precept for praying in a ſet Form made praying in a ſet Form unlawful, the ſame thing would make extemporary Prayer unlawful too. When God hath in Scripture plainly determined to whom we ſhall pray, and in whoſe Name, and for what, and in what manner, but not in what external mode, as whether in a ſet Form or without; either of them may be lawful. For the reaſon, doubtleſs, why God hath not reſtrained Prayer either to the one mode or the other, is, that either may be made uſe of as occaſion ſerves, or circumſtances require. For if he had not intended to have left Men at more liberty in this, than he hath in the object, matter, and manner of Prayer, he would have been as particular in determining in what mode he would be ſought to, as in what Name, and for what. It is in this Duty of Prayer, in reference to the mode, much as it is in the Duty of ſinging of Pſalms: The Duty of ſinging them is expreſly enjoined in the New Teſtament as well as the Old, but what Pſalms in particular, and whether ſuch as are indited by them that ſing, or by ſome others for them, or whether in Proſe or in Meter, or whether by all the Congregation jointly, or by a part only, are Circumſtances not determined particularly in the New Teſtament. And why are they not? But that there might be a liberty left to vary in theſe Particulars, as Circumſtances ſhould render it moſt convenient. Some indeed have made ſuch ill uſe of this, as that becauſe the Scripture hath not determined all theſe Particulars, they will not make uſe of any, and ſo wholly neglect the Duty it ſelf, to the diſhonour of him who hath made it a Duty: As if he had been defective in not determining thoſe Circumſtances, whenas Men were purpoſely left at liberty herein for their greater Edification. And doubtleſs for the ſame reaſon is the external mode of Prayer left ſo much undetermined as it is.

By theſe things we may ſee how impertinently ſome uſe to object againſt the Liturgical Mode of Worſhip, the Sin of *Nadab* and *Abihu*, in offering ſtrange Fire before the Lord, and of *Jeroboam*'s keeping the Paſſover on the fifteenth Day of the eighth Month, and the like. For if the offering of Incenſe had been commanded, but with what Fire not determined, it would not have been their Sin to have offered with any Fire that had been conveniently uſeful for that purpoſe. And ſo if the keeping of the Paſſover had been commanded, and neither Time nor Place determined, it would have been no ſin to have kept it on the fifteenth Day of the eighth Month, and in *Bethel*, provided it had been to the Lord only. So we ſay, when Prayer is commanded, but the Mode not determined, any are lawful, as Circumſtances ſhall render them convenient. God had appointed with what fire Incenſe ſhould be offered, as well as that Incenſe it ſelf ſhould be offered, *viz.* with Fire from off the Altar: And ſo he had in what Month, and on what Day of the Month the Paſſover ſhould be kept, as well as that it ſhould be kept at all: And in varying from theſe was the Sin of thoſe Men. If God had limited Prayer by his Command to that mode which we call extemporary Praying, then theſe Inſtances would have been pertinently alledged againſt the Liturgy, but this is not the caſe; and therefore they, and all other of like nature, are impertinently alledged againſt Modes of Worſhip not determined in Scripture either one way or other. And ſuch is the allegation of thoſe Scriptures alſo in this caſe, which are againſt adding to the Word, *Deut.* xii. 32. againſt Sacrificing to Idol-gods, which God ſaith he commanded not, *Jer.* vii. 31. and xix. 5. *Deut.* xvii. 3. againſt making falſe Repreſentations of God by Images, as in the ſecond Commandment, which becauſe they do ſo, are therefore called a Lie: All which refer to falſe Worſhip in the ſubſtance of it, as being contrary to God's expreſs Command, and not unto ſuch Circumſtances relating to the ſubſtance of commanded Worſhip, which are neither commanded nor forbidden, but left to the prudence of God's People to order themſelves in by general Rules: For which cauſe the allegation of them in this buſineſs is wholly impertinent and irrelative to the queſtion. And yet this way of miſapplying Scripture hath been, I think I may ſay, the only way of upholding unlawful Separation in the Church.

But the plain truth is, if that would ſatisfie Men, that the Scripture is ſo far from forbidding the uſe of a ſet Form in Prayer in any caſe, as that there is much in the Scripture to countenance it. God commanded a Form to be uſed by the Prieſts in Bleſſing the People, *Numb.* vi. 23.——Hezekiah *the King, and the Princes commanded the Levites to ſing Praiſe unto the Lord with the words of David, and Aſaph the Seer,* 2 Chron. xxix. 30. What are many of the Pſalms but ſo many ſet Forms of Prayer and Thankſgiving? The Title of the 102^{d} Pſalm is *A Prayer for the afflicted when he is overwhelmed, and poureth out his complaint before the Lord.* The 72^{d} Pſalm concludes thus, *The Prayers of David, the Son of Jeſſe, are ended.* The Title of the xc Pſalm is a Prayer of *Moſes* the Man of God. Our Saviour taught his Diſciples a Form of Prayer, as *John* the *Baptiſt* had before taught his; and commanded them ſaying, *When ye pray, ſay our Father*, &c. And is it not ſtrange then, that any of his Diſciples ſhould ſay when ye pray, ſay not our Father, *&c.*

Again, do not they who ſing Pſalms pray to God, and praiſe God in a ſet Form? Nay, is not the Prayer of every Miniſter a Form to all the People that join with him, how extemporary ſoever it may be to himſelf? For they are as much confined in this caſe, as if he had read it out of a Book: And every time he varies, it is ſtill but a new Form to the People. So that they that are moſt againſt Forms, are neceſſitated to uſe ſome themſelves. And ſo I have done with ſhewing my reaſon why the Prayers of the Liturgy cannot be proved unlawful in reſpect of its being a ſet Form.

2. They cannot prove it unlawful to join in the Prayers made according to the Liturgy, upon account of its being ſuch a ſet Form as it is; Neither, 1. In reſpect of the Object to whom, nor of the Mediator by whom the Prayer is made. Nor, 2. In reſpect of the matter of which it doth conſiſt. Nor, 3. In reſpect of the Words and Phraſe ſignificant of the matter. Nor, 4. In reſpect of the Method, the Repetitions, the Abruptions, the Reſponſes, or popular Conclamations thereby uſed, nor becauſe read out of a Book. Nor, 5. Though they ſhould be able to prove the forementioned Repetitions, Abruptions, Reſponſes, and Conclamations, or the like, to be real Defects in that Mode of Worſhip, and that a better is deſirable, and that another might be more uſeful.

1. They cannot prove Communion in thoſe Prayers unlawful in reſpect of him to whom they are made, nor in reſpect of him in whoſe Name they are made. For they are made to the true God only, and only in the Name and Mediation of the only Mediator Chriſt Jeſus.

2. Nor ſecondly, In reſpect of the matter of which they do conſiſt. I know no Prayer in the Liturgy appointed for the ordinary publick Worſhip, but what refers either to Confeſſion of Sin, or Petition for Pardon, or for the Aſſiſtance of God's Grace and Holy Spirit, or for ſome temporal, or other ſpiritual or eternal Bleſſings, or for the averting of the contrary Evils, or to Thankſgiving to God for Benefits relating to this Life, or that which is to come; and all this in the behalf of our ſelves and others. And if there be nothing but what is of this Nature, the matter of the Prayers to be ſure, cannot be proved to be unlawful.

3. They cannot prove Communion in thoſe Prayers unlawful upon account of the Words and Phraſe by which the ſubſtantial Matter of the Worſhip is expreſſed. They are not made in an unknown Tongue or Language, not underſtood by the People. Nor will they ever be able to prove, but that in reſpect of the Words and Phraſe, that Mode of Prayer is of the common Nature of any right Mode of Prayer whatſoever. The beſt Mode of publick Prayer is but a *Medium* of conveying the ſubſtantial Matter of Prayer to the Underſtanding and Affection of them that pray, and from thence to God. It is neceſſary indeed, in this reſpect, that the Words and Phraſe ſhould be ſignificant and expreſſive of the Import of the Matter and Subſtance of which the Prayer doth conſiſt. As when God is to be magnified for the Glory of his Perfections and marvellous doings: And when we would be humbled for the Pravity and Degenerateneſs of our Nature and Miſcarriages towards him; and when in the Senſe thereof, and of God's declared Goodneſs through Chriſt, we would beg Forgiveneſs of Sin and the Aſſiſtance of his Grace for Amendment, and Eternal Life in the Iſſue, or any Temporal Bleſſing; it is neceſſary that theſe things be expreſſed in Words and Phraſes that have ſome Aptneſs in them to fill the Soul with Apprehenſions and Affections ſuitable to the reſpective Matter of the parts of Prayer to which they do relate. The general Nature of all right Modes of Prayer conſiſts in this, whether with, or without the uſe of a Book, whether uttered in a ſet Form of Words, or from the preſent Invention and Conception of the Mind. And it cannot with any colour of reaſon or truth be denied, but that the Liturgical Mode of Prayer is of this nature. The Words and Phraſe are intelligibly ſignificant of the Matter and Subſtance of Prayer to which they relate; and ſo ſerve for publick Edification, according to the Rule, 1 *Cor.* xiv. 9, 14, 15.

And if ſo, then we may, if the fault be not in our ſelves, and if a Heart be not wanting, ſeriouſly and devoutly preſent our neceſſary Confeſſions, Petitions, and Thankſgivings unto God in that Mode. It is too groſs an Apprehenſion of God to think that a greater Variety of Words and Phraſes as ſuch, do delight him: But it is Humility, Reverence, Senſe of Wants, fervent Deſires of Supply, and Faith of Acceptance through Chriſt concurring with Words ſignificant of ſuch things, whether pronounced out of a Book, or otherwiſe, that he is pleaſed with. Nor is it comely for us to think that it is the Repetition of the ſame words every Day, as in the Lord's Prayer, that doth diſpleaſe the Lord: But it is the irreverent, raſh, careleſs, and cuſtomary pouring out words before him without any due Senſe of what they import, that doth offend him. If Men be but attentive and careful to engage their Hearts to go along with the Matter ſignified by the Words, and to be duly affected with the Import thereof; it is not their being read out of a Book that will make theſe Prayers unacceptable or ineffectual: As on the other hand, if Men are careleſs and unconſcionable therein, it is not its proceeding from a Gift of him that utters the Prayer that will make it acceptable and effectual, how excellent ſoever the matter and words may be. I conclude then that the mode of Prayer in our *Engliſh* Liturgy, doth in the general nature and quality of it, agree with all right modes of publick Prayer whatſoever, and with the general Rule by which all right modes of Prayer are to be ſquared. The queſtion is not whether it be the beſt, but whether it is ſo competently uſeful, as to render Communion in Prayer by it lawful.

4. They cannot prove Communion in the Prayers of the Liturgy unlawful, in reſpect of the Method, Repetitions, Abruptions, Reſponſes, or Conclamations thereby uſed. For ſo long as the Scriptures, in which the Duty of Prayer is enjoined, have not determined whether it ſhall be by the help of a Book, or without; or whether longer or ſhorter; or whether all the publick Prayer, meet for the Aſſembly, ſhall be put up to God in two or three Prayers, or more; or whether all ſhall be pronounced by the Miniſter only, or part by the People alſo; or whether kneeling or ſtanding; I cannot ſee how it will be proved unlawful to do it any of theſe ways, as Circumſtances in the caſe may be. For the queſtion before us is not at all which is moſt convenient where Men are at liberty to chuſe, but only what is lawful, or which is to be choſen under a neceſſity of either uſing ſuch a mode, or of ſeparating. It is not unlawful for all the People in a Congregation to pray to God, or praiſe him together with one Voice, in ſinging of Pſalms: And how then it will be proved unlawful for them to do it in another way of praying, I know not. We read of many that by their Conjunction of Voices, *were as one to make one ſound to be heard in praiſing and thanking the Lord*, 2 Chron. v. 13. They may perhaps think ſuch Repetitions of the ſame Prayer as are uſed by the Liturgy may be forbidden by our Saviour, when he ſaid, *When ye pray, uſe not vain repetitions as the Heathen do*, Matth. vi. But they will hardly prove it, if they do but conſider what the vain Repetitions which the Heathen uſed, were. For there ſeems to be no likeneſs or proportion between the Repetitions in the Liturgy and thoſe of the Heathen. For they repeated the very ſame words it may be a hundred times over, and more, in a little time: As they in 1 *Kings* xviii. 26. who *from morning until noon, cryed, O Baal, hear us; O Baal, hear us.* The very ſame words are uſed twenty ſix times in *Pſal.* cxxxvi. and often in many other Pſalms, and yet I dare not ſay they are a vain Repetition, and I ſuppoſe, nor they neither*. It is ſaid of our Saviour, that *again he went away and prayed, and ſpake the ſame words*, Mark xiv. 39.

5. Although they ſhould be able certainly, and without all doubt, to prove the forementioned Repetitions, Abruptions, Reſponſes, and Conclamations, or the like, to be real defects in that mode of Worſhip, and that a better *medium* is deſirable, and that another might be more uſeful; yet it will not from thence follow, that that would be a ſufficient ground or cauſe of Separation from the ſubſtance of the Worſhip it ſelf, for theſe two Reaſons.

1. Becauſe thoſe who count the uſe of theſe a diſorderly way of Praying, need not be active in thoſe things, unleſs they will, but only paſſive. And if they be but paſſive, they will not by their preſence be guilty of the diſorder. I ſuppoſe they do not think their preſence at conceived Prayers by habit, makes them guilty of all the diſorders and defects that are found in them, or ſome of them, ſo long as they do not in their minds conſent to thoſe diſorders and defects, but are ſorry for them. For they are in ſuch caſes but involuntary defects as to them: And defects of that nature our beſt Performances are more or leſs liable to. We may lay aſide all Duties at this rate, if we think we may not endeavour a performance of them till we can do them without all involuntary defects. But that in which a Man's Will is not, is not morally the Man's Act: *Every Man is tempted when he is drawn away of his own luſt, and enticed*, Jam. i.

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* If accompanied with ſuitable Affection, without Expectation of Acceptance meerly for much ſpeaking, which makes Repetition vain.

And no Man is to be counted a Conſenter to all that is done in his preſence, though he do not declare his conſent to it ſome other way than meerly by his preſence. If this were not ſo, a Man would be guilty of all the defects he perceives in the Miniſters Praying and Preaching, unleſs he declared his diſſent from them in the open Congregation, which if practiſed would tend to open Confuſion. When we conſider the corrupt Eſtate of the Jewiſh Church, in which our Saviour held Communion both in Temple-worſhip, and Synagogue-worſhip at *Nazareth*, where he was brought up; I ſuppoſe no Man will think that the Adminiſtration of the Worſhip there was free from all defects, eſpecially conſidering that their Liturgy was of humane compoſure, and yet our Saviour's preſence at this Worſhip, and joining in it, did not make him guilty of the defects that cleaved to it. The Scribes and Phariſees taught unſound Doctrine, as well as ſound; and yet our Saviour encouraged his Diſciples to hear them, only cautioning them to *beware of the leaven* of their Doctrine, leſt they ſhould receive it, or approve of it: Which had been a Contradiction, if their preſence in reference to the good, had been an approbation of the bad. Nor did the private Members of the Church of *Corinth*, by their preſence at the diſorderly Adminiſtration of Holy Things, complained of by the Apoſtle, in the eleventh and fourteenth Chapters, make themſelves guilty of that diſorder, without ſomewhat elſe beſides their preſence. That's my firſt Reaſon.

2. The Repetitions, Abruptions, Reſponſes, and the Reading the Prayers out of a Book, are not oppoſite to, or deſtructive of the matter and ends of Prayer: All that can be pretended, is, that they are leſs uſeful, leſs conducing to the ends of Worſhip. The things asked in that way are deſirable in themſelves; the ſuppoſed defect lies in the ſuppoſed diſorderly way of asking them. For otherwiſe the petitioning for things in this way, tends to the ſame end as when the ſame things are prayed for in a ſuppoſed more orderly way, though comparatively with ſome diſadvantage. A greater degree of uſefulneſs doth not exclude a leſs, but only exceed it. A mode or *medium* of Prayer is not therefore uſeleſs, becauſe another is more uſeful, eſpecially when a more uſeful one cannot be made uſe of, and the other declined without a greater Inconvenience otherwiſe. They will not ſay, it's unlawful to join in conceived Prayer with a Miniſter or private Chriſtian, that is leſs able than another, and perhaps far inferiour to ſome then preſent. A leſs uſeful Verſion of the Pſalms doth not make it unlawful to ſing Pſalms by ſuch a Verſion. The Geſture of Kneeling in Prayer is the beſt and meeteſt, and yet that doth not make the uſe of another Geſture in Prayer unlawful. If the Common-Prayer Book-*medium* of Worſhip then be in the fore-mentioned reſpects, or any other, leſs uſeful than another, it might be indeed a reaſon, inducing them that think ſo, to make uſe of another which they judge better, if they were at liberty to do it without drawing on a greater Inconvenience, ſuch as Separation is with all its ill effects. But otherwiſe, can any Man think the leſs uſefulneſs of a mode but of part of the publick Worſhip (for it is no more) to be a ſufficient ground of Separation, when there is a neceſſity of uſing the one, or practiſing the other. Under ſuch Circumſtances, doubtleſs, a leſs uſeful mode of publick Worſhip is much more eligible than to run all the hazards, and to bring on all the evil effects of a Separation for the uſe of one but comparatively better. It is moſt certain, that Separation upon account of a leſs uſeful mode tends more to the hurt and damage of the Religious Intereſt in the main, than the uſe of a leſs uſeful mode of but part of the publick Worſhip can with any colour of Reaſon or Truth be pretended to do. All that can be pretended, is, that it tends leſs to the good of Religion, but not at all to its hurt, as Separation doth.

3. And laſtly, as to this: They cannot prove Communion in the Worſhip preſcribed by the Liturgy to be unlawful upon account of its being impoſed by Man, and commanded by humane Authority. Before they can prove this, they muſt prove ſuch Communion to be forbidden of God, (which, as I have been ſhewing before, cannot be done.) For that Law of God, which will bear us out in doing a thing, cannot be repealed by the Law of Man commanding the ſame thing. There is no ſuch Enmity or Inconſiſtency between God's Laws, and thoſe of Men which are ſubordinate, or not oppoſite to God's, as that any thing ſhould become the leſs acceptable to God, meerly becauſe commanded by his Miniſter. Nay, we obey God in obeying the higher Powers in ſuch things as are not contrary to his Laws; becauſe God hath commanded us to obey them in ſuch things. It is not a ſetting up of Man in God's ſtead, till Man is obeyed againſt God, not when he is obeyed in ſubordination to him.

But let us turn the Tables a little, and ſuppoſe that the Law of the Land did forbid the uſe of any ſet Form of Prayer in the Church, (as ſometime the uſe of the Liturgy was forbidden) and that all Miniſters were by Law commanded to pray *extempore*, would ſuch an Impoſition or Command make extemporary Prayer unlawful, and only a Form of Prayer then neceſſary? I ſuppoſe they will not ſay it would; and if not, then for the ſame reaſon why it would not make Prayer in that mode unlawful, it doth not make it unlawful in this.

Men uſe to plead their Chriſtian Liberty againſt ſuch Humane Impoſitions. But the beſt uſe of Chriſtian Liberty, is ſtill to do thoſe things, which all things conſidered, tend moſt to common good, the edification of our ſelves and others, though otherwiſe and out of thoſe Circumſtances we were under no Obligation to do them. And thus did St. *Paul* make uſe of it, who beſt underſtood the uſe of his Chriſtian Liberty: *Though I am free from all Men*, ſaith he, *yet have I made my ſelf a Servant unto all, that I might gain the more: To the Jews I became as a Jew; to them that are without Law, as without Law*; and all this *for the Goſpel ſake*, 1 Cor. ix. 19, 23. The intereſt of the Goſpel in the main did govern him (as it ſhould do us) in the uſe of his Chriſtian Liberty, ſometimes one way, and ſometimes another. And therefore we have him ſometimes againſt Circumciſion, that the Truth of the Goſpel might be preſerved among the Chriſtians, *Gal.* ii. 5. and v. 1. And ſometimes making uſe of it for the furtherance of the Goſpel, *Acts* xvi. 3. And he perſuaded the Chriſtians to uſe their Liberty to which they were called, not ſo much to pleaſe themſelves, as *to ſerve one another in Love*; but by no means *to uſe it as an occaſion to the Fleſh*, as ſome would have taught them, in caſting off the Rule and Government of Heathen Governours, Maſters and Magiſtrates, under a pretence of being Chriſt's Freemen, *Gal.* v. 13. 1 *Tim.* vi. 1, 2, 3. 2 *Pet.* ii. 10, *Jude* ix. Now I have been ſhewing before, that a Liberty of a total diſuſe of the Liturgy in the publick Worſhip, as the caſe now ſtands, cannot be practicable with that advantage to the general Intereſt of Religion, as the uſe of it may, as any Men of Reaſon may eaſily diſcern, if they be not blinded with Prejudice and Intereſt. An Argument may much rather be fetch'd from Chriſtian Liberty for the uſe of the Liturgy, under the preſent poſture of Circumſtances, than againſt it. For if God hath not limited Prayer to one mode only, then Chriſtians are at liberty to uſe any, as occaſion ſhall require for the Intereſt of Religion in the main, and conſequently that which for the preſent the Law requires.

I have now near done with the *ſecond Dividing Principle*: And when the whole I have ſaid about it hath been conſidered, I appeal to all who are able to make a Judgment in the Caſe, whether thoſe that ſeparate from our Proteſtant Pariſh Congregations will ever be able to clear themſelves from the guilt of ſinful Schiſm, and cauſleſs Separation, and of all the miſchievous Effects that have and may proceed from it, or be occaſioned by it.

And to give yet the greater weight to the general Scope of what I have ſaid about the Lawfulneſs of Communion in our Pariſh Congregations, and of the Sinfulneſs of ſeparating from them, notwithſtanding all pretences, I ſhall ſet before you the unerring Example of our Bleſſed Saviour in his holding local Communion when he was on Earth with ſuch a Church as he did; which, for ought I can judge, was more corrupt both in reſpect of Perſons and Things, than any of our Pariſh-Churches are, tho' many of them, alas, are too bad indeed. 1. The High Prieſthood, the higheſt Office in the Church, in which Miniſtry all the Worſhippers were concerned, was bought and ſold for Money, or otherwiſe unduly obtained, and frequently tranſlated from one to another, contrary to God's appointment, of which we have an account from *Joſephus*, beſides what we have in *Luke* iii. 2. *John* xi. 49, 51. and xviii. 13. 2. Proviſions for the Temple-Service were in part unduly obtained in the *Corban* way, *Mark* vii. 11. 3. The holy Temple was profaned, being made a Houſe of Merchandize, and a Den of Thieves, which was otherwiſe Holy by Inſtitution, as well as the matter of the Worſhip it ſelf. 4. The Law was corrupted by many falſe gloſſes, *Matth.* v. 5. The Commandments of Men were taught for Doctrines, *Matth.* xv. 9. 6. The Church-cenſures were abuſed to the Excommunication of the beſt Men, *John* ix. 22, 34. 7. The Sadducees, who denied the Reſurrection, or that there is Angel or Spirit, were not only tolerated, but were alſo a great and prevailing party in that Church. 8. The Scribes, Phariſees, Chief Prieſts and Rulers, were perſecuting and oppreſſive, proud, covetous and hypocritical; and the common People generally ſo bad, as that they preferred *Barabbas* before *Jeſus*, and had their hands in ſhedding the Blood of our Saviour; and they with the other were all of them together *a Generation of Vipers*, *a ſinful and an adulterous Generation.*

In this lamentable Condition was that Church then. Yet all this notwithſtanding, our Saviour did not refrain the publick Worſhip, but held Communion with this Church, both in Temple and Synagogue-Worſhip, as you may ſee in *Luke* ii. 41, 42, 43. *John* ii. 23. and vii. 10. and x. 22, 23. *Luke* iv. 16. *Matth.* xxvi. 17, 18. There is no Man ever had ſo good a mind as he, to Soundneſs of Doctrine, Purity of Worſhip and Worſhippers, and to right Order and Diſcipline in the Church. And his Wiſdom was ſuch, as that he knew perfectly what was fitteſt to be done under ſuch Circumſtances of things, both in reference to his Father's Glory, the Furtherance of Religion, the Advancement of Reformation, and the Salvation of Men, for which he came into the World; and what courſe would beſt conduce to theſe ends, and what would not. And although as a publick Perſon he did not ſpare to reprove the Corruptions of the time, both in reſpect of Perſons and things, and to endeavour a Reformation in a regular way, yet he never attempted it by breaking off Communion with that Church in the publick Worſhip, and by erecting ſeparate Communities for Reformation ſake; which yet certainly he would have done, if that had been the better and nearer way to thoſe great Ends but now mentioned.

And if Men had no other ends or deſigns than our Saviour had, methinks thoſe that are to learn of him, and not to teach him, ſhould not lay aſide thoſe Means and Methods which he made choice of to accompliſh his ends, or ever think to make a better Choice than he had done. If when thoſe who are ingenuous and truly conſcientious, have well conſidered theſe things, and yet after that ſhall continue Separatiſts from our Pariſh-Churches; I ſhall ſomewhat wonder how, or which way they can ſatisfie themſelves in ſo doing. Methinks this unqueſtionable and uncontroulable Pattern and Example of our Saviour, of whom we are all to learn, and who hath left us an Example that we ſhould tread in his Steps, ſhould of it ſelf alone, if there were nothing elſe to be ſaid in the caſe, put an end to all Diſputes about this Buſineſs, and ſatisfie the moſt ſcrupulous Chriſtian under Heaven.

The Jews initiating of Proſelytes by Baptiſm as well as by Circumciſion, was a humane Addition to what God had appointed: And yet for all that, our Saviour made choice of Baptiſm, by which to initiate Proſelytes into his Religion. He uſed a Geſture in eating the Paſſover, different from what was appointed at the firſt Inſtitution, as *Ainſworth* obſerves on *Exod.* xii. 6, 11. Which things I might improve to ſeveral purpoſes: But becauſe they are not ſo directly appoſite to what I have laſt diſcourſed, I ſhall leave them to be pondered on by ſuch as are ſcrupulous over-much, and who think no Alteration of Circumſtances between the firſt and after-uſe of an Inſtitution, will juſtifie a circumſtantial Variation from what was firſt practiſed thereabout.

III. *Dividing Principle to be avoided.*

Another dividing Principle is, That it doth not belong to the higher Powers in a Nation profeſſing Chriſtianity, to intermeddle in any publick Eſtabliſhment of that Religion, farther than to protect, countenance, and encourage the Profeſſors of it in their Profeſſion. I call this a Dividing Principle, becauſe the higher Powers more than ſo in having doing divided the whole Nation into particular Pariſh-Churches, and having appointed Goſpel-Ordinances to be adminiſtred in thoſe Congregations, and obliging, and conſtraining all profeſſing the true Chriſtian Religion in the Nation, to attend the Worſhip of God in thoſe Aſſemblies; this being the National way as they call it, ſome do therefore ſeparate from it. In Oppoſition to this Dividing Principle, I ſhall endeavour to ſhew,

1. That Nations profeſſing the true Chriſtian Religion, do upon that account according to the Scripture, ſtand related to God as his People in a large Senſe, and in Contradiſtinction to the Heathen and Infidel World.

2. That a National Settlement of the Chriſtian Worſhip in the Pariſh-Churches by the higher Powers, is more for the Intereſt of Religion and Mens Salvation, than if there ſhould be none.

1. To begin with the firſt of theſe. When God by *Abraham* deſigned to ſet on foot a Method of reforming the World, he declared to him he would do it in a National way: *As for me, my Covenant is with thee, a Father of many Nations ſhalt thou be: A Father of many Nations have I made thee,* ſaith the Lord, *Gen.* xvii. 4, 5. Meaning, I ſuppoſe, That that Reformation which was begun in him, by his Faith and Obedience, in forſaking the Idols of his Country upon God's Call, and betaking himſelf to the Worſhip and Service of the true God, ſhould by degrees extend to the

taking in of many Nations. God at the very firſt told him that *he ſhould be a Bleſſing*, and that in him, and in his Seed, all Nations ſhould be bleſſed, *Gen.* xii. 2, 3. And by St. *Paul*, Rom. iv. 16. 17. we underſtand that God's Promiſe of making *Abraham* a Father of many Nations, was not in reſpect of many Nations deſcending from him in the way of Natural Generation, but by deriving from him that Profeſſion of Faith and holy Worſhip, which was tranſmitted down from him, not only to the Nation of the Jews, but alſo to the Nations of the Gentiles. To begin this Work in a National way, the Lord promiſed *Abraham* to give to his Seed, his Natural Seed, the Land of *Canaan* as the place where this Work ſhould be eminently begun in a National way. And all that Nation were accordingly brought into Covenant with God, and became his Church and People. And all the Proſelytes of the Gentiles that forſook their Idols to join with them to Worſhip the God of *Abraham*, and were circumciſed, were without any Exception ſave that of legal Uncleanneſs, to eat the Paſſover, *Numb.* ix. And thus it held on in the way of gathering only ſome here and there out of the Nations of the Gentiles, until Chriſt gave Commiſſion to preach the Goſpel to all Nations, baptizing them.

And as the time of bringing in whole Nations of the Gentiles in times of the Goſpel drew nearer, ſo Predictions of it by the Prophets, were more particular and expreſs, *Iſa.* lii. 15. *He ſhall ſprinkle many Nations:* To wit, as he promiſed in particular to the Jews to ſprinkle clean Water upon them, to *cleanſe* them *from all their Filthineſs, and from all their Idols*, Ezek. xxxvi. 25. And again, *Iſa.* lv. 5. *Behold, thou ſhalt call a Nation that thou kneweſt not, and Nations that knew not thee ſhall run unto thee.* And God's Call of a Nation, and a Nation's Anſwer to that Call, makes a Church, works a Relation between God and them; as ſome have well obſerved. And *Zechariah*, one of the laſt Prophets, ſpeaks yet more expreſsly, *Chap.* ii. 11. *And many Nations ſhall be joined to the Lord in that Day, and ſhall be his People.* To be joined to the Lord, and to be his People, plainly ſignifie ſuch a Relation between God and them, as doth make them to be of his Church, *Matth.* xxi. 43. *The Kingdom of God ſhall be taken from you, and given to a Nation:* That is, ſure Nationally, for otherwiſe we cannot ſay it was taken from all of that Nation of the Jews, *Rev.* xi. 15. *The Kingdoms of this World are become the Kingdoms of the Lord, and of his Chriſt.*

Theſe Predictions have been fulfilled as Nations have Nationally embraced and profeſſed the Chriſtian Religion. For it is a vain thing to think that theſe Prophecies have not yet at all been fulfilled now after the Goſpel hath been running its courſe theſe ſixteen hundred Years to accompliſh them. And if any have a mind to interpret theſe Prophecies of National Churches by that in *Revel.* v. 9. *And haſt redeemed us to God by thy Blood, out of every Kindred, and Tongue, and People, and Nation:* They may do well to conſider, that the calling of a few out of Nations (according to their Notion) is not the calling of thoſe Nations themſelves. It's one thing for Men to be brought to effectual Faith and ſincere Obedience by the Goſpel, and another to be brought to a general Profeſſion of it. There are the many that are called, and yet but few that are the choſen, *Matth.* xx. 16. and xxii. 14. It is in the one Senſe that they are ſaid to be redeemed out of every Kindred, Tongue, People, and Nation; and in the other, that whole Nations are ſaid to be joined to the Lord, and to be his People; for ſo they are by a general Call and Profeſſion. Every individual Perſon in a Nation that ſo profeſſeth and worſhippeth the true God in Oppoſition to all falſe Gods, as to be called by his Name, are in Scripture denominated Sons and Daughters to God in a large Senſe, *Iſa.* xliii. 6, 7. *Bring my Sons from far, and my Daughters from the ends of the Earth, even every one that is called by my Name.* As the Worſhippers of Idols are called the Children of a ſtrange God, *Mal.* ii. 11. So in Oppoſition to that, and in a large Senſe, all that worſhip the true God, are called his Children, as the Jews were, *Deut.* xiv. 1. When St. *Paul* ſaid, in *Gal.* iii. 26. to all the Churches of *Galatia*, *Ye are all the Children of God by Faith in Chriſt Jeſus:* It was ſure from their Profeſſion of Faith in Chriſt Jeſus in their Baptiſm, by which they put him on (as there he ſaith) that he ſo ſtiles them, and not from the Effectualneſs of the Faith of every one of them: For he chargeth them with *being removed from the Goſpel of Chriſt to another Goſpel*, Chap. i. 6. with *not obeying the Truth*, Chap iii. 1. and tells them that *he was afraid of them leſt he had beſtowed Labour on them in vain*, Chap. iv. 11. that *he ſtood in doubt of them*, and was *travelling in Birth again with them for the forming of Chriſt in them*, ver. 19, 20. There are many that are the People of God by profeſſed Obligation on their part, that are not ſo by ſpecial Intereſt in the Promiſe on God's part, for want of performing the ſpecial Condition. And ſuch are the Servants of

God, indeed; but they are called in Scripture *ſlothful Servants*, *unprofitable Servants*, *wicked Servants*, *fooliſh Virgins*, *Branches in Chriſt* the Vine, that bear no Fruit.

2. A National Settlement of the Chriſtian Worſhip in the Pariſh-Churches by the higher Powers, is more for the Intereſt of Religion, and Men's Salvation, than if there ſhould be none. It is for the Intereſt of Religion in a Nation that are of the true Religion by Profeſſion, that the higher Powers there being of the ſame Religion, to take order, 1. That God be publickly worſhipped by the People in the uſe of Goſpel-Ordinances. 2. That Places for publick Worſhip be provided for that end. 3. That Church-Officers competently qualified, be appointed to adminiſter thoſe Ordinances in thoſe places; and that Maintenance be appointed them that they may attend that Work. 4. That all the People of the Chriſtian Profeſſion, be required to attend the publick Worſhip. 5. That this be enjoined under ſuch moderate Penalties, as may ſecure the Law from Contempt, or careleſs Neglect. 6. That ſome be appointed to ſee the Law put in Execution: Which yet cannot be practicable without a Diſtribution of the whole into parts in the ſame, or ſome ſuch way as that is, by which the whole Nation is divided into Pariſhes. 7. That Church-Diſcipline be eſtabliſhed and duly exerciſed for the purging of the Church, and keeping it pure. The firſt of theſe Particulars that the higher Powers take care that God be publickly worſhipped by the People, is evident of it ſelf. Nature teaches all Men to worſhip him whom they acknowledge to be their God, and by themſelves or others, to teach thoſe under their Government to do the like, as appears by univerſal Practice. And the ſecond of the forementioned Particulars is conſequent upon the firſt, and the third upon the ſecond, and ſo on.

That theſe things are for the Intereſt of Religion, every Man's Reaſon will eaſily diſcern. For hereby a Face of Religion will be kept up in every place in ſuch a Nation, and the means of Salvation will be ready at hand, and all will come under an Obligation of Man's Law as well as God's, to make uſe of them. And hereby through the Bleſſing of God, Knowledge and the Fear of the Lord will be propagated more than if the People were all left at Liberty to do that which is right in their own Eyes, to provide, or not provide themſelves with ſuch Helps, or to uſe or neglect them as they pleaſe. We ſee by Experience that there is generally the leaſt Face of Religion in thoſe places that have been moſt neglected in the publick Proviſion. And it is upon the account of ſuch neceſſary things as theſe, that Kings and Queens were promiſed as a great Bleſſing to the Church under the Notion of *Nurſing Fathers and Nurſing Mothers*, to train up, and educate their People in Religion, *Iſa.* xlix. 23. And the better any Kings and Rulers are, the more careful and the more zealous will they be to promote and propagate true Religion in their Dominions by their Authority. And uſually the Succeſs anſwers the Zeal and Diligence of ſuch, as we ſee it did in the good Kings of *Judah* and their People. When *all Kings fall down before him*, *all Nations ſhall ſerve him*, according to the Prophecy, *Pſal.* lxxii. 11. It will be ſo with the People, when the Kings of Nations ſubject themſelves to Chriſt, not only in their perſonal, but more eſpecially in their Regal Capacity. For which cauſe it ſhould ſeem St. *Paul* exhorted the primitive Chriſtians, *to make Supplications*, *Prayers*, *and Interceſſions*, *for Kings*, *and all that are in Authority*; as for other reſpects, ſo eſpecially for their Converſion to Chriſtianity (they being then Heathen) both that Chriſtians might live peaceable and quiet Lives in all Godlineſs and Honeſty, and alſo that Chriſtianity might be propagated in their Dominions, to the Salvation of many the more: For this is implied in the reaſon of the Exhortation in theſe words: *For this is good and acceptable in the ſight of God our Saviour*, *who will have all Men to be ſaved*, *and come to the Knowledge of the Truth*; 1 Tim. ii. 2, 3, 4.

And when the primitive Chriſtians had accordingly for a long time travelled by fervent Prayer for the Converſion of the Heathen Emperors to Chriſtianity, at laſt they obtained their Petition in *Conſtantine*, that famous Chriſtian Emperor: Upon whoſe Victories over the Enemies to Chriſtianity, and the Propagation of the Chriſtian Religion by publick Authority throughout his Dominions, that joyful Acclamation was heard in the Church (as Interpreters underſtand) *Now is come Salvation and Strength*, *and the Kingdom of our God*, *and the Power of his Chriſt*, Rev. xii. 10. Chriſtianity, and ſo the Kingdom of God, was in the Empire before private Mens Profeſſion of it: But when it came to be backed by Imperial Edicts and Laws, and to be ſeconded by the Power and Strength of the Empire; then, and not till then, was that new Song ſung in the Church: *Now* is come Salvation and Strength, the Kingdom of our God, and the Power of his Chriſt.

I would it were better conſider'd by ſome who would be thought great Enemies to Popery, how that in this proper and eminent point of Popery, they ſymbolize with the Pope himſelf, and all that are thorow Papiſts, *viz.* in denying Kings to have any power in matters Eccleſiaſtical. When the ten Kings, *Rev.* xvii. 13. parted with this Eccleſiaſtical Authority to the Pope upon his Uſurpation, they gave their Authority, which God had inveſted them with, as well as their Strength, unto the Beaſt. And as faſt as they fall off from him, they re-aſſume it again, as we ſee all Princes and Governours of the Reformed Religion have done. And of all the Kings that have profeſſed Chriſtianity ever ſince there was a Nation profeſſing it, there hath not, I think, been one, but who have claimed a power about ordering Church-affairs, except ſuch as have given their power and ſtrength unto the Beaſt. And ſhall we not then interpret and underſtand the Ancient Prophecies that went of them, by the Event in what we ſee fulfilled?

That Kings may abuſe this power to the propagating a falſe Religion, or in corrupting the true, is no good Argument againſt the due uſe of it in propagating the true. *He is the Miniſter of God to thee for good*, ſaith the Scripture: And as long as he doth that which tends to publick good, he is not out of his way to be ſure, *Rom.* xiii. 4. Every Chriſtian is bound to promote the Intereſt of Religion according to his capacity: He that is head of a Family, as ſuch is bound to do it; and ſo he that is head of a Kingdom, as ſuch is bound to do it likewiſe: Every one is under an obligation to do it according to their Talents and ſeveral Abilities.

It's true indeed, that ſince all ſuch as are the Higher Powers, *are Miniſters of God for good* to the People, and have no power from God to *do any thing againſt the Truth, but for the Truth*; It is greatly to be wiſhed, and fervently to be prayed for, in behalf of all Chriſtian Princes and Governours, that God would give them Wiſdom, that nothing may be impoſed upon their People by them in the Worſhip of God, but what hath a plain and apt tendency one way or other to farther Edification, or to help their Devotion: And that ſuch ways and methods of promoting theſe ends may be made uſe of, as are leaſt liable to exception or diſputation, thereby to cut off as much as may be all occaſion of Diviſion and pretence of Diſſatisfaction: That ſo Peace, Love and Unity may be recovered, and the happy Effects of them obtained.

Yet when all is done that can be done, there will in all National Settlements of this nature, be place for the exerciſe of Humane Prudence. And indeed I know no Sect or Party, but though they decry Humane Prudence about the Worſhip of God never ſo much, yet do make uſe of it themſelves in their Adminiſtration of Holy Things, and are neceſſitated ſo to do if they will worſhip God publickly at all. The Ordinances of Baptiſm, Lord's Supper, Word and Prayer, as touching the matter and ſubſtance of them, are particularly and expreſly determined in Scripture: But many particulars about the Adminiſtration of theſe are left to the guidance and direction of general Rules for Edification. It is not determined in particular what Prayers ſhall be made either before or after the Adminiſtration of Baptiſm or the Lord's Supper, or what Exhortation ſhall be made to the People upon the occaſion of them. It is not determined in particular how, or in what way or method the Word and Prayer ſhall be uſed in Church-Aſſemblies: As how much, and what part of the Scripture ſhall be read at one Meeting, or how or what way the Miniſter ſhall improve the Word by Preaching, as whether by what occurs to his preſent Thoughts upon occaſion of what is then read, or by uttering what he hath prepared by painful ſtudies otherwiſe; or whether he ſhall do this with, or without the help of Notes. Nor is it particularly determined whether all, or part, or none of the publick Prayers ſhall be in a preſcribed Form, except the Lord's Prayer, or whether any of it all ſhall, or ſhall not be read out of a Book, or whether Prayer ſhall be made both before and after Sermon.

Now in this caſe, thoſe to whom it belongs to take order for the ſettling of God's publick Worſhip in a Nation with the beſt advice they can take, will neceſſarily be put upon conſidering whether it is beſt to leave all theſe things wholly to each Miniſter's liberty and choice, or wholly to limit them; or whether to leave them partly at liberty, as in the Pulpit, and partly to limit them. And while they deliberate on theſe things, ſeveral Circumſtances will come under Conſideration: As the different Abilities, and various Tempers of the Miniſters, and the various Capacities and Tempers of the People; as whether that which may be beſt for ſome, may be beſt for all, or whether ſomewhat of a middle Nature may not beſt accommodate all; and what hath anciently been practiſed in the Church of God, and what is practiſed in other Reformed Churches; and which way is moſt likely to preſerve Truth and Peace in the Church,

Church and the like. And when Men have only general Rules to guide and govern themſelves by, in determining ſuch things as theſe, it muſt be remembred that it is a thing incident to the holieſt and wiſeſt Men to differ in their application of particular Caſes to general Rules, when a great variety of Circumſtances are to be taken in to make a right Judgment in the caſe: Their different meaſures of Light, if not of Intereſts too, expoſing them thereunto. Their late Differences, under a greater Liberty in this kind than can now be expected, is a ſufficient proof of this.

And when things of this nature are done, and determined upon the beſt terms, as is thought by them into whoſe hands the Providence of God hath caſt it, though it ſhould be otherwiſe, not only in the thoughts of many others, but alſo really in it ſelf; yet if nothing be thereby impoſed as a Condition of Communion, but what, Circumſtances conſidered, is lawful, the Reaſons formerly given may, I conceive, well ſway with all ſober and peaceable-minded Chriſtians, rather to make the beſt uſe they can of the preſent Settlement, than to chuſe to ſeparate becauſe it is not in all things to their mind. For if there ſhould not be a bearing with one another in ſuch leſſer differences for general Edification ſake, and the Intereſt of Religion in the main, and for the maintenance of Peace and Love, till by diſcreet, ſober and peaceable means, thoſe that differ can work themſelves, or thoſe that differ from them, into a nearer agreement; how ſhould it ever be expected, that Chriſtians ſhould maintain ſuch Fellowſhip upon their agreement in the Subſtantials of Chriſtianity, notwithſtanding Circumſtantial Differences, as for which the Scripture is far more expreſs, than it is for ſuch particular modes of Worſhip, as thoſe are about which they differ? If Differences in Judgment about Circumſtances, whereby the ſubſtance of Religion is not in danger, ſhould be a ſufficient ground of Separation, it's probable there would be almoſt as many Separations as Churches in the World.

Having now done with what I had to ſay to take Men off from thoſe Dividing Principles which are chiefly conſiderable, I ſhall purſue my Directions for endeavouring to keep the Unity of the Spirit in the Bond of Peace no farther, conſidering what plentiful proviſion there is already made for Direction in the *Cure of Church-diviſions*, as by others, ſo eſpecially by that laborious Servant of the Lord, Mr. *Baxter*. I ſhall therefore conclude this Diſcourſe with a few Motives to perſuade the ſeveral parties which are divided, to unite again, and to endeavour to keep the Unity of the Spirit in the Bond of Peace: And that all on all hands would manifeſt themſelves to be ſuch hearty Lovers of Peace, Unity and Charity, as for the ſake thereof thoſe that are uppermoſt would count it no diſhonour, but rather their glory, to condeſcend to thoſe that are below: And that thoſe again, whoſe ſtanding is in the Valley, would not think it too much to travel up the Hill to meet them: And if it be thought too much to ſtrive who ſhall *go before another in giving Honour*, (Rom. xii. 18.) yet if both ſorts that differ would but go as far as they well may, both in reſpect of Conſcience and Prudence, towards compounding the difference; how ſoon, and how eaſily might both ends be brought together, and the Bond of Peace which hath been broken, be pieced again? To this end conſider, and lay to heart thoſe few things which I ſhall lay before you.

1. I ſhall commend to you the beſt Pattern which you can imitate, and againſt which there can be no Exception, and that is God himſelf; who though he be ſo infinitely above all, as to ſtand in no need of the Friendſhip of Men, yet out of the infinite Goodneſs of his Nature, *hath humbled himſelf*, not only to *behold the things on Earth*, but even to ſeek the Reconciliation of his Enemies to himſelf, and to propoſe new and eaſie terms of Friendſhip, when the old had been violated. *God was in Chriſt reconciling the World unto himſelf, not imputing their treſpaſſes unto them*, 2 Cor. v. 19. And not to reconcile them to himſelf only, but alſo to one another in their common Head and center of Union, Chriſt Jeſus. *That in the diſpenſation of the fulneſs of time he might gather together in* [*one*] *all things in Chriſt, both which are in Heaven and which are on Earth*, Epheſ. i. 10. And to that end hath ſent forth Ambaſſadors of Peace to beſeech them to be reconciled to God, and to bring them all to the *Unity of the Faith, and knowledge of the Son of God*, Epheſ. iv. 13. And how can we think our ſelves to be partakers of a Divine Nature, unleſs we find ſome reſemblance of this Goodneſs of God's Nature in our ſelves, inclining and diſpoſing us to Concord and good Agreement with fellow-Chriſtians, by removing out of the way all that unneceſſarily hinders it. *Bleſſed are the Peace-makers, for they ſhall be called the Children of God*, Matth. v. 9. And why the Children of God? but becauſe herein they reſemble him, who is the God of Peace, and loves Peace, and ſeeks Peace, and delights to ſee Men

deſigning it, and labouring at it, with Heart, Head, Tongue, and Hand. *Be ye therefore* one and all, *Followers of God as dear Children, and walk in Love*, Eph. v. 1, 2. *Be perfect, be of one Mind, live in Peace, and the God of Love and Peace ſhall be with you*, 2 Cor. xiii. 11. Can you be ambitious of any greater Honour than to be like God? A Likeneſs to God is the higheſt Honour and Perfection the Nature of any Creature is capable of: And to live in Love and Peace, and to ſeek Peace, and to be Peace-makers, is the way to be like him. *If we love one another, God dwelleth in us, and his Love is perfected in us*, 1 John iv. 12.

2. If you count it either matter of Honour, or Comfort, to be of a Temper like Chriſt, or if you think it will give you any Confidence towards him for the preſent, and at his coming (as undoubtedly it will) then by this be perſuaded likewiſe to endeavour with all your Might, that the Unity of the Spirit may be kept in the Bond of Peace. For the Heart and Soul of Chriſt is exceedingly ſet upon Union and good Agreement of all that believe in him: Though they cannot all know alike and think alike in every thing, yet for all that he is greatly deſirous they ſhould all hold together as one in Faith and Love. And therefore in that ſolemn Prayer of his to his Father, *John* xvii. when he was leaving the World, he ſingles out this in ſpecial as the Matter of his Requeſt to his Father in one of the laſt Prayers he was to make in this World, *that they all might be one, and be perfected in one*. His Heart and Deſire was ſo full of this, and ſo ſet upon it, that he is at it over and over, mentioning it no leſs than four times in the ſame Prayer, *ver*. xi. 21, 22, 23. And why was his Heart ſo much in this? Was it, think you, for himſelf, or for us? For his own ſake, or for ours? He deſired no greater thing for himſelf than to be *glorified with the Glory he had with the Father before the World was*, before ever he entred upon his Mediatory Office, *ver*. 5. No, it was for us Men, and for our Comfort and Benefit that he ſo much deſired it, as knowing how much the Peace, Comfort, and Edification of his People depended upon it; and how much the Converſion of the World depended on it, as neceſſary to make a right Repreſentation of Chriſt to the World, that they might believe that the Father had ſent him.

And was his Heart ſo much in it! And did he concern himſelf ſo much about it for our ſakes! And ſhall we our ſelves value it ſo little as to prefer little and inconſiderable things before it, and that rather for Will and Humour than any tie of Conſcience! O, God forbid. If we do, it is a ſign we do not well underſtand the things that belong to our Peace, but that they are hid from our Eyes.

And if Chriſt's Heart was ſo much ſet upon the Unity and Concordance of his Followers, we muſt needs think they are Men according to his own Heart, that heartily deſign, deſire and endeavour it too. And is not that Honour enough? Which ſounds of moſt Honour to *David*? That he was a King? Or, that he *was a Man after God's own Heart*? And who are like to be moſt dear unto Chriſt, but thoſe who are moſt like him, and make one Heart with him?

The more you ſhall find your Hearts run out to this thing, as Chriſt's did; the more you find your ſelves of his Mind, Spirit, and Temper herein, the better Aſſurance you will have (and the greater Comfort in that Aſſurance) of your dwelling in him, and he in you: *Hereby we know that we dwell in him, and he in us, becauſe he hath given us of his Spirit*, 1 John iv. 13. *But if any Man have not the Spirit of Chriſt, he is none of his*, Rom. viii. 9.

Truly if Men were but as forward to gratifie and pleaſe our Lord in this that is ſo pleaſing to him, as they ſeem to be in ſome other things in which he never diſcovered himſelf to take any ſuch Pleaſure, things would be quite at another paſs among us. And yet if pleaſing him be the Buſineſs, and not ſomewhat elſe, why ſhould not we be moſt for that in which he moſt delights?

3. Your Contentions and Diviſions, if you will ſtill live in them, and maintain them, will hinder your Spiritual Improvement, and keep you from thriving by the means of Grace which you enjoy. It was a ſad thing that St. *Paul* charged upon the *Corinthians*, viz. That *their coming together, and exerciſing* themſelves in the Holy Ordinances of the Lord, *was not for the better, but for the worſe*, 1 Cor. xi. 17. *Now in this that I declare unto you, I praiſe you not, that you come not together for the better, but for the worſe*. But what was the cauſe of this, or upon what doth he ground this Charge of their going backward in Religion? Verily it was their Diviſions that was the Cauſe of this Miſchief. *For firſt of all*, ſaith he, *when you come together in the Church, I hear that there are Diviſions among you*, ver. 18. That Church abounded in Spiritual Gifts, *being enriched in every thing, in all Utterance and all Knowledge, ſo*

that they came behind in no Gift, Chap. i. 5, 7. They thrived in theſe indeed: But then they went backward in their Humility and Charity, and Goodneſs of their Spirit and Temper, which made the Apoſtle to ſpend almoſt a whole Chapter in commending Charity above Spiritual Gifts to them, beſides the ſeveral hints he gives of their being *puffed up*. Though they might well have been Spiritual Chriſtians, conſidering the opportunity and means they had to make them ſuch: Yet becauſe of *Envying, Strife*, and *Diviſions* among them, ſome following one Teacher, and ſome another in Oppoſition; St. *Paul* could not (as he ſaith) *write to them as to Spiritual, but only as to Carnal*, ſuch as were but *Babes* ſtill, and unthriven in the Life and Spirit of Chriſtianity; their Envying, Strife, and Diviſions, keeping them thus low under the means of higher Attainments in Grace, 1 *Cor.* iii. 1, 2, 3.

The Truth is, Diviſions, Wranglings, and Janglings, and Contentions, eat out the very Heart of Religion. Men may grow rich in a Form of Knowledge, and expreſs a great Zeal for the outſide of Religion, and yet in the mean time be languiſhing in the very Vitals of Chriſtianity, when that Knowledge and Zeal is not improved and ſpent for the fartheriing of Peace and Love, with other Chriſtian Vertues. Your Diviſions and Contentions, Chriſtians, will be as a Worm at the Root of your Tree, that will keep it from thriving, whatever coſt you otherwiſe beſtow upon it.

If then you have any mind to keep up Religion in heart among us, and not to have your Wine to become as Water, having loſt its Spirit: If you would have the Goſpel-Ordinances yield their Increaſe, and your Religion not degenerate into Form: If you would yield the Lord the acceptable and pleaſant Fruit of all his coſt, and not ſuch as is ſtarvy, harſh, and unſavoury: If you would not *turn the Fruit of Righteouſneſs into Hemlock:* If you would be free from ſuch a Diſtemper as will hinder your Spiritual Reliſh, and convert your Food to a noxious Humour, and ſubject you to a ſpiritual languiſhing in the midſt of a plentiful Proviſion for ſpiritual Health and Growth; then lay aſide your Diviſions about Matters of doubtful Diſputation, and follow after the things which make for Peace, and things whereby you may edifie one another in Love.

What Knowledge ſoever you have, and what Zeal ſoever you expreſs for any Truth as you conceive it to be, yet if while you hold faſt other things, you let go Charity, your Knowledge of, and your Zeal in proſecuting and promoting the ſame, though it were to the loſing of your Life, will profit you nothing, 1 *Cor.* xiii. 2, 3. *Though I underſtand all Myſteries and all Knowledge, and though I give my Body to be burned, and have not Charity, it profiteth me nothing.* A thing which nearly concerns all ſuch to mind, that are more careful and tender leſt ſome other controverted and ſuppoſed Truth ſhould ſuffer, than Charity, Peace and Concord ſhould ſuffer; and care not what Rents and Diviſions they make, ſo they may but propagate their particular Opinion. If there be bitter Zeal (as ſome tranſlate it) glory not of thy Knowledge, and lie not againſt the Truth, in ſaying that's the way to promote it, *Jam.* iii. 14. If you would thrive under the means of Grace indeed, and be growing up to Perfection, then be ſure to be much for Charity and Unity. You have much Talk of Perfection among ſome, and many that pretend to it that are far from it, but I think it conſiſts in nothing more next our Love to God, than in the Saints Love and Unity. This is the Cry of the Scripture: *That they be* [*perfect in one*] John xvii. 23. *Be perfect, be of one Mind, live in Peace*, 2 Cor. xiii. 11. *Above all theſe put on Charity, which is the Bond of Perfectneſs*, Col. iii. 14. *If we love one another, God dwelleth in us, and his Love is* [*perfected*] *in us*, 1 John iv. 12.

If ſome do grow in Grace after they have fallen into dividing ways, and ſeparating Practices (as I am not ſo uncharitable, but to think that they do, while the Error lies not in their Will, but in their Judgment) yet this Growth is not to be attributed at all to that wherein they differ from other good Chriſtians, not of their way, who grow in Grace too, but to thoſe ſound Principles of Chriſtianity wherein both the one and the other are agreed. And I have good reaſon to think that the ſame Improvement of thoſe unqueſtionable Principles by which they grow in Grace, their Separation, notwithſtanding, would ſet them much forwarder in that Growth, in caſe they were at Liberty from the Entanglements of Separation, than under them it can: Becauſe thoſe ways of Diviſion and Separation, do naturally tend to narrow Mens Spirits and Charity, and to cauſe them to think that many are not of the Church of Chriſt, which indeed are: And to have low Thoughts of many, that yet are highly eminent in the Church for their Worth and Service; and all becauſe they are not of their way: And beſides, through Prejudice they deprive themſelves of many happy Advantages of ſpiritual growth, which otherwiſe they would make uſe of. And thoſe that abound moſt in a well-grounded and regular Charity, have, doubtleſs, the more of God's preſence and aſſiſtance with them for their Spiritual growth and comfort too, as others for want of it have the leſs. *If he that dwelleth in Love, dwelleth in God, and God in him*, (1 John iv. 16.) then thoſe that abound moſt in Love, muſt needs have moſt of God's Preſence, both to aſſiſt, quicken, and comfort them. *Live in Peace, and the God of Love and Peace ſhall be with you*, to increaſe theſe, and to help you to propagate them, (2 *Cor.* xiii. 11.) and to give you great Peace in ſo doing, as ſome have found by Experience.

But though the ways of Separation among us do but, as the Rickets, hinder ſome in their growth, and not totally deprive them of it, yet it is to be feared they make ſome others much worſe than they were before they came in to them: More goodly and ſelf-conceited, more proud and imperious, ſlighting and deſpiſing others that are much better than themſelves, and over-valuing themſelves quite upon account of the Form and Church they are got into; and more uncharitable in cenſuring others as Carnal, as Time-ſervers, as Men of the World, only becauſe of the National way, and not of theirs, though otherwiſe never ſo worthy. Many of theſe are growing indeed, but it is farther and farther into Separation, till at laſt they commence *Quakers*.

4. If you prize your comfort, prize harmony and good agreement, not among this or that ſort or party only, but among all that do agree in things of abſolute neceſſity to Salvation to all. For thoſe that are living, and not dead or benumb'd Members of Chriſt's Body, cannot but be pained with the rending of one Member of that Body from another. *If one Member ſuffers, all the Members ſuffer with it*, 1 Cor. xii. 26. Was it not a ſad ſight to ſee the Man, in *Mark* v. 5. cutting himſelf with ſtones? And an Argument that he was poſſeſſed with an evil Spirit? And I pray you how much leſs doleful is it to ſee the People of God, Members of the ſame Body, cutting and wounding themſelves? For ſo they do when they cut and wound one another: *For they are Members one of another*, Rom. xii. 5. Alas, how unnatural is this! *For no Man yet ever hated his own Fleſh.* Certainly where thus it is, they are under a Spiritual Phrenzy and Madneſs, and are Objects of very great Commiſeration, as well as occaſions of great Trouble and Diſturbance in the Church of God. But, O the *Comfort of Love*, (as the Apoſtle phraſeth it, *Phil.* ii. 1.) and the pleaſantneſs of Peace, and the delight of Harmony, which is like a well-tuned Inſtrument, where there is no jarring: *Behold how good and pleaſant a thing it is for Brethren to dwell together in Unity!* Pſal. cxxxiii. 1. A great part of the Comfort of a Chriſtian in this World lies in his Communion with Saints: *David* ſaid, *The Saints and Excellent were all his delight*, Pſal. xvi. 3. And therefore a breach in this, muſt needs make a breach in a Chriſtian's Comfort.

5. The Chriſtian Cauſe and Intereſt in the World calls loudly upon all ſuch as would approve themſelves to have any Love for it, or to be any Friends to it, and not Betrayers of it; to Unite, and to cloſe up the Diviſions that are among us, and not to perſiſt in ſeparating Practiſes, or to do any thing that contributes thereto, but the contrary. One great means of facilitating the Belief of the Goſpel, and of propagating the Chriſtian Religion, and of bringing it into Reputation in the World, is the Union and good Agreement of all Chriſt's Followers. And therefore he prayed ſo earneſtly, as we heard before, *That they all might be one, as he and the Father are one, that they alſo might be perfect in one*; and all for this end, *that the World might believe that the Father had ſent him*, John xvii. 20, 21. That Men might believe that he came from God indeed, and that he was no Impoſtor, but that his Goſpel is the infallible Truth, and that Religion which is taught thereby, is the only true Religion. For Chriſt's Followers are thoſe by whom the Goſpel is upheld in the World, and held forth and witneſſed to the World: *They hold forth the Word of Life*, (Phil. ii. 16.) *They are the pillar and ground of the Truth*, 1 Tim. iii. 15. And the more unanimous theſe are in Judgment, Affection, and Teſtimony, the ſtronger and more authentick will their Teſtimony be, and the more Men will be drawn to conſider it, and to lay to heart the import of it. But the more they are divided about it, the more this Goſpel, this Religion, comes under ſuſpicion in the Minds of many: And from their differing about leſſer things, the Ignorant, the Weak, and Unbelieving, will draw Arguments of Suſpicion and Heſitation about the greater, and be ready to conclude the uncertainty of the whole, by their differing about a part; eſpecially when their difference riſes ſo high, and becomes ſo notorious and publick, as it does when they ſeparate about it. This is lamentably experienced, not only in the continued Infidelity of Jews and Turks, but alſo in that

Atheiſm and Scepticiſm, which hath ſo exceedingly increaſed upon us ſince theſe ſad times of Diviſion and Separation among us. Our Diviſions unſettle the Minds, unhinge and diſtract the Souls of many, that they know not whom to follow, or where to fix: And by this means they are expoſed to be practiſed upon by Seducers, and carried away. Your Diviſions encourage Seducers, and the Adverſaries of our Reformed Religion in their deſigns againſt you, and invite them to attempt upon you: So that as long as you keep up your Diviſions, they will make an advantage of it, grow upon you, and get ground, and by little and little draw away your ſtrength; and in concluſion, overmaſter you, if by uniting you prevent them not. Your Adverſaries know the meaning of, *divide them in Jacob, and ſcatter them in Iſrael*, if you do not; and of thoſe words, *A Kingdom divided againſt it ſelf cannot ſtand.* It hath been, no doubt, their practice, by all the artifice they could, to raiſe and foment your Diviſions, as it is ſtill to continue and increaſe them, as deſigning Ruine to the Proteſtant Intereſt thereby. And will you gratifie them herein, and become their Inſtruments to accompliſh your own Deſtruction, and the Deſtruction of that Cauſe and Intereſt which ſhould be more dear to you than your Lives? God forbid. And therefore let no leſſer Intereſts of Worldly Advantage, be it Profit, be it Honour among Men, or Reputation among a Party, tempt you to betray this greater Intereſt of your Lord and Maſter, of Religion, and of your Souls. Be not herein penny wiſe, and pound fooliſh. Revive not that Complaint, *Phil.* ii. 21. *All ſeek their own, not the things of Jeſus Chriſt.* Expoſe not Religion to loſs and damage in the main, and in the ſubſtance of it, by being too tenacious of mutable Circumſtances. Be not ſo concerned for your Cabbin, as to expoſe the Ship to ſinking through your neglect.

I have now done: Only remember, I pray you, that the things wherein the divided Parties profeſſedly agree, are ſuch as carry in them the main of Chriſtianity, and will make good Chriſtians indeed, if lived up to. Whereas the things upon which we divide are but diſputable Opinions, the beſt of which, on the one ſide or the other, will never make a good Chriſtian without the other. And you know what account God made of Men's Zeal, though it were for his own Inſtitutions, as among the Jews of old, when they were greatly guilty of Sins againſt Charity. Though Men be never ſo Orthodox in, and Zealous for their Opinions, yet if they have not Charity, they are but as ſounding Braſs, or a tinkling Cymbal. A wiſe Man will not therefore value himſelf by that which is proper to ſuch or ſuch a Party, but by that Charity, Humility, and Sobriety of Mind, with other Graces, which are common to thoſe that are good indeed, in each party: And by theſe he will value any Man, of what party ſoever, and how different ſoever from himſelf in by-opinions, If thoſe of each party then would but ſteer by this Compaſs, and proportion their Zeal to the Nature of things, labouring more to leſſen Differences, to make Peace, and to recover Charity, than to propagate thoſe things, which as they are more uncertain, ſo at beſt are leſs acceptable to God, and leſs profitable unto Men, and conſequently leſs attractive of their Zeal; I ſhould not doubt but that in a little time things would be at a much better paſs in the Church of God, than for the preſent we ſee them to be.

POSTSCRIPT.

THere is great reaſon to think, that many of the Non-Conformiſts do hold it lawful for Perſons, in the capacity of private Members, to join in Parochial Communion, who yet do not do ſo themſelves. The five diſſenting Brethren that lived in Separation from Parochial Communion, yet did in their Apologetical Narration, profeſs before God and the World, *That all that Conſcience of Defilement they conceived cleaved to our Pariſh-Churches, or of the unwarrantable Power of Church-Governours exerciſed therein, did never work in them any other Thought, much leſs Opinion, but that multitudes of the Pariſh Congregations were the true Churches and Body of Chriſt, and the Miniſtry thereof a true Miniſtry.* And I have no reaſon to doubt, but that very many of the preſent Non-Conformiſts, that never went ſo far as thoſe, are of the ſame Opinion, who yet live not in Communion with thoſe Pariſh-Churches, though they live among them. And I cannot but wonder, that the ſenſe they muſt needs have of the ill tendency of our Diviſions, and of the deſirableneſs of Peace and Unity, ſhould not deter them from making or keeping the Breach wider than needs, wider than the neceſſity of not Sinning puts them upon. For it cannot be denied, but that it is a Duty incumbent upon Chriſtians, and becoming all that love and long for Peace and Unity in the Church, to go as far as ever a good Conſcience will carry them towards the leſſening of our Differences, and cloſing up the Breach among us.

They cannot but know, as well as all other Men, that to break Church-Communion and rend the Church, where Men are not neceſſitated to do ſo or to ſin, is Schiſm. And I muſt needs ſay they put the Charity of their Friends hard to it, not to think they condemn by their Practice, what they allow in their Judgment, while by Separation they break the Unity of the Church, which according to their own Judgment, they might forbear to do without Sin.

If they think their Conceſſion touching the Lawfulneſs of Lay-Communion with our Pariſh-Churches will free them from the Guilt of Schiſm, though they themſelves keep in no ſuch Communion, I may well pray them to conſider, whether that very thing doth not render their Schiſm in ſome reſpect more criminal than theirs who ſeparate as accounting our Churches no true Churches; ſince it ſeems to proceed more from Error in the Will (which is Error of the worſt kind) than Schiſm in the others doth; and ſince their Judgment and Practice ſeem more to interfere, and to render them ſelf-condemned in their way. When *Peter* knew that the difference between the believing Jews and the believing Gentiles was no ſufficient ground of Separation between them, and yet did withdraw and ſeparate himſelf from the believing Gentiles, for fear of diſpleaſing the believing Jews; St. *Paul withſtood him to his Face, becauſe he was worthy to be blamed*, and ſo much the rather, becauſe he drew *Barnabas* and other Chriſtians into *the ſame Diſſimulation* with himſelf, *Gal.* ii. 11, 12, 13.

Theſe things conſidered, one would think they ſhould apprehend it far more ſafe, and leſs ſcandalous, and more conducible to Peace, Unity, and Love, and a more regular way of obtaining the Removal of Burthens, for thoſe Non-conforming Miniſters that can, to maintain Communion as private Members with the Pariſhes, and to perſuade their Hearers to do ſo too.

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A SERIOUS

A
SERIOUS and FRIENDLY
ADDRESS
TO THE
Non-Conformiſts,
Beginning with the
ANABAPTISTS:
OR,
An ADDITION to the
Perſuaſive to Peace and Unity.

BRITISH MUSEUM

THE PREFACE.

THE Deſign of the following Addreſs is, to perſuade to the Re-uniting of a divided Church. And the Unity of the Church is that which our Lord *and Saviour earneſtly, and with reiterated Petitions, prayed for to his* Father, *and which his Apoſtles after him did, with the moſt pathetical Expreſſions they could well take unto themſelves, perſuade the Chriſtians to maintain. By which we may perceive, That the Succeſs of Chriſt's Deſign to be carried on by the Goſpel, does very much depend upon this* Union; *which was the reaſon why the Heart of Chriſt, and of his Apoſtles, were ſo much ſet upon it. And if ſo, then Diviſions, Sidings, Factions and Diſaffections in the Church, and Separation of one part of it from another, muſt needs tend to fruſtrate and diſappoint our Saviour in his deſign of Grace, and to deprive the Church, where theſe take place, of the Benefit and* Comfort *in great part which he intended them, in recommending the Chriſtian Religion to them: And then it will follow alſo, that thoſe who are moſt of the Mind, Spirit and* Temper *of our* Saviour *and his Apoſtles, are and will be moſt tender, leſt they ſhould make any Breach in the Church, or diſturb the* Peace *of it; and moſt careful to do what in them lies to repair Breaches when made: But contrariwiſe, that thoſe who are moſt venturous in making Breaches upon* Pretences, *that will not abide an impartial Tryal, and leaſt careful to cloſe up thoſe which are made, are to that degree, that they are ſo devoid of a Chriſt-like* Frame *of Mind, and* Temper *of Spirit. All which looks moſt unpleaſantly upon ſo many as will not do all that they can do to prevent the farther growth of Schiſm, and to heal the Church's wounds already made by it.*

Conſidering all which, and the deplorable State and Condition of the Church in this Nation, by reaſon of Schiſm, and what Men ſuffer, and are like to ſuffer thereby in their Religious Intereſt; I cannot imagine wherein, or by what, good Men can better approve themſelves to Chriſt in any one thing, and more anſwer the Joy of his Heart, nor better ſerve their Generation, than by endeavouring heartily, according to the Capacity they are in, and the Opportunity they have, to promote the Re-uniting of the divided parts of the Church of God in this Nation. And if by Endeavours of this nature, any thing I have acted more than comes to my ſhare in this Addreſs, or otherwiſe, it hath been out of the abundance of my Affection to ſo good and neceſſary a Work, which will eaſily obtain Pardon *from thoſe that are for* Peace. *I cannot ſay, but that many Attempts of this nature have been made by others, and Endeavours uſed to this end: But the Reaſon why ſo little comes of it, is, Becauſe thoſe who are the Aggreſſors, or many of them, would needs make themſelves the* Center *of* Union, *and* Standard *of Communion. But how unreaſonable it is to expect, that an Union ſhould be brought to paſs upon ſuch Terms, or to think it fit, that our Breaches ſhould lie open till it can, is eaſie to apprehend. For when will all* Presbyterians, *think you, be perſuaded to turn* Anabaptiſts *or* Independents, *or* Independents *to turn* Anabaptiſts, *or* Anabaptiſts *to turn* Independents, *or both to turn* Presbyterians? *Or if they ſhould, when will thoſe of the way of the Church of* England *fall in with them? So that there ſeems a neceſſity of one of theſe two things; either for all the ſubdivided* Parts *of the Aggreſſors to Reunite themſelves again to the Church of* England, *from which they unduly rent themſelves: Or elſe to perpetuate our various Schiſms, until we have made our ſelves thereby a* Prey *to the common Adverſary. And whoever are of the mind to put things on this iſſue, and to run that hazard rather than to come to ſuch* Terms *of Accommodation as are not ſinful, though otherwiſe not altogether ſuch as they could wiſh, will certainly ſhew themſelves to be Perſons of but* private *ſelfiſh Spirits, regarding more their own perſonal Satisfaction, and private Conveniency, than the* publick *Benefit of* *the Church in general: A Temper very unworthy a Chriſtian, and far from a* laying down the Life for the Brethren. *It was the true Mother who was for yielding to her Competitrix, rather than the Child ſhould be* divided. *Beſides, by continuing a Schiſm upon ſuch Terms which will not amount to any ſufficient, or juſt Cauſe, they make themſelves accountable for all the dreadful Effects of it.*

Since then there is no Probability *that the Aggreſſors in their Subdiviſions will ever ſettle or unite upon any one of their narrow* Foundations, *it will, I doubt not, be much more becoming them as Chriſtians, for them all to* reconcile *themſelves to the Church of* England, *rather than to perpetuate ſuch a Complex Schiſm, as we ſee hath coſt both Church and Nation into a Convulſion, and threatens its final Ruine. Do you, or can you think, that there is at this Day, after all Tryals made, any Men upon Earth better Chriſtians than many of thoſe who have been bred in the Church of* England *ſince the Reformation from* Popery, *and who have lived and died in her Communion? I can hardly think that any ſober, intelligent Perſon will venture to ſay there is. And if not, what is the matter then if nothing but the being very good Chriſtians be your deſign, why (rather than to make a Schiſm) that will not ſatiſie you for the attaining to it, which hath been ſo ſucceſsful for the effecting this end in ſo many other worthy Perſons as have left us an Example of Holy Living, worthy our Imitation? Why the matter, as I apprehend it, ſtands thus: Thoſe whoſe minds had been influenced and affected with the different Principles of the old* Non-Conformiſts, Browniſts, *and* Anabaptiſts, *before our late unhappy Civil Wars brake out, took the Opportunity which it gave them, to begin a Work of Reformation in this Nation, as they notioned it to be. And although they all ſtill agreed with the Church of* England *in Doctrines of Faith, and a holy Life, and in thoſe Doctrines wherein it oppoſeth the Church of* Rome; *yea, and in the Subſtance of Divine Worſhip alſo: Yet they all oppoſed the Church of* England *in the external Form of Worſhip, and in her Order and Government. But when they had done ſo, they could not agree among themſelves what Form of Worſhip and Government, in Oppoſition to all other, is indeed of Divine Right, but therein ſharply oppoſed one another. So that this ſo called Reformation, produced more Diviſions and Separations, and multiplied more, and more monſtrous Sects, than ever there were in the Nation before. Notwithſtanding the ſad Experience of all which, and notwithſtanding the Means uſed by the higher Powers to reduce them; yet it ſeems theſe ſeveral divided parts have thought themſelves concerned upon one account or other, ſtill to carry on their eſteemed Reformation in their ſeveral different ways, and rather to run the hazard of all the ill Conſequences of their Diviſion in common from the Church of* England, *and of their ſeveral Subdiviſions among themſelves, than to return to our Parochial Communion.*

Now then, the endeavour of the following Addreſs is, to ſhew theſe two things eſpecially. The one is, That both the Principles and Practice in many things, wherein this Reformation, endeavoured by them, doth conſiſt, are really Corruptions, and things which ought themſelves to be reformed. The other is, That if any Emendation, in Matters Eccleſiaſtical, ſhall be found convenient for the Peace, Unity, and Stability of the Church of England; *as I will not deny but there may, the preſent Genius and Temper of many of this Nation conſidered (for* Moſes, *for the Hardneſs of the Peoples Hearts, by God's Direction, put that into the Body of the Law, which otherwiſe would not have been neceſſary:) Yet to ſeek this by Separation from our Pariſh-Churches, and by gathering Churches out of them, and by keeping Aſſemblies in Oppoſition to them, is no good Method of proceeding therein, but ſuch as tends to hurt the Church of God much more than to do it good, and to ſet People back, and not to bring them forward in that wherein the Heart and Spirit of true Chriſtianity lies. And for my Juſtification in this Undertaking, I have the old* Non-Conformiſts *ſo far on my ſide, as that, as Mr.* Baxter *ſaith, ſuch as Mr.* Cartwright, Egerton, Hilderſham, Dod, Ameſius, Parker, Bains, Brightman, Ball, Bradſhaw, Paget, Langly, Nicols, Hering, and many ſuch wrote more againſt Separation, than the Conformiſts did. *And the former Writings of the preſent* Presbyterians, *abound alſo with Invectives againſt the Practice of gatheriug Churches out of our Pariſh-Churches. Yea, thoſe who have been chief in the Congregational Way, have, in their Apologetical Narration, told the World,* That all that Conſcience of Defilement they conceived, cleaved to the Worſhip of God in our Pariſh-Churches, or of the unwarrantable Power of Church-Governors exerciſed therein, did never work in any of them any other Thought, much leſs Opinion, but that Multitudes of the Pariſh-Congregations, were the true Churches and Body of Chriſt, and the Miniſtry thereof a true Miniſtry. *And again:* We have always profeſs'd feſs'd (*ſay they*) (and that in theſe Times when the Churches of *England* were moſt, either actually over-ſpread with Defilements, or in the greateſt Danger thereof) That we both did, and would hold a Communion with them as the Churches of Chriſt. *I ſhall not offend you by making that Improvement of theſe Conceſſions, by* Reflections, *which the Matter is capable of. Only I heartily wiſh, That for the Honour of our Religion, we may all be careful to do that which is good and commendable, not only in the Sight of* God, *but alſo in the Sight of Men: And that nothing may be done but what we can give ſome competent account of unto Men. A thing wherein you have left even ſuch as wiſh you very well, much to ſeek, as not knowing how to reconcile your Principles and your Practice. What hath been offered by ſome in order to it, from the Conſideration of the different Circumſtances of former and preſent Times, I muſt needs ſay, falls very ſhort of it, and hath met with ſuch a return from other ſome, as hath even left it without any Strength at all, eſpecially in that which relates to* Lay-Communion.

Doctrine of Schiſm opened, and applied to gathered Churches.

A ſtop to the courſe of Separation.

Now the God of Love and Peace at laſt lead us out of all thoſe Diſtractions and Confuſions into which our own Weakneſs and Folly have betrayed us, into Paths of Purity, Peace, and Love, and beſtow upon us all a Spirit of Love, and of a ſound Mind, That ſo we may all come to keep the Unity of the Spirit in the Bond of Peace.

A SERIOUS and FRIENDLY

Addreſs to the Non-Conformiſts,

Beginning with the

ANABAPTISTS.

SIRS,

NOW I am upon leaving the World by reaſon of Age; ſome Reaſons have prevailed with me to leave behind me for you, a few words, not of bitter Contention, but of Peace, and to Edification; and ſuch only as are agreeable to a *following the Truth in Love*. And in doing ſo, methinks I might promiſe my ſelf, that what ſhall be thus offered will with a like mind be pondered and weighed by all ſuch among you, as in whom Paſſion, Prejudice and Partiality do not prevail, more than that *Wiſdom which is from above*, *which is firſt pure*, *then peaceable*, *and eaſie to be intreated*.

How unfit ſoever I may in other reſpects be thought for this undertaking, yet my former Experience in your way, and the many ſerious and impartial Conſiderations I have had about it, may poſſibly have given me ſo much advantage for it, as may excuſe my preſent undertaking. And beſides, if he that *digged a pit* (Exod. xxiii. 33.) *was to cover it*; no Man need to wonder if I concern my ſelf more than many others, by endeavouring what in me lies, to Cure the almoſt Epidemical Diſeaſe of Schiſm in ſome, and to prevent it in others. For however the general prevailing of it ſeems to have worn out that ſenſe of the heinouſneſs of it, which the Church of God, and all the famous Guides in it, anciently had of it, and to have changed its Name, and to be now adopted into the number of Virtues, and to be eſteemed an Ornament among too many; yet I aſſure you it is not ſo with me, who have ſeen and obſerved the diſmal effects of it. And doubtleſs it is not grown any whit the leſs heinous by prevailing ſo much as it hath done, unleſs a thing becomes the leſs evil by how much the more miſchief it does.

This Evil took place preſently after the Reformation from Popery, and became a clog to it then, as it hath been ever ſince. And I know nothing ſo like to ſubvert the Reformation, and at laſt to deliver us up again to a Papal Power, as this Sin of Schiſm.

Therefore blame me not, if you find me endeavouring to awaken you into the ſame ſenſe of it which I my ſelf have. If you will but take your meaſure of what it is like to produce among the whole Proteſtant Party in the end, if a ſtop be not put to it, by what the Diviſions among your ſelves in the greateſt part of your Congregations in this Nation hath brought forth, eſpecially in the Weſt; the proſpect will be ſad enough, and ſuch as one would think ſhould create in you a great jealouſie touching the practice of ſeparating from other *Proteſtant* Congregations. I ſhould think it might well cauſe you to conſider, whether thoſe Sub Diviſions and Sub-Separations among your ſelves, do not befal you as a Correction for your firſt dividing from others without a cauſe, and to awaken you to review the grounds on which it hath been done.

Now to convince you, That you have no ſufficient ground to ſeparate upon account of *Infant-Baptiſm*, and that you have great cauſe to repent that you have ſo done, is that, I confeſs, which I chiefly deſign in this Charitable Addreſs, ſo far as it concerns you only.

You are wont to interpret the extent of Chriſt's Commiſſion to Baptize by what is recorded in point of *fact*, touching who, or what manner of Perſons were baptized by the Apoſtles and others in their times: And to conclude, That no Infants were authorized by that Commiſſion to be baptized, ſince, as you ſuppoſe, the Scripture gives no account that any ſuch were baptized. But if this way of arguing were good, it would certainly make againſt your own Practice, whether it make any thing againſt Infant-Baptiſm or no. For then the ſaid Commiſſion of our Saviour would not warrant the baptizing of any ſuch as you baptize, to wit, Perſons at Age, whoſe Parents were Chriſtians when they were born, and who have been educated from their Childhood in the Chriſtian

Religion: For there is not the leaſt hint in Scripture, that any ſuch were baptized in the Apoſtles days, nor of any (except Infants) but only ſuch as were converted from Judaiſm or Paganiſm to Chriſtianity, and that preſently after ſuch their Converſion.

But if you think the lawfulneſs of baptizing ſuch Perſons as you baptize may be deduced, by way of conſequence, from Chriſt's Commiſſion, though there be no Inſtances in Scripture of the baptizing any ſuch; then you cannot deny it to be lawful to baptize Infants, if the lawfulneſs of it can be deduced from Chriſt's Commiſſion to baptize, though there ſhould be no Inſtances in Scripture of the baptizing any Infants. By this you ſee, that your popular Argument againſt Infant-Baptiſm falls foul upon your ſelves and your own Practice. The difference then between you and the *Pædobaptiſts* muſt not be decided by Examples in point of Fact, (though if it ſhould, you would be far more to ſeek than they, as ſhall be ſhewed afterwards) but by the Doctrine of the Scriptures relating to Church-memberſhip and Baptiſm, which we will now come to conſider, and therein proceed gradually.

When any thing hath been wont to be argued from the Church-memberſhip and Circumciſion of Infants in Old-Teſtament-times, in favour of the viſible Church-memberſhip and Baptiſm of Infants now, and in favour alſo of the Nationality of Churches; it hath been ſtill replied and urged by you, that there is this difference between the Church then and now, to wit, That the Church was conſtituted then by *Natural Generation*, whereas it is conſtituted now by *Spiritual Regeneration*; and farther, That what was ſufficient to make Church-members then, and to qualifie them for the initiating Ordinance, is not ſo now. And becauſe this is a Corner-Stone in your Building, a Foundation-Principle, upon which both you and the Congregational Men in great part do found your ſeparate Congregations, therefore it will be very meet, in the firſt place, to examine, What there is in this Pretenſion.

That which is uſually alledged for it, is, *Rom.* ix. 6, 7, 8. where it is ſaid, *They are not all Iſrael, which are of Iſrael: neither becauſe they are the Seed of Abraham, are they all Children: But in Iſaac ſhall thy Seed be called. That is, they which are the Children of the Fleſh, theſe are not the Children of God, but the Children of the Promiſe are counted for the Seed.* However you may have flatter'd your ſelves from the meer ſound of theſe words, to think them a ſtrong foundation for your aforeſaid Notion and Opinion, yet being more narrowly look'd into, they will be found to ſubvert and utterly overthrow it. For that which theſe words will directly prove, is, That Church-memberſhip, or Perſons relation unto God as his Children, did not, no not in Old-Teſtament-times, proceed from Natural Generation, or meerly from being *Abraham*'s Seed, according to the Fleſh.

The unbelieving Jews, againſt whoſe Pretences the Apoſtle here argues, did indeed hold, That becauſe they were naturally deſcended from *Abraham*, and Circumciſed and kept the Law, that God ſhould be unrighteous, and not make good his Promiſe, if he ſhould not own them for his Children, but caſt them off, as the Apoſtle in his Doctrine, it ſeems, aſſerted that he would, if they did not believe, but reject the Goſpel of his Son. And that upon which they built this confidence was, in that God had promiſed to be the God of *Abraham* and his Seed.

To take off which Pretence of theirs, and to prove, that God would act nothing contrary to his Promiſe made to *Abraham* and his Seed, though he ſhould reject them for rejecting the Goſpel, he ſhews they were under a great miſtake, (juſt as you are now) in thinking they were the Children of God, or of his Church, meerly becauſe they were deſcended from *Abraham*'s Loins. For, ſaith he, *they are not all Iſrael, that are of Iſrael*; which yet they would have been, if ſomewhat elſe had not been requiſite to make them ſo, than their procedure out of his Loins in a a courſe of Natural Generation. *Neither* (ſaith he) *becauſe they are the Seed of Abraham, are they all Children*, to wit, of God, as after he expounds it, when he ſaith, *They that are the Children of the Fleſh, theſe are not the Children of God*, Verſe 8.

But as he ſhewed from what this Relation of Sonſhip unto God did not proceed, ſo he ſhews likewiſe from what it did, by interpreting thoſe words of God to *Abraham*, *But in Iſaac ſhall thy Seed be called.* *That is* (ſaith he) *they which are the Children of the Fleſh, theſe are not the Children of God, but the Children of the Promiſe are counted for the Seed.* Now by *Children of the Promiſe* is meant *Abraham*'s Spiritual Seed; for they, we ſee, are oppoſed to *Children of the Fleſh*: And *Spiritual* and *Carnal* are contra-diſtinguiſhed the one from the other, as Seeds of a different ſpecies or kind. This is ſo plain, as what can be plainer? So that in *Abraham*'s time and after, we ſee, thoſe who were related to God, as his Church and Children, were ſo, upon the account of their being *Abraham*'s Spiritual Seed.

And farthermore, in that any of the Gentiles being proſelyted to the Faith and Religion of *Abraham*, were with their Children to be admitted to the ſame Privileges with the People of the God of *Abraham*, and to be numbred with them as they were; it's a plain caſe, That their Church-Memberſhip, or Relation to God as his People, did not then proceed meerly from Natural Generation and Relation, they being Children of *Abraham* not according to the Fleſh, but according to Faith. The ſame may be ſaid of Strangers from among the Gentiles that were born of Gentile Parents in *Abraham*'s Houſe, or bought with his Money, they being under his Power to inſtruct and educate in the true Religion, the Males of them were to be circumciſed, and received into the Church as *Abraham*'s Spiritual Seed.

This being ſo, upon what account little Children were of the Church, at that time, we will conſider afterwards. In the mean time, methinks, from what hath been now repreſented to you from the Scriptures, you ſhould not but perceive that the Church was no more conſtituted by Natural Generation before the Times of the Goſpel, than it is ſince: And that therefore the Spiritual Conſtitution of the Church under the Goſpel, is no more an Argument againſt Infants Church-Memberſhip, nor of the Nationality of Churches now, than the like Conſtitution of the Church in Old-Teſtament-times, was an Argument againſt them then.

The next thing I would offer to your Conſideration is this, That notwithſtanding that, the Conſtitution of the Church in Old-Teſtament Times, was as well Spiritual as that in the New, and did as well conſiſt of *Abraham*'s Spiritual Seed, as the New-Teſtament Church doth, and that there is no ſuch difference between them as you have imagined: Yet for all that, the *whole Body* of the Jewiſh People in *Jacob*'s Line, ſtood related to God as his Children and peculiar People. Before they were incorporated into a Common-wealth, and while they were as yet in *Egypt*, God himſelf ſtiled them collectively conſidered, *his Son*, Exod. iv. 22, 23. And afterwards to the whole Body of that People, *Moſes* ſaid, *Ye are the Children of the Lord your God*. And again, *Thou art an holy People unto the Lord thy God, and he hath choſen thee to be a peculiar People unto himſelf*, Deut. xiv. 1, 2. Elſewhere they are ſtiled *Saints*, Deut. xxxiii. 2, 3. Pſal. lxxxix. 5, 7. and cxlix. 1. And St. *Paul* ſaith, That unto them *pertained the Adoption*, Rom. ix. 4. Now theſe ſeveral Appellations, Children of God, holy People, Saints, peculiar People, ſignified doubtleſs as much when applied to the Old-Teſtament-Church, as when applied to the New, in the Epiſtles to the Churches. And therefore there can be no difference in the general Nature of the Conſtitution of the one and of the other. Though there is a difference in the Revelation of the Mind of God, and of the way of Salvation to the Church then and now, yet there is no ſuch difference in their Conſtitutions, as that the one ſhould be called Carnal, and the other Spiritual: For as thoſe of the Church of the New-Teſtament are ſaid to be *Saints by calling, holy Brethren, Children of God, a peculiar People*, ſo were thoſe of the Old likewiſe.

Conſidering then, That the Old-Teſtament-Church was conſtituted of *Abraham*'s Spiritual Seed, as well as that of the New; and ſtiled the Children of God, Saints, a holy and peculiar People, as thoſe of the New-Teſtament-Church alſo are: One of theſe two things muſt of neceſſity follow. Either firſt, That the whole Body of the People of the Jews under the Old-Teſtament, and all the People of the Churches of the New, who both came under the aforeſaid Denominations, were all ſavingly holy, and no Hypocrites among them: Or elſe, Secondly, That ſome People are in Scripture denominated Children of God, a holy People, Saints, a peculiar People, and the like, in other reſpects than that of ſaving Grace, or internal Holineſs. And becauſe we have no ground to believe, That all thoſe, both of the Old-Teſtament-Church, and of the New, to whom the aforeſaid Appellations are given, were ſavingly ſanctified, ſavingly the Children of God, therefore we muſt of neceſſity conclude, That they were and are ſo called upon ſome other account, that is more extrinſecal than that of ſpecial and internal Grace.

And what that ſhould be, is not neceſſary for me to determine; it is enough to my purpoſe, that it appears, That the forementioned glorious Appellations, are in Scripture given to ſome other, than ſuch as are ſavingly ſanctified. But yet that which ſeems to me moſt likely to be it, upon account of which others are ſtiled Saints, the Children of God, and the like, than thoſe that are ſavingly ſo, is this; to wit, God's chuſing, calling, and ſeparating them from other People in the World, to be brought nearer to him than thoſe others are, in Relation, and in Learning to profeſs the true Religion.

And thus ſuch *are Saints by Calling*, Rom. i. 6, 7. of which I ſhall ſay more afterwards, and of the manner how. But thus there *are many called, when but few are choſen*, as our Saviour hath told us again and again. Called, not only by being invited, but really brought to profeſs the true Religion, in the ſincere Belief, and Practice of which, Salvation is to be obtained; when yet they are not the choſen of God in that emphatical Senſe, which is peculiar to thoſe who are inwardly in Heart and Soul, ſeparated and devoted to God. Thus all and every one are God's Sons or Daughters, that are called by his Name, as every one is, that is called to profeſs his Name and Religion, *Iſa.* xliii. 6, 7. *Bring my Sons from far, and my Daughters from the ends of the Earth; even every one that is called by my Name.* And according to this account, and in this more general reſpect, Perſons very unworthy, in point of Life and Practice, are God's Sons and Daughters. Deut. xxxi. 19. *When the Lord ſaw it he abhorred them, becauſe of the provoking of his Sons and of his Daughters.* There are many that are Children of God's Kingdom, that will be caſt out into outer Darkneſs, *Matth.* viii. 12. St. *Paul* writing to all the Churches of *Galatia*, ſaith thus unto them, Chap. iii. 26. *Ye are all the Children of God by Faith in Chriſt Jeſus*, and gives this Reaſon of his ſo ſaying: *For as many as have been baptized into Chriſt* (as they all were) *have put on Chriſt*, viz. by Profeſſion. And yet many of them were ſuch as made him to write thus of them. *I marvel that ye are ſo ſoon removed from him that called you unto the Grace of Chriſt, unto another Goſpel*, Chap. i. 6. *I am afraid of you, leſt I have beſtowed on you Labour in vain*, Chap. iv. 11. And again, *I ſtand in doubt of you*, ver. 20. Much more of this nature might be ſaid, and it might be farther ſhewed alſo, that the holy Scriptures ſtile ſuch Saints in this more general reſpect, and in a large Senſe, which were far from appearing to be ſo in the more ſpecial and emphatical Senſe. Inſtances of this nature might be given in Members of the Church of *Corinth*, and other primitive Churches, as well as in the ancient Jewiſh Church. Compare 1 *Cor.* i. 2. with *Chap.* v. 1. and viii. 10, 11. and xv. 34. 2 *Cor.* xii. 20, 21. But I will not multiply words to prove that which appears ſo evident by a few as you ſee.

But if this be true which I have been proving, *viz.* That ſome in the viſible Church are in Scripture denominated the Children of God; a Holy People, Saints, a Peculiar People, in other reſpects than ſuch as amount to ſaving Grace, or internal Holineſs; then your Principle, and the Principle of others in the *Congregational way*, cannot be ſound, when you and they aſſert, *That none are to be owned as Members of the viſible Church, ſo as to be received into Church-Communion, who are not in the Judgment of Charity, ſavingly ſanctified.* For we ſee others than ſuch are in Scripture-account owned as really Members of the viſible Church. And therefore the Opinion and Practice both of you and them in this, can be no other than an *Innovation and humane Invention*, and which hath been one principal cauſe of ſo much Diviſion in the Church, and of the ſad Effects of it, as we have already ſeen. I have nothing to ſay againſt exerciſing as much Charity in your Opinion of others as you can. But that's no Judgment of Charity, nor of Truth neither, to judge thoſe no viſible Church-Members for want of ſaving Grace, which yet are ſo in the Judgment of God himſelf by the Scriptures. And Men ſhould not pretend to be wiſer than their Maker, or think to find out better Methods than he hath pitch'd upon, for the promoting his Ends, his own Glory, and Man's Salvation. But when they do, they likely do in the total, and at the long run, but fruſtrate and diſappoint thoſe Ends, or greatly hinder them, and promote thoſe of a worſe Nature. The Judgment of Charity in this matter, is a Rule arbitrary and uncertain, and will vary as Mens Opinions and Affections vary, and he ſhall be a good Chriſtian in the charitable Judgment of ſome, that ſhall be denied to be ſo in the Judgment of others. To ſet up this Judgment of Charity for a Rule in this matter, is indeed a way like unto which there is none that I can think of ſo prepared and fitted to make Parties and Sects in the Church as that is. But to own all to be of the viſible Church who are converted from a falſe to a Profeſſion of the true Religion, and the little Children of ſuch, and the Succeſſors of ſuch in the ſame Profeſſion, until they deſert the Church, or are worthily and deſervedly, and in a regular way of proceeding excommunicated, is to walk by an open, manifeſt, certain, and fixt Rule; which had it been duly obſerved, would have preſerved the Church in Unity and Peace, which now is lamentably divided and diſturbed by introducing other Meaſures. Which brings me to the next thing to be enquired into.

The next thing then which as I ſay we will enquire into is, how, or in what reſpect little Children were Members, and a part of the Old-Teſtament Church, and capable of the then initiating Ordinance. And by what hath been before proved, I think we may ſafely conclude, that it was not meerly upon the account of their Natural Deſcent from *Abraham*, or from *Abraham*'s Seed, according to the Fleſh. For *Abraham*, as he was Father to the Church, or Church-Members, as ſuch, it was not in his Natural, but his Religious Capacity that he was ſo: It was as he was a Believer, that he was and yet is the Father of Believers. And accordingly all that were of the Church, whether young or old, were ſo upon a Religious account in one reſpect or other. The Church is not a Natural, Political, or Civil Community, but a Religious or Spiritual Community: And therefore all Perſons, and ſo little Children that were of the Church, muſt needs in one reſpect or other have been Perſons of a Religious or Spiritual Conſideration. This I think is paſt diſpute. And yet I think that the little Children, which were of the Church, could not be look'd upon to be in that Religious Capacity actively, or by any act of their own, while but little ones, but were paſſively ſuch.

This conſidered, I know not upon what better to place the viſible Church-memberſhip of Infants, or to attribute it to, than to God's *electing and calling them to be his People, and their Parents dedicating and devoting them to God and his Service.* Firſt, God choſe them to be his People among the reſt: Deut. iv. 37. *Becauſe he loved thy Fathers, therefore he choſe their Seed after them.* This was the *Adoption* of which St. *Paul* ſpeaks, *Rom.* ix. 4. Now God's thus chuſing them to be his People, and declaring that he had choſen them, (as he did in promiſing to be their God) was one degree of ſeparating them from the reſt of the World, and by which they became a holy Seed, relatively holy I mean.

But this was not all: But they became his People by God's *Calling* them to be ſo, as well as by his Election and Promiſe. The Lord by his Prophet ſtiled the whole Body of the People of the Jews, *Iſrael my called*, Iſai. xlviii. 12. By this *Call* of his they were in a farther degree ſeparated to God as his People, and differenced from the Heathen Nations that were under no ſuch call. Now God then calleth Perſons to be his People, when he placeth them in ſuch Circumſtances, or vouchſafed them ſuch means, as by which they do or will come to take him for their God, and to embrace the Religion which is of God. Now as to the manner of this Call, it is either extraordinary or ordinary. As for *Abraham* himſelf, he ſeems to have been called by God in a way extraordinary, by his *appearing and ſpeaking* to him, as he did in *Meſopotamia*, Acts vii. 2. But his Seed and Poſterity were called in an ordinary way, by being educated from their Childhood in *Abraham*'s Religion by their Parents, deriving it from *Abraham*, and ſo ſucceſſively from one Generation to another, from Generation to Generation, according to *Pſal.* lxxviii. 5, 6. *The Lord eſtabliſhed a Teſtimony in Jacob, and appointed a Law in Iſrael, which he commanded our Fathers that they ſhould make them known to their Children: That the Generation to come might know them, even the Children which ſhould be born; who ſhould ariſe and declare them to their Children, that they might ſet their hope in God.* And in this way the little Children, who were then Members of the Church, as all confeſs, were *called* to that Church-memberſhip, unleſs you can ſuppoſe that any can be Members of the Church without being called to it. And it was doubtleſs the Election and Call aforeſaid, by which little Children were brought into that Spiritual Relation to God and his People, which qualified them for a ſolemn Admiſſion into the Church, by the Church-initiating Ordinance for the time then being, which other Children were not duly capable of, who were not under that Election and Call. God's placing thoſe Infants in ſuch Circumſtances, as was their being under the Care and Tutorage of ſuch Parents, as would iſſue in their owning God for their God, and his Religion for the way of their worſhipping and ſerving him, was his calling of them in the beginning of it unto ſuch a Profeſſion. And the Scripture uſeth to reckon little Children, as having begun to do this or that, when they are but placed in Circumſtances that will bring them to do it actually in the Iſſue. And thus the Children of the *Kohathites of a month old were numbred with their Fathers, as with them, keeping the Charge of the Sanctuary*, when they were but in a way of being trained up to it, *Numb.* iii. 28. And in this reſpect perhaps it was, that our Saviour ſpake of ſome little Children, as believing in him, of which I ſhall ſay more afterwards, *Matth.* xviii. 6. And for the ſame reaſon it may be little Children were ſaid to enter into Covenant with God, when their Parents did ſo, *Deut.* xxix, 11, 12. To conclude this Enquiry: Moſt certain it is, that Infants were then received into the Church, and were a part of it, as all acknowledge; and it muſt be in the reſpects which I have mentioned that they were ſo, unleſs any more likely can be named, which I cannot imagine. For other Infants of the Heathen, which were not under theſe Circumſtances, were not reputed Church-Members, nor were in any immediate capacity of the Church-initiating Ordinance.

The next thing after this, which would be enquired into, is, Whether the viſible Church-Memberſhip of the Infants of believing Parents, was *diſcontinued* or terminated by the taking place of the Goſpel-Miniſtration, or by any new Church-State under it? And, I doubt not to ſay, that there are many things which will determine this Queſtion againſt you in the Negative. I will begin with that in *Rom.* xi. 29. where it's ſaid, *for the Gifts and Calling of God are without Repentance.* Theſe words relating to the calling of ſuch Jews, who, as concerning the Goſpel, were then Enemies for the ſake of the believing Gentiles, and yet beloved for the Father's ſake, that which I chiefly note from them is, That the Calling of God, or his ancient Way or Method of bringing the Jews to be his People, is not now under the Goſpel recalled, no more than his *Donation* or *Gift* conferred on *Abraham* and his Seed, is, when he promiſed to be their God on the Terms he did; but both are ſtill continued without any Repentance in God. The way into the Church is as open, the Terms of Admiſſion as touching the general Nature of them as eaſie, and the means of procuring it vouchſafed by God, as ſufficient now as ever they were. God hath not repented of any Favour or Grace that was anciently granted to the Jews whether old or young, in reference to their being of his Church and People. And in that very Prediction in *Iſa.* lix. 20, 21. which the Apoſtle here in *Rom.* xi. 26, 27. recites, touching the calling of the Jews in Goſpel-times, it is foretold, that the ſame way of propagating Church-Members and the true Religion, which God uſed in Old-Teſtament-times, by Parents training up their Seed in the true Religion, and by that means tranſmitting it from Generation to Generation, ſhall continue in the Church to the end of the World. For it is there ſaid, *As for me this is my Covenant with them, ſaith the Lord, my Spirit which is upon thee, and my words which I have put in thy Mouth, ſhall not depart out of thy Mouth, nor out of the Mouth of thy Seed, nor out of the Mouth of thy Seeds Seed, ſaith the Lord, from henceforth and for ever.* And accordingly we find in point of Event, that (except in the firſt planting of Chriſtian Churches in an extraordinary way, by extraordinary means) the ordinary way of propagating the Chriſtian Profeſſion and Profeſſors from Age to Age, hath been the very ſame with that which was uſed by God's Appointment by the Jews of old; which was by receiving their Infant Children into the Church, and ſo educating them in the true Religion profeſſed by the grown Members of the Church.

For farther Light in this Matter, let us conſider what Doctrine our Saviour taught, and what his Apoſtles after him, in relation to it. Our Saviour ſaith, *Suffer the little Children to come to me, and forbid them not; for of ſuch is the Kingdom of God*, Mark x. 14. Which words, *for of ſuch is the Kingdom of God*, are the reaſon here given by our Saviour, why little Children ſhould be ſuffered and not forbidden to be brought to him. Which ſhews, that when he ſays, of *ſuch* is the Kingdom of God, he meant it of ſuch little Children properly as thoſe were which were brought to him, and not of Men like little Children, in Humility, Innocency, or Docility, as you would have it. For if we ſhould underſtand it in your Senſe, then that which our Saviour gives here for a reaſon, ſeems to be no reaſon. For what conſequence is there in this, or how would it follow, that becauſe the Kingdom of God is of other Perſons like little Children in other things, but altogether unlike them in what was the matter of Exception againſt their being brought to Chriſt, which was their Minority, that therefore little Children properly meant, ought to be ſuffered and not forbidden to be brought to Chriſt? And if it be meant of little Children properly, then our Saviour in theſe words aſſerts ſuch little Children to be of the Church, whether you underſtand by Kingdom of God, Heaven it ſelf, or the Church on Earth. For none are of the Kingdom of Heaven above, who are not firſt of the Church on Earth; for it is his Body the Church only that Chriſt is thus the Saviour of. But if this Text were to be underſtood in your Senſe, yet it would prove that for which I alledge it, by Parity of Reaſon. For if that which makes adult Perſons like little Children in that for which they are propounded as a Pattern, will qualifie them for the Kingdom of God; then it muſt needs qualifie the Children themſelves for it. If you ſay that this way of arguing as well proves Doves, Lambs, and Sheep qualified to be of the Kingdom of God, as little Children; becauſe they, in ſome reſpects, are ſet for Patterns unto Men, and good Men, upon account of reſembling them in ſome reſpects, are called by their Names. I anſwer, it follows not; becauſe theſe Creatures have not rational Natures as Children have, and therefore are not capable of Spiritual Benefits as Children are: Nor were ever conſtituted Church-Members heretofore, as little Children have been. By reaſon of which difference, it will not follow that the one are not Church-Members becauſe the other are not, though both are propounded as Patterns in ſome reſpect of that which will qualifie rational

Creatures for Church-Memberſhip. So that take it which way you will, the Argument from the Text for Infants Church-Memberſhip, is far ſtronger than any thing which can be offered againſt it.

Again, in *Luke* ix. 48. Our Saviour ſpeaking of a little Child which he had ſet by him, ſaith, *Whoſoever ſhall receive this Child in my Name, receiveth me.* Here you have no room to pretend it meant of Men qualified like Children. For it is not ſaid, whoſoever ſhall receive *ſuch* as this Child in my Name; but whoſoever ſhall receive *this* Child (the individual Child then ſet by our Saviour) in my Name, receiveth me. And if that Child or other ſuch were to be received in the Name of Chriſt, then that Child was, and other ſuch are ſpiritually related to Chriſt, as thoſe of his Body the Church are: How elſe could they be received in his Name? Now to receive one into the Church of Chriſt, is to receive one in his Name, therefore ſince our Saviour would have ſome little Children received in his Name, he would have them received into his Church. The words, *Whoſoever ſhall receive this Child in my Name, receiveth me*, are indefinite and not limited to any one way of receiving in his Name. So that if there ſhould be more ways of receiving little Children in the Name of Chriſt, than by receiving them into the Church, yet that being one way, and an eminent way too, it cannot according to Chriſt's own Declaration, but be highly acceptable to him to receive ſuch little Children into the Church as that he ſpoke of was, ſince he takes it as if he himſelf were received.

Let us conſider yet farther thoſe words of our Saviour, *Matth.* xviii. 6. *But whoſo ſhall offend one of theſe little ones that believeth in me*, &c. If I can demonſtrate to you that this was ſpoken of little Children *properly*, I ſhall not need to determine in what reſpects they can be ſaid to believe in Chriſt. I can eaſily think as well as you, that they cannot be ſaid to believe in the propereſt Senſe. They are not indeed Unbelievers, as that ſignifies a wilful Rejection of the Terms of Grace and Salvation, which yet it may be is the common Senſe of the word *Unbelief* in Scripture, which is damning. And conſidering their Redemption by Chriſt's Death from Condemnation for Original Sin, while actual is not added to it, they may be as well in a State of Salvation, as actual Believers are, till actual Sin take place; and ſo be numbred with them upon that account. When our Saviour ſays, *Whoſoever doth not receive the Kingdom of God as a little Child, ſhall not enter therein*, it is not only implied that little Children receive the Kingdom of God, but alſo more fully expreſs'd, that none ſhall receive the Kingdom of God but upon the ſame Terms in ſome ſort as they do, and what can thoſe be but Chriſt's Ranſom and Purchace, and their being free from a prevailing Principle of Oppoſition againſt the Goſpel and Government of Chriſt. And that may well be true in this caſe which our Saviour ſays in another, *He that is not againſt us is for us*, Luke ix. 50. and if little Children in ſuch a Senſe are for Chriſt, they may well be reckoned to be of his Party, and called as thoſe of his Party are, Believers, Diſciples.

The little Children of old, could no more *properly enter into Covenant*, nor the *uncircumciſed Male-Child break the Covenant*, nor the Children of the *Kohathites of a Month old keep the Charge of the Sanctuary*, than little Children can believe in Chriſt: And yet in ſome reſpect, and in ſuch a Latitude of Speech as the Scripture ſometimes uſeth, they were ſaid to do all theſe things. Let the reaſon then be what it will for which they are ſaid to believe, yet that it is ſome little Children properly taken, who in this place are ſaid to believe in Chriſt, I ſhall endeavour to evince by ſhewing theſe two things.

Firſt, That they were little Children in a proper Senſe, of which our Saviour ſpeaks, *Ver.* 5. in the words next preceding theſe in *Ver.* 6.

Secondly, That theſe in this 6. *Ver.* who were ſaid to believe in Chriſt, were the very ſame, or the ſame ſort of little ones, of which he had ſpoken in *Ver.* 5. That they were little Children in a proper Senſe, of which our Saviour ſpake in *Ver.* 5. when he ſaid, *Whoſo ſhall receive one ſuch little Child in my Name, receiveth me*; will appear, partly by the relation theſe words bear to thoſe which go before; and partly by comparing them with the relation which another Evangeliſt makes of the ſame matter. In the 2. *Verſe* of this *Chap.* Chriſt is ſaid to *ſet a little Child in the midſt of his Diſciples.* And in the 4. *Verſe* he ſaith, *Whoſoever ſhall humble himſelf as this little Child, the ſame is greateſt in the Kingdom of Heaven.* This little Child in *Verſe* the 4*th.* is the ſame with that ſaid to be ſet in the midſt of the Diſciples, *Verſe* 2. And then in *Verſe* 5. he ſaith, *Whoſo ſhall receive one ſuch little Child in my Name, receiveth me*; meaning ſuch little Child as had been ſpoken of juſt before in *Verſe* 2. and 4. And to put the matter out of all doubt, that by ſuch little Child mentioned *Verſe* 5. our Saviour meant that very little Child that was ſet by him, or any other ſuch, and not Men reſembled by the Humility, Docility, or Innocency of that or any other ſuch Child, the Evangeliſt *Luke* relating the ſame matter, *Chap.* ix. 48. ſaith thus: *Whoſoever ſhall receive this Child in my Name, receiveth me*; plainly ſpeaking this of that individual Child, which in the very next Verſe before, Chriſt is ſaid to have ſet by him. The true ſenſe of the ſame matter related thus by both the Evangeliſts, ſeems to be this: That whoſoever ſhould receive that little Child, that very Child which Jeſus had ſet by him, or any other ſuch, in his Name, ſhould by ſo doing receive him. The one Evangeliſt relates one, and the other the other part of our Saviour's ſaying in this matter, as is uſual alſo in other caſes.

Thus far the matter before us is as clear as well could be deſired, that when our Saviour ſaid, *Whoſo ſhall receive one ſuch little Child in my Name, receiveth me*, he meant it of little Children properly. And that it was theſe very little ones ſo underſtood, or this ſort, which our Saviour ſaid, *did believe in him*, when he ſaid, *But whoſo ſhall offend one of theſe little ones which believe in me*, &c. ſeems to be as plain as the other. For to whom can thoſe words, *One of theſe little ones*, relate, but to them of whom our Saviour laſt ſpake? Beſides, the oppoſition here between Receiving and Offending, the Receiving one of thoſe little Children in Chriſt's Name, and the Offending of one of thoſe little ones, ſhews the matters ſpoken of in both Verſes, 5. and 6. to reſpect the ſame ſort of Perſons, which then muſt needs be little Children properly. And the oppoſition ſeems to lie thus: As he, whoever he be, which ſhall receive a little Child in Chriſt's Name, as related to him, or ſo as to educate and inſtruct him in the Knowledge of him and his Religion, ſhall do a worthy act, ſuch as Chriſt will take as if done to himſelf: So he that ſhall turn one ſuch little Child aſide, by training him up in a contrary Religion, ſhall do a moſt unworthy act, and ſuch as would expoſe him to worſe than being drowned in the depth of the Sea. And this ſenſe of the word *Offend*, exactly agrees with the common uſe of it in the New Teſtament.

But yet, notwithſtanding all that I have ſaid, I do not at all deny the Emblematical Uſe here, of the little Child which our Saviour ſet in the midſt of the Apoſtles, which was to cure them, or ſome of them, of Ambition; and to perſuade them to become, if poſſible, as free from it as little Children are. And therefore tells them firſt, that except they were converted, and became as little Children, they ſhould be ſo far from being greateſt in the Kingdom of Heaven, the thing they contended about, as that they ſhould not at all enter therein, *ver.* 3. And, ſecondly, he tells them, that the way for them or any other to intereſs themſelves ſo far in his favour, as to be made greateſt in the Kingdom of Heaven, is by becoming like little Children, by purging out ſuch ill habits of Pride and the like, which made them unlike to little Children, in whom ſuch ill habits had not taken place. For ſaith he, *Whoſo ſhall humble himſelf as this little Child, the ſame is greateſt in the Kingdom of Heaven*, ver. 4. But then, though all this is granted, yet it muſt be conſidered, how, and after what manner our Saviour would cure this Diſtemper in the Diſciples, by this Emblem of a little Child. And this he did, firſt by intimating to them how free from Pride and other ill Habits little Children are, till they have defiled themſelves with actual Sin. And ſecondly, by letting them know how very dear to him they are upon that account, upon their not having actually defiled themſelves with Pride, Malice, or Oppoſition againſt him and his Goſpel (for which reaſon perhaps he numbers them with thoſe that believe) indeed ſo dear, as that he takes what is done for or againſt them, as done for or againſt himſelf. And by thus diſcourſing to them of ſuch little Children, as that was which ſtood in the midſt of them, he inſtructed them touching the neceſſity of purging out ill Habits, and of becoming Humble and Innocent, if ever they would endear themſelves to him, or become capable of entering into the Kingdom of Heaven, or of being great therein.

By the way then, by what hath been now ſaid, you may anſwer your own Argument, why you cannot think it probable that any little Children were ſaid to be baptized, when it's ſaid, Such and ſuch were baptized and their Houſholds. Your Reaſon you know is, becauſe it is ſaid of ſome of them, that all of thoſe Houſholds did believe. Which yet is no reaſon to disbelieve little Children to be any of thoſe *all*, if the little Children of Believers are ſaid by our Saviour to be Believers, as you may ſee they are, by what hath been now repreſented to you, unleſs better reaſon can be offered againſt the Senſe argued for, than what is offered for it.

THus far we have heard what our Saviour hath ſaid touching the continuance of little Children in the viſible Church under the Goſpel: Let us now hear what his Apoſtles ſay. In the firſt Sermon they preached, after they had received the Holy Ghoſt, St. *Peter* uſed this as a motive to thoſe Jews who had crucified Chriſt, to repent and be baptized for the remiſſion of Sins: For ſaith he, *The Promiſe is to you and to your Children, and to all that are afar off, even as many as the Lord our God ſhall call,* Acts ii. 38, 39. This clauſe, *Even as many as the Lord our God ſhall call,* ſhews that which I have been proving, to wit, that the Promiſe of Spiritual Benefits or Privileges was not made to *Abraham*'s Seed meerly upon account of their relation to him according to the Fleſh, but as they ſhall be his Spiritual Children, in deriving from him the Profeſſion of the ſame Faith or Religion which was in *Abraham*. And ſo and upon theſe terms the Promiſe was made to the Jews here ſpoken to, as bad as they were, and to all afar off, whether Jews or Gentiles, upon ſuppoſition of their being called, and not to them only, but to their *Children alſo*. Now I have ſhewed before, that the little Children in the Jewiſh Church could not have been of it, no more than the Children of the Gentiles, but by being ſome way or other *called* to it, as they were, whom God put under the nurture of believing Parents, or Tutors, and upon thoſe terms the Gentiles Children might be of the Jewiſh Church too, as the Children of the Strangers that were born in the Houſe of him that was a Jew, or bought with his Money, were. By this part of St. *Peter*'s Sermon you may ſee, that under the Goſpel the Promiſe continued to all ſuch as were called, both of Parents and Children, juſt as it was before; I mean as to Spiritual Privileges. The Promiſe now is to as many, both Parents and Children, as God ſhall call, and it was no otherwiſe before. The Apoſtles words here run but according to the tenour of the Promiſe of old, and according to what was enjoyed in Old-Teſtament times, both by Jews and Proſelytes, and their Children. The Proſelytes from among the Gentiles upon their being called, were of old *graffed into the ſtock of Iſrael, and their Children with them, and did partake of the root and fatneſs of the Olive-Tree*, as the Apoſtle's phraſe is: That is, they were partakers of the ſame Spiritual Privileges as *Abraham*'s Spiritual Seed were. Thus the Proſelytes were then, and the believing Gentiles under the Goſpel were no more: They were but graffed into the ſame Stock or Olive-Tree, *i. e.* into the ſame Church, *Rom.* xi. 17. I ſay, into the ſame Church; for that continued ſtill, though not all the ſame Laws, and was conſtituted of *Abraham*'s Spiritual Seed, as before it had been. Which brings me to the next thing I would call you to the Conſideration of.

When St. *Paul*, in *Rom.* xi. 20. ſpeaking of the unbelieving Jews, ſaith, *Becauſe of unbelief they were broken off*; it doth appear thereby, there was no diſcontinuance of the Church by any change made by the Goſpel upon its firſt entrance. This is implied when it's ſaid of ſome Jews, that they were *broken off*. For it was the Church, the ſame Church from which they were broken off, of which they were Branches or Members, until they were broken off. But then the Church it ſelf remained ſtill in being at that time, when they as Branches were broken off, and after alſo, into which others were graffed. The caſe was plainly this: Before Chriſt's appearance in the Fleſh, the Jews generally, both better and worſe, profeſſed a Belief in God's Promiſe of ſending the *Meſſias*, and that he ſhould be of *Abraham*'s Seed, in which Seed all Nations were to be bleſſed. By profeſſion of which Faith, or this, and the Religion of *Abraham* otherwiſe, they were all externally *Abraham*'s Spiritual Seed; and as they were his Spiritual Seed, they were the Church of God. When the promiſed *Meſſias* was come, and the Promiſe thereby fulfilled, and a new Revelation made touching his being come, and that Jeſus the Son of the bleſſed Virgin was he: Some of them believed this, and ſo kept their ſtanding in the Church, in as much as by that Belief they continued to be the Spiritual Seed of *Abraham*, as they were before by their former Faith. Whereas the other Jews, who did not believe this, but oppoſed the profeſſion of it in thoſe that did, ceaſed thereby to be ſo much as nominally, or by profeſſion, the Spiritual Seed of *Abraham*, and ſo became broken off from the Church, being now his Seed but after the Fleſh only. This, which is indeed the plain truth, and eaſie to be underſtood, is point-blank againſt your contrary Opinion and Aſſertion on which you muſt build, touching the diſſolution of the Church which had been Jewiſh, when the Church as Chriſtian did commence. The belief of a new Revelation did not make a new Church, but the Church in being before had thereby a new Illumination, and their Faith changed into a Belief, that that now was done, which they believed before would be done. The Church, conſidered as well before as after the entrance of the Goſpel into the

World, is reſembled by one ſtanding Olive-Tree, that had ſome Branches broken off, and others graffed in.

And as the ſame Church continued under the Goſpel, which did exiſt, or was in being before, ſo the very ſame Church-members kept their place and ſtanding in it, which were of it before, except ſuch as were broken off by *Unbelief*. And if ſo, then thoſe little Children which were of the Church immediately before their Parents became Chriſtian, did not ceaſe to be ſo by their Parents becoming ſuch, nor by any alteration which the Goſpel made. For if thoſe who were broken off, were broken off by Unbelief, according to the Apoſtle's expreſs Aſſertion; then unleſs thoſe little Children, I ſpeak of, were guilty of Unbelief in themſelves, or had it imputed to them from their Parents, they could not be broken off, but ſtill kept their place and ſtanding in the Church of God. But guilty of Unbelief by imputation of it from their Parents they could not be, for they were Believers. Nor could they be any more guilty of it, by any Act or Omiſſion of their own, than they were while as *Abraham*'s Spiritual Seed they were of the Church before. And therefore the only reaſon and cauſe of the diſchurching of thoſe who were diſchurched, not being found in thoſe little Children, they could not poſſibly be diſchurched by any alteration which the Goſpel made.

You may farther obſerve, how that ſuch Expreſſions are uſed in the holy Writings of the New Teſtament, as do denote the Children of believing Parents to be *holy*, to be ſeparated to God now as well as they were in Old-Teſtament-times. Thus when the Apoſtle ſpeaks of the Hebrew Chriſtians and their Seed, of which the Chriſtian Church was firſt conſtituted as the *firſt-fruits unto God*, and how it was like to continue as the *root* or *ſtock* into which the believing Gentiles in part were already, and were farther to be graffed, he ſaith thus in *Rom.* xi. 16. *If the firſt fruits be holy, the lump is alſo holy, and if the root be holy, ſo are the branches.* In Old-Teſtament-times, if the Root were holy, if the Parents, *Abraham*'s Spiritual Seed, were holy, the Branches, their little Children, were holy alſo, as coming under the ſame denomination with their Parents. And we here ſee the Apoſtle aſſerts the ſame thing to be now, and to take place under the Goſpel Diſpenſation. He doth not ſay in reference to times paſt, if the Root *were* holy, ſo *were* the Branches; but, with reference to the time preſent, if the Root *be* holy, ſo *are* the Branches.

And as here St. *Paul* ſpeaks of the Sanctification of the Seed of the Hebrew Believers, ſo elſewhere he aſſerts the Sanctification of the Children of the believing Gentiles, when he ſaith, *The unbelieving Husband is ſanctified by the Wife, and the unbelieving Wife is ſanctified by the Husband: elſe were your Children unclean, but now are they holy*, 1 Cor. vii. 14. If we ſhould read this Text according to your Interpretation of it thus; Elſe were your Children *Baſtards*, but now they are *Legitimate*, we ſhould impoſe ſuch a ſenſe upon the Apoſtles words, as would repreſent him as ſpeaking untruly. For certainly the Children of Heathen Parents born in lawful Wedlock, were no Baſtards, although the Parents were neither of them Believers, nor neither of them ſanctified by Faith, or by means of the Faith of the other. Whereas the Holineſs of the Children here ſpoken of, did depend upon the Faith of one of the Parents: If one of them had not been ſanctified by means of the Faith of the other, their Children would have been unclean, and yet not Baſtards neither, provided the Parents were lawfully Married before either of them believed. If then your Interpretation be not the true ſenſe of the Text (and you ſee for what reaſon it cannot) then what can ſo reaſonably be aſſigned for it, and ſo agreeably to the concurrent tenour of the Scriptures, as thoſe Childrens being ſeparated, together with their Parents, from Heatheniſm to Chriſtianity, from Idols to God, from being without God and Chriſt in the World, to be related to him as Members of his Church, choſen and called out of the World, by which they became *relatively holy*.

Unto all that hath been already ſaid, let us add in the laſt place, that little Children together with their Fathers, are expreſly called *Diſciples*, Acts xv. 10. where it's ſaid, *Why tempt ye God to put a yoke upon the neck of the Diſciples, which neither we nor our Fathers were able to bear.* That which is here called *a putting a yoke upon the neck of the Diſciples*, was the urging the neceſſity of proſelyting the believing Gentiles with their Children by Circumciſion, after the manner of *Moſes*, ver. 1. Now the manner of initiating Proſelytes of the Gentiles, according to the Law of *Moſes*, was to circumciſe the Father and his Male-Children too, if he had any, *Exod.* xii. And therefore the Children of the believing Fathers, as well as their Fathers themſelves, muſt needs be underſtood to be thoſe Diſciples upon whoſe Necks this Yoke was endeavoured to be put. This being the plain and genuine ſenſe of this Text, in all probability, I muſt needs ſay it is but a faint put off and weak Evaſion to eſcape the Force of the Teſtimony, given in this Text to the Diſcipleſhip of ſome Infants, for you to alledge that it was the *Doctrine only* of the falſe Teachers impoſed upon the Parents, and other grown Perſons, who only, and not their Infants were able to underſtand it, that was the Yoke, the only Yoke that was endeavoured to be put upon the Neck of the Diſciples here, and that therefore they only muſt be here meant by the Diſciples upon whoſe Neck the Yoke was endeavoured to be put. For this Doctrine of falſe Teachers was no farther a Yoke or Burthen, than as it referred to the thing thereby urged to be practiſed. The Yoke or Burthen which St. *Peter* a Jew here ſaith, neither they nor their Fathers were able to bear, was the Pain they underwent in being circumciſed, and the coſtly Sacrifices and other external burthenſome Obſervances which by the Law of *Moſes* was laid upon them: And this really, or Circumciſion which was a part of it, was the Yoke or Burthen which the falſe Teachers would now have impoſed upon the believing Gentiles and their Children; as neceſſary to Salvation. And this was that which St. *Paul* alſo called the *Yoke of Bondage*, wherewith he would not have the Believers *intangled again*, Gal. v. 1. Which did not conſiſt only in Doctrine: For he preſently by an inſtance ſhews what he meant by it, and wherein it did conſiſt, ſaying, *ver.* 2. *Behold, I Paul ſay unto you, that if ye be circumciſed, Chriſt ſhall profit you nothing.* And the like he had done before, *Chap.* iv. 9. *How turn ye again to the weak and beggarly Elements, whereunto ye deſire again to be in Bondage*; inſtancing wherein in the next words: *Ye obſerve Days, and Months, and Years.* This Yoke of Bondage then we ſee, did conſiſt in more than meerly Doctrine. The Neck of the Diſciples muſt needs be the Neck of all thoſe who were to have born the Yoke according to the Law of *Moſes*, if they had been obliged by it, as the falſe Teachers pretended they were: And ſuch were Children of eight Days old, who among the reſt were to have been brought under that Yoke, had the falſe Teachers prevailed. To reſtrain then the Senſe of the Word *Yoke* to Doctrine only, whenas the thing urged by that Doctrine, was the Yoke which the Children were as much to bear as their Parents, is as I ſaid but a weak Evaſion. I deny not but that adult Perſons are primarily meant and intended by Diſciples in this place: But that they only were ſo with Excluſion of little Children, is that which you will never be able to prove, ſince it's certain that the falſe Teachers did no leſs impoſe the Burthen of Circumciſion upon the Children than upon the Parents. Though it's true they began with the adult, and the Diſpute lay between the adult and them: For they could not impoſe upon the Children, but by procuring the Parents to accept of the Impoſition, both for themſelves and for their Children. In that Infants are not in an immediate and the moſt proper Capacity to learn of Chriſt, makes you think, I ſuppoſe, that the Scripture ſhould not call them Diſciples; But that need not make it incredible to you, when you conſider what I have already ſhew'd, and need not here repeat; how that little Children in Scripture-account, are eſteemed to be or to do this or that in a religious reſpect, when yet they are but firſt put into a way, or but brought near a proper Capacity of being or doing it; when they are but placed in ſuch Circumſtances as will iſſue there, and which makes it viſible to Men that they will do ſo. How elſe ſhould little Children be ſtiled Believers, and be ſaid to do ſeveral other things every whit as remote from their Capacity in the propereſt Senſe, as their learning of Chriſt is? I could ſhew, I think, by many Inſtances in Scripture, that things are ſaid to be, or to be done, when they are but viſible in their Foundation or Cauſe.

Thus (to give you one inſtance) our Saviour ſaid of the Family of *Zacheus*, *This Day is Salvation come to this Houſe, for as much as he alſo is the Son of Abraham*, Luke xix. 9. The Name of the Effect is given to the viſible cauſe; Salvation is ſaid then to be come to the Family of *Zacheus*, becauſe he himſelf being become a Son of *Abraham*, would in all Probability be a means of bringing his Houſhold to be ſo too. Beſides, in Scripture-account, as are the Parents, ſo are their little Children reputed to be. If the Parents are counted *the Seed of the Bleſſed of the Lord, ſo are their Offſpring with them*, Iſa. lxv. 23. Pſal. xxxvii. 26. If they are called from the reſt of the World into a near Relation to God, as his ſpecial or peculiar People, or to be his *Diſciples* (which is but another Name for the ſame thing, *Iſa.* viii. 16.) ſo were and are their Children with them. And in ſome ſort they are accounted to do that in their ſomewhat remote religious Progenitors (much more in their immediate Parents) which they did. And thus *Levi paid Tithes in Abraham*, Heb. vii. 9. And when our Saviour ſaid, *Whoſo ſhould receive one of thoſe little Children*, he ſpoke of, *in his Name, would receive himſelf*; it is intimated that in doing ſo, they ſhould receive ſuch Child as ſpecially related to him as Diſciples are. And to receive them in his Name, and to receive them as his *Diſciples*, ſeem to be two Words ſignifying but the ſame thing, as appears by comparing *Mark* ix. 41. with *Matth.* x. 42. Where both expreſs the ſame thing in different Phraſes. That which one calls a giving to one a Cup of Water in *Chriſt's Name*, *becauſe he belongs to Chriſt*, the other calls, *a giving it to one in the Name of a Diſciple.* And to receive little Children into the Church of Chriſt (which is one way of receiving them in his Name) which is his Family, is to receive them as Diſciples or Scholars into his School, as deſigned by him there to learn his Doctrine, which may well give them the Denomination of his Diſciples. And the account which I have now given why little Children are called *Diſciples*, may ſerve as Reaſons alſo why they are ſaid to *believe* in Chriſt.

Having now heard what Doctrine our Saviour himſelf and his Apoſtles after him have taught concerning the little Children of believing Parents, and in what viſible State they ſtand in relation to Chriſt and to his Church, I think you will find little room left for you ſo much as but once to imagine that the Goſpel when it took place, put a Period to the viſible Church-Memberſhip of Infants.

Let us now conſider from what hath been ſaid, in what Capacity ſuch Infants ſtand in reference to Baptiſm. And can any Man, that doth conſider them, *forbid Water that theſe ſhould not be baptized?* If ſuch Infants are as much of the Church, and as much *Abraham's* Spiritual Seed, as ever Infants in the Old-Teſtament-Church were, then they can be no more uncapable than they were of a ſolemn Admiſſion into the Church by the Ordinance of Initiation for the time being, as Baptiſm is now, as Circumciſion was then. That which qualifies any for viſible Church Memberſhip, certainly qualifies them for Baptiſm. *All were baptized into one Body* that were of it, 1 *Cor.* xii. 13. And ſuch Infants can be no leſs capable of the Spiritual Ends of Baptiſm now, than they were of the Spiritual Ends of Circumciſion then, which were, and which are, much-what the ſame. And if it be ſo acceptable a thing to Chriſt, for us to receive one ſuch little Child in his Name, as that he takes it as well as if we received him, nay, takes himſelf to be received in our ſo receiving it (which could not well be if it were not a Member of his Body the Church) can you then think it a thing diſpleaſing to him to baptize ſuch in his Name, whenas that is a ſacred Rite appointed by him for a ſolemn receiving ſuch in his Name into his Church, as do belong to him, as doubtleſs ſuch Infants do, or elſe they could not be received in his Name? And when Chriſt hath given Commiſſion to diſciple all Nations and baptize them; can you fanſie, That the ſame Commiſſion implies a Prohibition to baptize little Children though they are *Diſciples?* If little Children are made Diſciples in their Parents being made ſo, and that in God's account, and by his Appointment, then to baptize them certainly cannot be a Deviation from Chriſt's Commiſſion to baptize Diſciples. And laſtly, If our Saviour hath ſaid it of ſome little Children, that they believe in him, then the ſame Commiſſion which authorizeth the baptizing of Believers, muſt authorize the baptizing of them. The Commiſſion is general to baptize Diſciples indefinitely, and therefore muſt needs extend to all that are ſo, or that are Believers, though but in the loweſt Senſe. Theſe are no forced, or far-fetch'd Conſequences, but flow naturally from their Premiſes.

And whereas the Scripture ſpeaks of Baptiſm, as the Sacrament of Regeneration or new Birth, which you make as an Argument againſt the Adminiſtration of it to Infants, by reaſon of their Incapacity for Regeneration: You ſhould conſider, firſt, That Circumciſion was a Sacrament of Regeneration as well as Baptiſm is, and yet Infants were not uncapable of it upon any ſuch account. Circumciſion in the Letter was a ſign of Spiritual Circumciſion, of that made without hands, the Circumciſion of the Heart, and was a Seal of the Righteouſneſs of Faith. And what thing more Spiritual than this, is, I pray you, ſignified by Baptiſm? Which conſidered, the Spirituality of Baptiſm, in Nature or Uſe, is no more an Argument againſt Infants Capacity for Baptiſm, than the Spiritual Uſe of Circumciſion was an Argument againſt that. And this is ſufficient to take off your Argument.

But you may conſider yet farther, That Infants, even while ſuch, muſt needs be capable of Regeneration in one Senſe or other; unleſs you will ſay, They are not in a ſalvable State, which yet you have not been wont to ſay; or elſe, That unregenerate Perſons may go to Heaven and be ſaved, contrary to that of our Saviour, *John* iii. 3. *Except a Man be born again, he cannot ſee the Kingdom of God.* And therefore you ſeem to be under a neceſſity of granting Infants to be capable of Regeneration in a Senſe more or leſs Proper. And if you think Regeneration, moſt properly and ſtrictly taken, to be incompetent to an Infant-ſtate, as Regeneration ſignifies that new State into which a Perſon is brought by a change in the Frame and Temper of the Mind and Will, and by a regulation of the Motions and Operations of the Soul, in reference to their ſeveral Objects; then you muſt be conſtrained to accept of another ſenſe of Regeneration, and ſuch as is more competent to an Infant-ſtate; unleſs, as I ſaid, you will ſay, That Perſons may go to Heaven in an unregenerate State. Now therefore ſince the Word tranſlated *Regeneration*, according to the Aſſertion of Learned Men, and the Reaſon and Nature of the thing it ſelf, doth properly ſignifie a *new or ſecond State*; it follows, That if it can be proved, that Infants are brought into a new or ſecond State, or capacity of being happy, other than what is natural to them, as deriving from *Adam*, or their immediate Parents, which is called a being *born of Blood*, (John i. 13.) then they may be ſaid to be in a regenerate State. And that the whole Race of *Adam* are put into a *new ſtate* or capacity for Happineſs by the ſecond *Adam*, after they had loſt it by the firſt, until they fall into actual Rebellion againſt God by actual Sin in their own Perſons (of which ſure they are in no danger while they are but in the Infant-ſtate) may, I conceive, be ſufficiently evinced from *Rom.* v. 18. where the Apoſtle ſays, *As by the Offence of one, Judgment came upon all Men to Condemnation; even ſo by the Righteouſneſs of one the Free-gift came upon all Men unto the Juſtification of Life.* And the ſame might be back'd by many other Scriptures. And it may well be, that it was in reſpect of this new State, into which little Children are brought by Chriſt the ſecond *Adam*, that our Saviour ſaid, *Of ſuch is the Kingdom of God.* Now ſo far as Baptiſm ſignifies our Communion, in the Virtue of Chriſt's Death and Reſurrection, by which our State is changed, as well as our Conformity to it, by a moral Change in our *Nature*; there is in Infants, or conferred upon them, that Spiritual Grace which anſwers the outward Sign in Baptiſm. And that ſuch a change of Condition, as to be raiſed out of a ſtate of Death, into which we were brought *for Sin*, into a ſtate of Life, by *Forgiveneſs of Sin*, by Virtue of Chriſt's Death and Reſurrection, is called a *being quickned together with him*, as well as that moral Change which is made by Sanctification, is a thing which ſeems fairly to lie in thoſe words, *Col.* ii. 13. *And you being dead in your Sins, and the Uncircumciſion of your Fleſh, hath he quickned together with him, having forgiven you all treſpaſſes.* And let me ſay this farther, that it ſeems not improper, neither to ſay, That Infants are dead to Sin, to actual Sin in their own Perſons, in as much as we cannot ſay, *That Luſt hath conceived* in them, ſo as *to bring forth Sin*, by any conſent of Will: Though it's true, they are not dead to it, as having mortified it; they having not yet, while Infants, contracted any ill Habits to mortifie. So that as burying with Chriſt in Baptiſm, ſignifies a Death unto Sin in the Perſon baptized, there is in ſome ſort that in Infants which anſwers the outward Sign in Baptiſm in that reſpect alſo. Theſe things conſidered, you may well infer, That if that *new State*, into which Infants are brought, be in ſome reſpect a new Birth, a Birth from above, and ſuch as puts them into an immediate capacity for Salvation, as well as Regeneration, in the common Acceptation of it, does the Adult, (and you ſee by what reaſon you are perſuaded to believe it is) then you have as great, yea greater certainty of the regenerate State of Infants, in this ſenſe, than you have of the regenerate State of any Adult Perſons, in the other Notion of Regeneration; and conſequently a more certain Ground to baptize them, ſo far as Regeneration in a Perſon is a Reaſon or Ground of baptizing him, than you have to baptize the Adult.

Dr. *Hammond's* Annot. *Matth.* xix. 28.

Conſidering farther, that the words of our Saviour's Commiſſion did run in general Terms to diſciple all Nations, and baptize them, how can you think, that the Jews or the Apoſtles themſelves could underſtand otherwiſe thereby, than that the Children of the converted Gentiles and Jews too, ſhould, with their Parents, be received as Proſelytes to the Chriſtian Religion, and as ſuch baptized, unleſs they had caution to the contrary; which if they had, there would have been no place for Controverſie in this matter. The reaſon of the unlikelihood of their underſtanding otherwiſe, is taken from a Uſage among the Jews, by which they did initiate Proſelytes, both Fathers and Children, from among the Nations of the Gentiles, by *baptizing* as well as *circumciſing* them. A thing which is acknowledged by the more Learned among your ſelves, and which you may find recited by ſeveral of our *Engliſh* Authors, out of the Writings of the ancient Jewiſh Doctors, as by Dr. *Hammond* for one, in his *Annotations* upon *Matth.* iii. 1. *John* iii. 5. See alſo *Ainſworth* on *Gen.* xvii. 12. The Reception of the Proſelytes into the Church in this way, the Jews eſteemed a *new Birth*: Unto which our Saviour ſeems to refer in his diſcourſe with *Nicodemus*, when he ſaid, *Except a Man be born again of Water and of the Spirit, he cannot enter into the Kingdom of God*, John iii. And when *Nicodemus* groſly miſunderſtood our Saviour, and demanded, *How can theſe things be?* Our Saviour replied, and ſaid, *Art thou a Maſter in Iſrael, and knoweſt not theſe things?* As if he ſhould have ſaid, Is this any ſuch ſtrange thing, which is ſo like what is familiarly practiſed among your ſelves? This conſidered, they, by Chriſt's commanding them to diſciple or proſelyte all Nations, baptizing them, could not well underſtand, but that they were now to go abroad into all the World, to proſelyte the Nations to Chriſtianity, and to enter them in the Chriſtian Church by Baptiſm, both Parents and Children, like as now and then a Family of them had been formerly proſelyted to the Jews Religion, and received into their Church. And accordingly the recorded Inſtances in Scripture, of Perſons baptized that had Houſholds, makes it probable, in conjunction with other Circumſtances, That when the Father, or chief of a Family, was converted to Chriſtianity, and baptized, his Houſhold was baptized alſo, as it had been before practiſed in the reception of Proſelytes. Of all thoſe in Scripture, who by Name or Perſonal Deſcription, are ſaid to have been baptized, there are but nine, ſo far as I remember, beſides our Saviour; to wit, *Simon Magus*, the *Eunuch*, *Saul* called *Paul*, *Cornelius*, *Lydia*, the *Gaoler*, *Criſpus*, *Gaius*, and *Stephanus*. The *Eunuch* had no Children, and was baptized upon the Road. *Paul* had none, not being married. Whether *Simon* had, or had any Houſhold, is not ſaid. And whether *Gaius* at that time had any Houſhold, when he was baptized, is uncertain. But the other five of the nine, who had Houſholds, their Houſholds came into the Church with them, by Baptiſm, as the Houſholds of the Proſelytes formerly had done. If then we may make a Judgment of what was uſually done, by ſo many Inſtances in Scripture, as we have of what was done in this caſe, we ſhall not want Reaſon to incline us to think, That when the Apoſtles did baptize any that had Houſholds, that it was their uſual practice to baptize all thoſe alſo that were of their Houſholds, except ſuch as *rejected the Counſel of God, againſt themſelves, and were not baptized*, which little Children could not do. It was not without its Signification, that of old the great Promiſe of Grace to the World by the *Meſſias* was made to Families, *In thy Seed ſhall all the Families of the Earth be bleſſed:* As if God's deſign, ſignified thereby, was to bring the Nations of the World into the Church by Families, as the Event ſhews he hath done, for the moſt part, both before and ſince the Goſpel-diſpenſation. The Proſelytes of the Gentiles of old, as well as the Jews, came in by Families: And we ſee, by the Inſtances before-mentioned, that the Chriſtians came in by Families, and were baptized by Families alſo. And the Church hath been ſtock'd by Families, and the Chriſtian Religion tranſmitted down from Age to Age, from Parents to Children, and from Maſters to Servants.

It will ſeem the leſs ſtrange to you, that when the Father of the Family was converted to Chriſtianity, his Houſhold was brought into the Church with him, if you conſider upon how ſmall appearance of becoming Chriſtians, adult Perſons were baptized and received into the Church in the Apoſtles days, and by them. When we read in 1 *Cor.*viii. 7, 11. That ſuch as *unto that hour continued to eat of the Idol-ſacrifice with Conſcience of the Idol*, are yet called *Brethren*, though weak Brethren indeed, you may eaſily gueſs upon how little appearance of Chriſtianity Perſons were received into the Church; and ſo you may by the baptizing of *Simon Magus*, and many others, that ſoon proved great Scandals in the Church, by whom the way of Truth was evil ſpoken of. When, in the ſame hour of the Night in which St. *Paul* preached the Goſpel to the *Gaoler* and his Houſhold, they were all baptized; they did not long ſtand Candidates for Church-memberſhip, nor could attain to much knowledge in the Chriſtian Religion, into which they were baptized. No doubt alſo but the door into the viſible Church is far wider than the Gate of the Church as inviſible, and of the Kingdom of Heaven. I do not find that any were refuſed that were willing preſently to be baptized, how bad ſoever they had been before, or proved to be after, no not *Simon Magus* himſelf, than whom there could hardly be a worſe. But then it muſt be remembred, that the Diſcipline was appointed for the cure of Diſtempers in the Church, and for the purging it of the notorious ſcandalous Members.

Theſe things I have the rather mentioned, to render it the more probable, that little Children were baptized where whole Houſholds were baptized, when there were any ſuch in thoſe Houſholds. For if adult and grown Perſons were baptized and received into the Church upon ſuch eaſie terms, as I have ſhewed they were: If they were baptized when there was but any fair probability that they would own the Chriſtian Religion for the future, though but by ſo little appearance of ſuch a thing as was viſible in ſome of them when they were baptized; Then it is not unlikely but that they might baptize ſome little Children alſo, concerning whom, Circumſtances conſider'd, there was every whit as great a probability that they would own, profeſs, and aſſert the Chriſtian Religion for the future, as there was that their Parents would: In as much as Parents ſtill uſe to educate their Children in the ſame Religion which they themſelves profeſs.

Unto all which let me add this farther, That the Judaizing Chriſtians, who contended with the believing Gentiles for not obſerving the Law of *Moſes* in Circumciſion, Meats and Days, never that we find quarrelled with them for not entring their Children into the Church, as by the Law of *Moſes* they were to do when they themſelves were received as Proſelytes, nor for not baptizing them according to the cuſtom of the Jews, both in reference to their own Children, and the Children of Proſelytes. Nor do we find that the unbelieving Jews ever conteſted with them for any ſuch thing, though otherwiſe they were forward enough to lay hold of any thing they could to object againſt them. All which ſtill renders it probable, that there was no ſuch thing wanting in the believing Gentiles, as might give either the Judaizing Chriſtians or Unbelieving Jews any occaſion for ſuch a Quarrel, which otherwiſe we may well think would have riſen among them.

But leaving theſe things, ſuppoſe it were granted you (which yet will not be) that the Scripture were wholly ſilent as to matter of Fact touching the baptizing of Infants in the Apoſtles days; yet when we find in Scripture ſufficient reaſon why they might and ſhould have been then baptized, it may well induce belief that they then were and now may. We do not find, as to matter of Fact, that any of ſix of the ſeven Churches of *Aſia* were baptized, nor of ſome other Churches of the Apoſtle's planting: But yet that's no good Argument that there was none, ſo long as there is ground enough to conclude that they ought to have been baptized, for that they were a part of that one univerſal Church that hath *one Baptiſm* belonging to it, for the ſolemn Incorporation and Initiation of all its Members, of all that are qualified for Church-memberſhip. We do not read in Scripture that the Jews baptized the Proſelytes, both Fathers and Children, when they received them into the Church, and yet we are otherwiſe ſatisfied that they did. So that you ſee it can be no good Argument that Infants were not baptized in the Apoſtles days, though it ſhould be ſuppoſed and granted that we have no record in Scripture that they were. I have told you before, that if this way of arguing were good, it would oppoſe and run down your own Practice as much and more than Infant-Baptiſm. Becauſe there is nothing at all recorded in Scripture, as to matter of Fact, that gives the leaſt hint that any were baptized at Age, whoſe Parents were Chriſtian at their Birth. So that either the Baptiſm of Children is recorded in the recording of the Baptiſm of Houſholds, or elſe the Baptiſm of none is recorded in Scripture but of ſuch who immediately before their being baptized were converted from Judaiſm or Paganiſm: I mean, as to what was done after Chriſt's Reſurrection. This Argument from matter of Fact I know hath taken much with People of weak Minds, who cannot *ſee afar off*, as St. *Peter* ſpeaks in another caſe, and hath furniſhed your Congregations with Proſelytes to your way; but doth indeed wound your Cauſe, and gratifieth none but *Socinians* in their Opinion, that none ought to be baptized but ſuch as are newly converted to Chriſtianity from another Religion.

And it is not a thing to be ſlighted in reference to this matter of Fact, That Authors of good credit in the ancient Church, who lived in times not far diſtant from the Age in which the Apoſtles or one of them lived, did aſſert Infant-Baptiſm to be an *Apoſtolical Tradition*, and to have been received from them, and practiſed in the Church from their times downwards, as many Books before you have made it appear. And that which yet adds the more credit to their Teſtimony is, in that they were never contradicted in this their Report and Teſtimony by any that lived in the ſame Age with them, or near to it, no not by *Tertullian* himſelf, though otherwiſe in reference to his Opinion of all Sin paſt being waſh'd away by Baptiſm, he would have had it deferred, except in caſe of danger of Death in Infants, not only till Perſons were paſt Childhood, but till after Marriage and the heat of Youth was over, if not till old Age, or towards the time of Death. Neither could ever any Advocate of your Cauſe, ſo far as I can learn, give any account, ſhort of the Apoſtles times, of the firſt riſe of Infant-Baptiſm.

But not Example in matter of Fact, but the Reaſon and Ground on which they ſtand or do depend, is our Rule. And therefore the Reaſon and Ground from Scripture why ſome Infants may be baptized, I reckon is more to be attended to than the Evidence of Fact. And theſe I have laid before you already, and ſhewed: That the Reaſon of allowing the viſible Church-memberſhip of ſome Infants is the ſame now as it was in Old-Teſtament-times; ſuch as is God's chuſing them to it, ſanctifying and ſetting them a-part for it, and calling them to it. That God's gift in granting this privilege in the days of the Patriarchs, and his calling them to it, is *without Repentance* and unrepealed. That they are as much qualified for the Church-initiating Ordinance now as ever heretofore, and as capable of the ends thereof. That our Saviour hath owned their ſpecial relation to him, by appointing them to be received in his Name. That he hath acknowledged them to be of the number of thoſe that believe in him. And that our Saviour and his Apoſtle hath put them into the number of Diſciples. That they are in a ſenſe in a regenerate State. All which together, plainly ſhew them to be qualified for Baptiſm, according to the very Letter of Chriſt's Commiſſion. And if there be Subſtance in theſe Reaſons, as I doubt not but there is, then Infant-Baptiſm is far from being a *Nullity*. And whatever I have ſaid heretofore in times long ſince, contrary to the tenour of theſe Reaſons, I hereby *revoke*, and do think I have given you ſufficient Reaſon for my ſo doing, and for every one of you to do ſo likewiſe.

Conſidering then what lies in your way, you will find it a difficult task to ſatisfie your ſelves (or to give others any tolerable account that you can ſatisfie your ſelves) that Infant-Baptiſm is a *Nullity*. And it is ſo much the more unreaſonable for you to think that it is, when yet thoſe who have been baptized in their Infancy do agree with you in the Doctrine of Baptiſm, touching the Nature and Neceſſity of it, and the Reaſons and Ends of it; and hold themſelves as much obliged by it, as you do by yours: And, the ſincere of them, do as well and as much perform their Obligation, as thoſe among you do who are ſincere.

AND if theſe things be ſo, as I have endeavoured to repreſent them from the Scriptures; and if Infant-Baptiſm be indeed no Nullity: Then ſo many of you muſt needs be under a dangerous miſtake, and guilty of the odious Sin of Schiſm, who think it a ſufficient ground to ſeparate from Chriſtian Congregations, for that they have not been otherwiſe baptized than in their Infancy, and which deny Church-Communion with them to be lawful for that reaſon, and practiſe upon it accordingly. For this is a *Cauſleſs and unwarrantable Rent and Breach made in the Body of Chriſt the univerſal Church*: Which is *Schiſm* in the formality of it. Nay, it is Schiſm of a higher nature than ordinary. The Schiſm in the Church of *Corinth*, and the like in other Churches, which was ſo much condemned in the Apoſtles Epiſtles, as that ſcarce any thing was more, was but a proud, uncharitable, and unpeaceable Faction, and ſiding in a particular Church, which did not proceed ſo high as to Separation of one part of the Church from the other in publick Worſhip, and Church-Communion. Nor was ſuch a thing at all practiſed then by any Chriſtians, upon any occaſion, though there were great diſorders among them, but only by ſuch as St. *Jude* ſaith, *were ſenſual, not having the ſpirit*, ver. 19.

And if Schiſm was ſo highly condemned when it never roſe to that height among Chriſtians as to deny Communion one with another in the publick Worſhip to be lawful: What can we think of ſuch a Schiſm then, as for you *without cauſe* to deny the lawfulneſs of holding Communion with almoſt all the Churches of Chriſt in the World (except thoſe few Congregations which have been re-baptized) and to practiſe accordingly; not to mention your cenſuring them to be no true Churches, nor any Member of them properly a Chriſtian, but People of the World? If the little Schiſms in the Church, which never proceeded to Separation, were thought of ſuch ill conſequence by the Apoſtles, as that they laboured hardly in any thing more in their Epiſtles, than to prevent and ſuppreſs them: Then certainly ſuch a Schiſm as yours cannot in reaſon but be of as much more a criminal Nature, and of ſo much worſe Conſequence, as the Unchurching of almoſt all Chriſtian Churches in the World, is worſe than thoſe leſſer Diviſions in the Church were; notwithſtanding which they kept on foot their Communion in the ſolemn Worſhip. The Schiſm, which conſiſted in Separation, we ſee was perpetrated by none then but thoſe vile *Gnoſticks*, who though they pretended to more Knowledge and Perfection than was in them they withdrew from; yet ſuch was the Opinion the Apoſtles had of them and their Separation, as that they were not afraid to ſay, they were *ſenſual, not having the Spirit*. Which I note, not as judging you to be as bad Men as thoſe *Gnoſticks* were, (ſetting aſide your Schiſm) but to put you in mind, that notwithſtanding the great Diſorders that were in thoſe Churches, and the want of the due Exerciſe of Diſcipline in the Church of *Corinth*, and ſeveral of the ſeven Churches of *Aſia*, yet no good Chriſtians then ever attempted to erect ſeparate Communities for Reformation ſake, much leſs were ever encouraged ſo to do by the Apoſtles, but the quite contrary.

Now if the Apoſtles had ſuch a deep Senſe of the miſchievous Nature and Effects of Schiſm, as put them upon ſuch ſtrenuous endeavours to prevent or ſuppreſs it, as we find they uſed: Methinks this ſhould awaken you to reflect upon your ſelves and what you have done by your Separation, in making ſuch a rent as you have done in the Church of God, and what the Effects of it have been.

I know you cannot be without all Senſe of what ſad Effects our Church-Diviſions have produced; ſuch as is the expoſing of our holy Religion, to the Scorn and Contempt of Atheiſts, Infidels, and Papiſts, and the tempting of thoſe to become ſuch which were not ſo before: And ſuch as is the diſcompoſing, unſetling, and confounding the Minds of many well-meaning, and well-deſigning, but injudicious People, to the betraying them into the hands of Seducers, who have made their advantage of our Diviſions: And ſuch as is the diverting of Mens minds from the ſerious Conſideration, Study, and Practice of the weightier Matters of Religion, and the engaging them in contentious Janglings, and uncharitable Cenſurings and Revilings, to the Deſtruction of true Chriſtian Charity and Piety, and the placing Religion much in Opinion, and in being of a different Form and Party; and ſuch as is the expoſing of us all to the Danger of the breaking in of Popery, by ſtrengthening their hands who are of that way, and by weakening their own, and by encouraging them in hopes of prevailing at laſt to practiſe upon us, and by all their Arts to improve the advantage we have put into their hands by our Diviſions and Diſtractions. You cannot be ignorant how many have taken their way to *Quakeriſm and Scepticiſm* through your Congregations; like *wandering Stars*, having firſt left the Parochial Aſſemblies, have promiſed themſelves this and that Satisfaction, firſt in one new Form and then in another, until they have run themſelves out of Breath, and at laſt quite loſt themſelves, and ſeldom returning.

And if upon Review and Examination you find, as doubtleſs you may, that your Separation, which with the Separation of others, hath brought forth ſuch bitter Fruit, hath proceeded on miſtaken Grounds, and been undertaken without any juſt cauſe: What work then will here be for Repentance, that ever you have been acceſſary to ſuch Miſchiefs as thoſe before-mentioned are, and what need is there for you that are Leaders, to ſound a *Retreat* to your Followers! I can aſſure you it hath been Matter of no ſmall humbling to ſome, when they have perceived the bad Effects of ſuch Separation, that ever they had their hands in it: The Senſe of which bad Effects alſo, firſt put them upon ſuch a ſerious Review of the grounds on which they firſt ſet out in it, as by means whereof they came to diſcover the Weakneſs and Unſoundneſs of thoſe grounds. And as what I have herein done to help you to a ſight of your Miſtake, is intended as a real Service to you; ſo I ought to preſume that it cannot but be judged to be ſo by ſuch as are ſincere Lovers of Truth, if they can receive thereby any ſuch Benefit as is deſigned them by it.

And if any ſhall receive Conviction, and yet for their Reputation ſake among their Party, and for fear of the Reproach of Inconſtancy, ſhall ſtill perſiſt in their way contrary to the Conviction of their own mind; let them conſider, that ſuch will hardly be able to *buy* the *Truth* with the Price of Liberty, Eſtate, or Life, that are ſcared from a publick owning of it, by the corrupt Breath of ſuch injudicious and heady Perſons, which cannot excuſe them by anſwering for them to God, to whom every one muſt *give an account for himſelf*. Let it be remembred, who and what they were who *believed on Chriſt*, and yet would not confeſs that they did, becauſe *they loved the Praiſe of Men*, of their own Party, *more than the Praiſe of God*, John xii. 42, 43. and who they were that *could not believe, becauſe they ſought Honour one of another, and not the Honour that comes from God only*, John v. 44. I the rather mention theſe things to you, becauſe I know in part how ſtrong a Temptation of this nature is, and how hard to be overcome. But let it be conſidered, that it is not counted a Diſparagement to any Man that he is not infallible, whenas it is truly diſhonourable for any to carry it as confidently as if he were, when almoſt all knowing and good Men in the World, are of another mind. It is in the Judgment of the wiſeſt, truly commendable and Praiſe-worthy, for a Man to acknowledge and retract his Error when he is convinced of it. If this ſhould not be admitted, what place is left for Men to grow in Knowledge, or to perfect that which is lacking in their Repentance, which is not done without a change of Mind? There are few Men that arrive at any great Wiſdom, but have found occaſion to alter their Opinion in many things.

THere is another Principle of Separation beſides this of Infant-Baptiſm, which is common both to you and thoſe of the *Congregational way:* And though you differ in the former, yet in this you are one. This Principle of Separation conſiſts in an Opinion, *That none are to be held Communion with in Church-Fellowſhip, who are not in the Judgment of the Church ſavingly called and ſavingly ſanctified:* Which you and they call *a Judgment of Charity or of Diſcretion.* This is an Opinion, and the practiſing upon it a thing plainly contradicted by the Teſtimony of the Scriptures both in the Old-Teſtament and the New. This I have ſhewed already in this Diſcourſe. And to what I have already ſaid, I ſhall add one or two things more. The one is, that herein you and they take upon you to judge in Matters, wherein you neither are nor can be competent Judges. He that judgeth a Man to have ſaving Grace or not to have it, muſt paſs a Judgment of what is in the Heart, and not of his outward Actions only. And this is the Prerogative of God only, who as the Scripture ſaith, *only knows the Hearts of the Children of Men*, 1 Kings viii. 39. and therefore may not be uſurped by Men. It's true indeed we may and muſt judge the beſt of Men with a Judgment of Charity ſo far as there is any ground to hope well of them in reference to their ſtate Godward; but we muſt not take upon us to judge in the *Negative*, againſt Men in the worſe Senſe; that is, that they have no ſaving Grace, or which is the ſame, that they are in a damnable condition, except they have thoſe black Characters on them, for which the Scripture expreſly excludes them from having *any Inheritance in the Kingdom of God and of Chriſt*, ſuch as are enumerated in 1 *Cor.* vi. 9, 10. *Gal.* v. 19, 20, 21. We may judge of Mens declared Principles and Actions in order to their Reception to, or Rejection, or at leaſt Suſpenſion from the Communion of the Church, when we may not judge of their ſtate Godward. A Man may be ſo ſcandalous as for which to be deprived of Communion with the Church, when yet we may not judge that Man to have no Grace. *If any Man obey not our Word by this Epiſtle, note that Man, and have no Company with him, that he may be aſhamed. Yet count him not as an Enemy, but admoniſh him as a Brother*, 2 Theſſ. iii. 14, 15. The reaſon of all which I have ſignified already, which is, becauſe we are incompetent Judges in this, at leaſt unleſs they are monſtrouſly wicked Perſons. The parting difference between the loweſt degree of ſaving Grace, and that which is but common Grace is ſo little, and to the wiſeſt of Men ſo undiſcernable, that it is impoſſible but that they will be in great danger of judging them to have no ſaving Grace that have, who ſit in Judgment upon that Matter: Yea, and of depriving them alſo of thoſe Church-Privileges which according to your own Tenent they have a right to, having ſaving Grace. And thus, in going about to weed out the Tares, *you will root up the Wheat alſo*, contrary to the Mind of our Maſter, *Matth.* xiii. 29. When our Saviour ſaith, *Judge not that ye be not judged*, Matth. vii. 1. as he would not have us ſevere in judging other Mens Words and Actions, or Intentions, ſo much leſs their State and ſtanding before God. *Who art thou that judgeſt another Man's Servant? To his own Maſter he ſtandeth or falleth*, Rom. xiv. 4. And again, *Who art thou that judgeſt another?* James iv. 12. St. *Paul* ſaith of him that is a Jew, not outwardly but inwardly, and whoſe Circumciſion is not outward in the Fleſh, but inwardly in the Heart, *That his Praiſe or Approbation is not of Men but of God:* It is not of Men *deciſively* or determinately, but of God only who knoweth the Heart. And if it be not of Men, then Men ſhould not attempt it or undertake it, *Rom.* ii. 28, 29. That's one thing.

Another which reſpects thoſe of the Congregational way chiefly, is this: That their Practice in Purſuance of their Principle aforeſaid, is contrary to the conſtant Practice of the Apoſtles and primitive Chriſtians. We do not find, that they refuſed any adult Perſons Communion with them in the Supper of the Lord, who had been received into the Univerſal Church by Baptiſm, but only in caſe of being orderly proceeded againſt in a way of Church-Cenſure for notorious ſcandalous Offences: But that ſuch as were baptized *continued ſtedfaſtly in the Apoſtles Doctrine, and in breaking of Bread and Prayer*, Acts ii. 41, 42. And the Proſelyte Strangers of old who were circumciſed, were by God's Appointment admitted to the ſame Church Privileges as the Jews were, *Exod.* xii. 49. Whereas thoſe of the Congregational way, though they baptize their Children, yet refuſe them Church-Communion when they are grown, if they have any ſtrong Suſpicion that they have no ſaving Grace, although they never came under Church-Cenſure for notorious ſcandalous Offences. Which is an arbitrary and unſcriptural way of proceeding, and ſo much the worſe in them who ſcruple ſome things, becauſe not commanded in Scripture, though they be not forbidden. So that their foreſaid Principle of Separation in Conjunction with their practice of baptizing their Children, renders them inconſiſtent in their way, and their way contradictious in it ſelf.

There are farther great Inconveniences, to ſay no worſe, attending this Practice of theirs.

Firſt, They have hereby prepared a way to Anabaptiſm, and give occaſion for many to take their way to that through their Congregations, as *taking a degree* towards it there. For when ſome have perceived the Interferings that are in their way in baptizing Perſons into the Univerſal Church, and yet not to receive them into their particular Churches, nor permitting them Communion with them therein when come to Age, notwithſtanding their Profeſſion of the Chriſtian Religion, but upon a new account of ſpecial Grace; they have been thereby drawn to think the Anabaptiſts more true to their Principles than they, and that then the baptizing of Perſons may be as well deferred till they have ſpecial Grace, as their particular Church Memberſhip may, and ſo upon that account among others, have gone over to them.

Secondly, Hereby ſome who may have no ſaving Grace, are in great danger of being betrayed into Self-Flattery, and into a being confident that they have, becauſe ſo good and knowing a Congregation as they eſteem ſuch a Church to be, hath judged that they have; and ſo reſt ſecure in an unſafe Condition. Which made ſeveral of the *New-England* Miniſters, after their long Experience of the Effects of this way, at laſt in their joint Anſwer to Mr. *Davenport*'s *Apologetical Preface*, p. 43, 44. to ſay thus: *Indeed when Men confound theſe two, and do tie viſible Church-Memberſhip unto ſuch Conditions and Qualifications, as are enough to Salvation: This may tend to harden Men, and to make them conceit, that if they be got into the Church, they are ſure of Heaven; whenas alas it may be they are far from it.*

Thirdly, A Guiltineſs of a great Schiſm in the Church, and conſequently of the many ſad Effects of it, ſome of which I have mentioned before. If the Separation built upon the Principle under Conſideration, had been Matter of Duty by virtue of that Principle, they that have engaged in it would not have been accountable for the Evils conſequent upon it, no more than they were of ſetting Father againſt Son, and Son againſt Father, Mother againſt Daughter, and Daughter againſt Mother, by preaching the Goſpel, *Luke* xii. 53. But whoſoever hath undertaken a Separation from, though but part of the Church, upon inſufficient Grounds and miſtaken Principles, muſt be accountable for the ill Effects and Conſequences of it, until they repent and leave off, as well as for the Schiſm it ſelf which cauſed them. But now I have already repreſented to you, why a Judgment in the Church that Perſons have not ſaving Grace, cannot be the Rule of Non-Admiſſion of them to particular Church-Communion, ſuppoſing them to have been baptized into the Church Univerſal: And I have ſhewed likewiſe how that in the account of Scripture, ſuch have been viſible Church-Members, and externally related to God and to Chriſt, and called by his Name, and denominated Saints, upon another account than that of ſaving Grace or internal Holineſs. Which if truly repreſented, then it cannot be matter of Duty but the contrary, to ground a Separation from ſuch Congregations as are conſtituted upon other Terms, and becauſe they are ſo.

In that thoſe of the Churches mentioned in Scripture have been ſtiled Saints, it is no Argument why none are to be admitted to Church-Fellowſhip but ſuch as are Saints in a ſaving Senſe, though this Principle of Separation I now ſpeak of, is wont to be grounded on that. For ſome in thoſe Churches which were not Saints in that Senſe, were yet ſtiled Saints from their being ſeparated and ſet apart to own and profeſs the worſhipping of the moſt holy God only, and to be of his holy Religion, as I have ſhewed both in this Diſcourſe and elſewhere more at large. Saints then was the common Appellation of thoſe that profeſs the Chriſtian Religion, as Chriſtian is now: And was not then uſed to diſcriminate the ſincere from the unſound Chriſtians, as it is now. This was a Device of a later Date, and is too like that of the Church of *Rome* which does appropriate the Honour of being Saints unto ſuch only as they eſteem to have been eminently Religious. The Concluſion then is, that if the Separation of theſe Friends with that of your own, be unaccountable from the Scriptures, then they and you muſt needs be accountable for it, as an unlawful and naughty Schiſm, and for the many Evils produced by it, until Pardon be obtained by Repentance, which none can promiſe themſelves, but upon Reformation.

THE laſt thing I ſhall obſerve from the foregoing Diſcourſe, is, that it doth afford us a ſubſtantial ground for *National Churches:* That is, it affords us ground to conclude, that the whole Body of a Nation, who are baptized into the Univerſal Church, and that profeſs God's true Religion, are in that reſpect *ſubject-matter* of a Church; though this is indeed a thing which lies croſs to your Thoughts, and which you are wont to oppoſe with ſome Indignation. The whole Body of the Nation of the Jews, as was ſhewed before, were by God's Call and their Profeſſion, *Abraham*'s Spiritual Seed, and as ſuch were *Church-matter*, and a Church *inorganically* conſidered. And for the ſame reaſon, if the whole Body of a Nation now by God's Call and their Profeſſion of the true Religion, become *Abraham*'s Spiritual Seed, in a ſenſe, they muſt needs be as well National Church-matter, as the Nation of the Jews were.

Now that other Nations which have profeſs'd God's true Religion, have thereby become *Abraham*'s Spiritual Seed in a large ſenſe, as well as the Nation of the Jews ever were, we have good reaſon to believe, not only from the nature of the thing it ſelf, but alſo from the Scriptures. *The Lord ſaid unto Abraham, My Covenant is with thee, and thou ſhalt be a Father of many Nations: a Father of many Nations have I made thee*, Gen. xvii. 4, 5. Which is not to be underſtood in a reſtrained ſenſe, of his being a Father of many Nations, *by Natural Generation only*, but alſo, if not only, of his being *a Spiritual Father* of many Nations, who were to derive their being, and what they ſhould be in a Spiritual or Religious capacity, from him from whom the true ſaving Doctrine hath been ſince propagated; firſt, to the Nation of the Jews, and then to the Nations of the Gentiles. And thus St. *Paul* interprets the aforeſaid Promiſe of God to *Abraham*, Rom. iv. 16, 17.——*That the Promiſe might be ſure to all the Seed, not to that only which is of the Law, but to that alſo which is of the Faith of Abraham, who is the Father of us all, as it is written, I have made thee a Father of many Nations.* Now if *Abraham* be, hath been, and ſhall be, a ſpiritual Father of many Nations, then many Nations muſt needs be his ſpiritual Children: For *Father* and *Children* are co-relatives, and in what ſenſe the one is a Father, the other muſt be his Children. And when St. *Paul* ſaith, *If ye be Chriſt's, then are ye Abraham's Seed*, (Gal. iii. 29.) is true of all that are ſo, and in the ſame ſenſe in which Men are Chriſt's, in that ſenſe they are *Abraham*'s Seed, whether it be by Profeſſion only, or by a ſound Faith alſo.

And in correſpondence to all this, *the Kingdoms of this World are ſaid to become the Kingdoms of the Lord and of his Chriſt.* Which muſt be underſtood of their becoming Profeſſors of the Goſpel of Chriſt, or the Chriſtian Religion, *Revel.* xi. 15. And this hath come to paſs, according as was foretold by the Prophets, as well as to *Abraham* himſelf. To inſtance in one, inſtead of many, *Zech.* ii. 11. *Many Nations ſhall be joined to the Lord in that day, and ſhall be my People.* As the Nation of the Jews were Nationally God's People, and God was the God of *Iſrael*; ſo here it's foretold, that many Nations nationally ſhould be joined to him, and be his People alſo, and conſequently he muſt be the God of thoſe Nations in the ſame ſenſe in which they are his People.

Thus far the matter is ſo evident, that one would think that nothing but an inveterate Prejudice, and prepoſſeſſion of a contrary Opinion unduly taken up, and an averſeneſs to confeſs your ſelves to have been miſtaken, ſhould hinder you from accepting of a Conviction in this matter, and of yielding up your Judgments as conquered by the Truth. To proceed then yet farther: If Nations, profeſſing the true Religion, are, in a more general ſenſe, *Abraham*'s ſpiritual Seed, and a People joined to the Lord, ſo as to be his People; then it is as well the Duty of the People, of ſuch Nations, to aſſociate and knit together in Chriſtian Congregations, for publick Worſhip in the places where they reſide, as it was for the Primitive Chriſtians, who lived in *Rome*, in *Corinth*, in *Cenchrea* by *Corinth*, &c. to aſſociate as they did in the ſame places for the ſame end; and accordingly thoſe Churches were called by the Names of the Places where they did reſide. And our Parochial Diſtribution is no more a Cauſe of Quarrel, than that was, that the Church of *Corinth* and the Church of *Cenchrea* were diſtinct upon the *only account*, that the Members of each lived in diſtinct places. And as the Diſtribution of the whole Nation of Profeſſors of Chriſtianity into particular Parochial Aſſemblies, beſt anſwers the *Primitive Pattern*, ſo it beſt anſwers the *Ends* of Church-Aſſociation, ſuch as the watching over, conferring with, admoniſhing, exhorting, and comforting one another, and the aſſembling together for publick Worſhip.

And when the Chriſtians in a Nation are thus diſpoſed of into Congregations, in places where they live, weak and ſtrong together, it is no ways agreeable to primitive Practice, nor to the general Ends of Church-Aſſociation, nor to the common good of particular Churches, or of the whole Body of Chriſtians in a Nation, for the ſtronger, the wiſer, the better, the more ſpiritual in thoſe Pariſh-Churches, to withdraw themſelves from the more ignorant, weak, and carnal Chriſtians, reſiding in the ſame place with them, into diſtinct and ſeparate Communities, ſo long as they can hold Communion with them, without ſinning in ſo doing. This the Primitive Chriſtians did not: And if no ſuch thing had been done in our Nation, the Church of God amongſt us would, doubtleſs, have been in no ſuch bad Circumſtances, as now it is.

As God hath placed in the Natural Body Members, ſome more neceſſary and uſeful than others, to be helpful and ſerviceable to the meaner, more helpleſs and leſs uſeful, for the good of the whole Body; ſo it is in Eccleſiaſtical Bodies. *God*, ſaith St. *Paul*, *hath tempered the Body together, having given more abundant honour to that part which lacked; that there ſhould be no Schiſm in the Body*, 1 Cor. xii. 24, 25. That there ſhould be no Schiſm in the Body: As to be ſure there will, and needs muſt, when that part is moſt neglected which lacketh moſt care and pains, and withdrawn from as if it were no part of the Body. This becomes a ſore Temptation to thoſe who are deſpiſed, to ſet againſt thoſe who deſpiſe them, and that again tempts them on the other ſide to oppoſe their Oppoſers, and ſo the Breach grows wider and wider, and ſpreads it ſelf through the whole Body of a Nation. And as the withdrawing live Coals from thoſe that are but a little kindled, is the way to put out the Fire; ſo is the withdrawing of the better Chriſtians from the worſe, not in a way of Church-Diſcipline, but into diſtinct Bodies, the direct way to ruine the Church, and to extinguiſh the Life and Heat of Religion in thoſe places where this is practiſed. I nothing doubt, but that thoſe who have taken this courſe, let the Provocation to it be what it will, might have conſulted the real and true Intereſt of Religion in the main, much better in another way. This way ſavours too much of Self-ſatisfaction, and neglect of others, to be of Chriſt, who would have the *ſtrong to bear the infirmities of the weak, and not to pleaſe themſelves*, after his own example, *Rom.* xv. New ways, many times, take much for a while, which do not end ſo well at laſt. *Enquire for the old way, and ſtand in the good way*, that in which the Primitive Chriſtians walked, if ye would find reſt and ſatisfaction in your own Minds, reſt to your Souls.

And if it be Matter of Duty in it ſelf, and according to primitive Practice, for all Chriſtian Profeſſors in a Nation thus to unite in particular Congregations in the places where they reſide, and not to make any Schiſm after, by one part withdrawing from the other into ſeparate Communities, ſo long as they can continue in their Communion without a neceſſity of ſinning; Then if the higher Powers in ſuch a Nation do exerciſe their Authority in commanding them to do this, which is of it ſelf their Duty, though they had not commanded it, and do likewiſe forbid and reſtrain their making of Schiſms by ſeparating, when they have no ſufficient or warrantable Cauſe to do it; this cannot make it leſs their Duty than it was of it ſelf before, and ſtill would be, were there no ſuch Command or Reſtraint from the higher Powers. No Man ſure can imagine, that if *Nero* had uſed his Authority in commanding the primitive Chriſtian Churches to do the ſame things which they were obliged to do, tho' he had not commanded it, as he did not; that *Nero*'s Command in that caſe would have made it any whit leſs their Duty, but the more.

It is not unbecoming, but very laudable, no doubt, for the higher Powers to concern themſelves and their Authority in promoting the Chriſtian Religion in their Dominions, by taking order, That God be publickly and ſolemnly worſhipped by the Chriſtians in the uſe of Goſpel-Ordinances: That Places for publick Worſhip be provided for that end: That Officers, competently qualified, be appointed to adminiſter thoſe Ordinances: That fitting Maintenance be appointed and provided them, that they may attend that Work without Diſtraction: That the People be required and commanded to attend the publick Worſhip, and that care be taken, that they may not be diſturbed in it: And finally, That Diſcipline be duly exerciſed, for the purging of the Churches, and for the keeping them pure. Suppoſing the Higher Powers and the People of a Nation to be Chriſtian, the very *Light* of Nature, and their *Love* to the Religion they profeſs, will dictate ſuch things as theſe, in the one to command, and the other to obey; and to uſe all due means to prevent Diviſions amongſt them, as being the moſt deſtructive to all Communities of Men, and to the flouriſhing of Religion.

I do not find, That, in the Law of *Moſes*, there was any Direction or Command in particular, That when that People ſhould chuſe them a King, that he ſhould uſe his Authority, in cauſing both Prieſts and People to do their Duty in the ſeveral parts of God's Worſhip, enjoined by *Moſes* his Law, any more than Kings now under the New Teſtament, are in particular appointed and required to ſee, That the Chriſtians under them, both Miniſters and People, do their Duty, in Matters relating to God's publick Worſhip. And yet when *Hezekiah*, for inſtance, to reſtore Religion, after a Decay of it, in his Dominions, commanded the Prieſts and Levites to do the Duty of their Places, according to the Law of *Moſes*; and with Advice of the Princes, ſummon'd the People of the Land to come and keep the Paſſover, and the like: In the Concluſion it is ſaid thus of him. *Thus did Hezekiah throughout all Judah, and wrought that which was right, and good, and true before the Lord his God: And in every Work which he began in the Service of the Houſe of God, and in the Law, and in the Commandments, to ſeek his God, he did it with all his Heart, and proſpered*, 2 Chron. xxxi. 20, 21. And if this, and the like, in other good Kings was highly acceptable to God, as we ſee it was; then we have little reaſon to think it ſhould be diſpleaſing to him, when Kings now do any thing like it. *He is the Miniſter of God, to thee for good*, ſaith St. *Paul*, Rom. xiii. 4. and ſo long as he promotes the publick Good, in things Temporal or Spiritual, Civil or Eccleſiaſtical, he is not out of his way. If it were a thing ſo well pleaſing to God, for *Abraham* to command his Children and his great Houſhold to keep the way of the Lord, as that God himſelf applauded him for it, *Gen.* xviii. 19. it cannot, certainly, be an Offence to him, for Kings to command their Subjects to do likewiſe. It was no ſmall Bleſſing that God promiſed to the Church, when he ſaid, That *Kings ſhould be their nurſing Fathers, and Queens their nurſing Mothers:* And it would be great Ingratitude, not to acknowledge it to be ſo, when they uſe their Power and Authority, not only to protect and incourage them in the Profeſſion of the Chriſtian Religion, but alſo in making Proviſion, as Nurſing Fathers for their Spiritual Nouriſhment, *Iſa.* xlix. And the Truth is, the more the higher Powers concern themſelves, in due ways to promote Religion in their Dominions, the more uſually it flouriſheth: As we ſee not only by Examples in the Scriptures and other Hiſtory, but Experience teacheth us that there is generally the leaſt Face of Religion in ſuch places as have been moſt neglected in the publick Proviſion.

I would adviſe thoſe among you, who are moſt tender in this point, touching the Magiſtrates Power in matters of Religion, to hear what is ſaid in anſwer to a Queſtion of this Nature, by *J.O.* in ſome Sheets intituled, *Two Queſtions concerning the Power of the ſupream Magiſtrate about Religion and the Worſhip of God; with one about Tithes, propoſed and reſolved:* Whoſe words I know they will more regard than anothers. The Queſtion is, *Whether the Supream Magiſtrate in a Nation or Commonwealth of Men, profeſſing the Religion of Jeſus Chriſt, may or ought to exert his Power Legiſlative and Executive, for the Supportment, Preſervation, and Furtherance of the Profeſſion of the Faith, and worſhip of God; and whether he may and ought to forbid, coerce, or reſtrain ſuch Principles and Practices as are contrary to them, and deſtructive of them?* The Anſwer to which, is managed under ten Heads of Arguments. *The Affirmative* (ſaith he) *of both parts of the Queſtion is proved.*

1. *From the Light and Law of Nature.*
2. *From the Law of Nations.*
3. *From God's Inſtitution in and by Laws poſitive, upon Doctrines of Faith and Ways of Worſhip, of pure Revelation.*
4. *From the Example of all godly Magiſtrates, accepted with God from the Foundation of the World.*
5. *From the Promiſe of Goſpel-times.*
6. *From the Equity of Goſpel-rules.*
7. *From the Confeſſion of all the* Proteſtant *Churches in the World.*
8. *From the Confeſſion of thoſe in particular, who ſuffer in the World, on account of the Largeneſs of their Principles, as to Toleration and Forbearance.*
9. *From the Spiritual Senſe of the Generality of godly Men in the World.*
10. *From the pernicious Conſequences of the contrary Aſſertion.*

This was good Doctrine in 1659.

And if upon Apprehenſion and Experience, ſuch higher Powers do judge that all the Chriſtian Miniſters and People in their Dominions, are never like to prove ſo wiſe and ſober, as not to abuſe an abſolute Liberty, by making *different Parties* in the Church, by chuſing *different ways of Adminiſtration:* And if to prevent this, and to preſerve Peace and Unity in the Church, as of great Concernment for their Edification and Comfort, and for the Honour and Reputation of the Chriſtian Religion, and for the better Propagation of it, they have thought it beſt to preſcribe ſome Method and Form to be uſed by all, it is to be ſeriouſly conſidered by you; That if nothing in that Method and Form be enjoined you as a condition of Communion, which is not ſinful for you to ſubmit to, then which is moſt eligible, whether to ſeparate, or to ſubmit to that Method and Form, though it ſhould not, in your Apprehenſion, be ſo uſeful, beneficial, and grateful to you, as a Liberty for you and your Miniſters would be, to uſe what way you liked beſt? If you ſay, to ſeparate is moſt eligible and fitteſt to be choſen in this caſe: Then you muſt prove that which no Man will ever (I think) be able to do, to wit, That it is lawful to break Churches to pieces upon the account only of ſome Conveniencies you deſire, and Inconveniencies which in your Apprehenſion you ſuffer, when otherwiſe you might lawfully and without defiling your ſelves with Sin, continue and maintain your Communion in thoſe Churches, to your own and their Edification with whom you were united. No doubt but the great Differences that were on foot between the Judaiſing and Gentile Chriſtians in the Apoſtles times, did ſomewhat burthen their Communion together in the ſame Church, with ſome conſiderable Inconvenience; and ſo did the ſcandalous Opinions and Practices of many in the ſeven Churches of *Aſia*, and other Churches, make the Communion which thoſe had with them who had *not defiled their Garments*, the leſs pleaſant and comfortable, and in ſome reſpect burthenſome to them. But we hear nothing of Separation and breaking of Churches in pieces upon that account, nor of any Encouragement given thereto by the Apoſtles, but the quite contrary.

To bring this Buſineſs down from above, let us try it a little in your own Court. Suppoſe the higher Powers ſhould not have concerned themſelves in preſcribing any common Form to be uſed in all particular Churches in their Dominions, but had left them all at liberty to do that which ſhould be right in their own Eyes. And ſuppoſe again that any other Eccleſiaſtical Power over the whole ſhould have thought fit to have preſcribed the ſame Form for all the Pariſh-Churches which now is preſcribed by the higher Powers in this Nation, or ſome other as diſſatisfactory to ſome. Nay, to go lower, ſuppoſe yet farther, that the ſeveral Pariſhes, or particular Churches had not been under any ſuch general Eccleſiaſtical Power, nor ruling over the whole neither, but each particular Congregation had been under its own Government only. And ſuppoſe in this caſe, that the ruling, prevailing, or major part in one or more ſuch Independent Congregations, ſhould have thought it fit to have ſuch a Form uſed in their own Congregation as is now preſcribed by our higher Powers, or ſhould have done, or cauſed to be done in the publick Adminiſtration, ſomething elſe as unacceptable to part of ſuch a Congregation as the Form now preſcribed by our higher Powers is to you. Yet the Queſtion would ſtill be, which would have been moſt Chriſtian in either of theſe Caſes, whether to divide, ſeparate, and break the Church to pieces, or to ſubmit to the uſe of it to avoid ſuch a Breach, and the bad Effects of it, until they could in a peaceable and regular way, have obtained their Deſire, or come to better Satisfaction in their own Minds? Suppoſing ſtill that all this while, the diſſatisfied part had been put upon doing nothing ſinful in it ſelf, but only what was leſs uſeful and deſirable in their own Apprehenſions. And if you allow of Separation upon any account leſs than that of neceſſity, when Men muſt ſin, or ſeparate, or an utter Failure in the means of Edification, you open a Door to Confuſion in, and Deſtruction to the Church. It is upon this very account of neceſſity that we juſtifie our Separation at firſt from the Church of *Rome*. Now if ſuch things as now ſuppoſed, did proceed from any other Church-governing Power, were it indulged to by the higher Powers, would be no good ground of Separation, neither then can they be any, when they proceed from the higher Powers. For let them proceed from the one or the other, it doth not alter the nature of the things themſelves, otherwiſe than as the Stamp of Authority may make that in ſome degree neceſſary in *Uſe*, which was, and ſtill is, but indifferent in its own Nature, and might have been uſed, or another in the ſtead of it.

Now ſee then where you are, and to what you are brought. If you cannot prove that to join in the publick Worſhip of God adminiſtred according to our Liturgy, is a

Sin; then if you refuſe to do it, and ſeparate from the Church becauſe of it, you make your ſelves guilty of as great a Sin as the monſtrous Effects of an unlawful Schiſm and Separation argues it to be. And you cannot prove that your joyning in the publick Worſhip adminiſtred by our Liturgy, is a Sin, unleſs you can prove that ſomething therein appointed for the publick Worſhip, and which you muſt join in, if you join in the publick Worſhip at all, is contrary to ſome Inſtitution, Rule, or Precept of our Lord and Saviour, which I preſume you will never be able to do. And the reaſon is, becauſe the things for which we pray therein, and for which we give thanks, are agreeable to the Scripture; they are *Prayer-Matter*, and *Thankſgiving-Matter*.

And then for the external Circumſtances of Form and Method, you cannot prove theſe unlawful, becauſe it is no-where forbidden in Scripture to preſent your Prayer-Matter, or Thankſgiving-Matter to God in ſuch an external Form and Method as is uſed in the Liturgy, but rather countenanced therefrom, as by our Saviour's directing his Diſciples to uſe a Form of Prayer, and by the Forms of Prayer in the Pſalms compoſed to be uſed as Prayers. The Title of *Pſal.* cii. is this; *A Prayer for the afflicted when he is overwhelmed, and poureth out his Complaint before the Lord.* The Title of *Pſal.* xc. is this; *A Prayer of Moſes the Man of God.* The lxxii. *Pſalm* ends thus; *The Prayers of David the Son of Jeſſe are ended. Hezekiah the King, and the Princes, commanded the Levites to ſing Praiſe unto the Lord with the words of David and Aſaph;* 2 Chron. xxix. 30. The Scripture hath no-where determined, whether Prayer ſhall be made with the uſe of a Book or without, or whether longer or ſhorter, or whether in our publick Devotions, one or two, or more ſhall be uſed, or whether all ſhall be pronounced by the Miniſter only, or part by the People alſo. We do not count it unlawful to pray to and praiſe God with united Voices in ſinging of Pſalms. Now where we are left at liberty in theſe things, there it cannot be unlawful in it ſelf to uſe, either the one way or other, as Circumſtances direct. Some Circumſtances may make one Way or Mode convenient at one time, and in one caſe, and other Circumſtances may make another more convenient at another time, and in another caſe, about external Forms of Worſhip. If our Lord had not intended us a Chriſtian Liberty in outward Forms, there is no doubt but we ſhould have had as particular Direction in them, as we have about the Subſtance. And we may well uſe the words of St. *Paul*, in exhorting one another to ſtand faſt in this Liberty wherewith Chriſt hath made us free. I mean in uſing this Liberty one way or other, as it tends to Peace, Charity, and Edification, and not the contrary, as ſome urge it.

The Jews had their Liturgy in their Synagogues, at the uſe of which our Saviour, we may preſume, uſed to be preſent, inaſmuch as we find he frequented the Synagogue where he lived, *Luke* iv. 16. The ancient Church before Popery look'd out into the World, had their Liturgy; and ſo have other Reformed Churches beſides ours unto this Day. And we in this Nation, ſo far as I can underſtand, have only been ſo unhappy as to break our ſelves in pieces about it.

Whoever ſoberly conſiders what hath been the effect of caſting off the Liturgy and the eſtabliſhed Church Government in this Nation, and of the Liberty that was taken in the late times of Liberty, may by this time be pretty well reconciled to it again, whatever his Thoughts may have been heretofore. Can any conſidering Man think that the Church of God, and the Concerns of Religion in this Nation, ſuffered at that rate by reaſon of the reſtraint put upon it by the Liturgy, before our late ſad Diſtractions brake out, as it hath done by thoſe ſundry ſtrange Sects, monſtrous Opinions and Practices, violent Contentions, ſore Breaches and Diviſions, and the Effects of theſe which that little time of Liberty in which the Liturgy was caſt off and the Bonds of Government broken, hath produced?

Suppoſe there were, or are ſome things ſuperfluous or wanting in our Liturgical Form of Adminiſtration, or that it might be mended, or a better way pitcht upon, if the higher Powers over us thought it fit: If this ſhould be granted, yet this is no Argument why you may lawfully ſeparate: It is not its being leſs uſeful, or leſs deſirable to you than it might be made, that will bear you out in your Separation, ſo long as you ſhould do nothing in it ſelf ſinful in worſhipping God in the uſe of it. The Queſtion is not at all whether this or another way were moſt eligible, were you at liberty to chuſe without danger of making any Schiſm: But the great Queſtion to which you muſt bring your ſelves, is, Which is moſt eligible, whether to do that which comparatively you think is inconvenient, leſs profitable, leſs uſeful, but yet not unlawful, or to make your ſelves guilty of a great and notorious Schiſm, and therein of a great Sin, and thereby alſo to make your ſelves accountable for the moſt diſmal Effects of our ſad

Breaches and Diviſions; the very Thought or Suſpicion of which, is enough to make the ſtouteſt Heart to tremble. Do not flatter your ſelves with this and that Apology and Pretence, for this ſeems to be clearly the State of your Caſe.

You talk of more Purity of Communion, for the ſake whereof you ſeparate; but if you make your ſelves guilty of Schiſm to obtain a more pure Communion, and ſuch a Schiſm as hath already produced moſt lamentable Effects, in vain do you flatter your ſelves with a Conceit of a more pure Communion. For your Communion being *founded* in a great Schiſm, muſt needs *pollute* it, and make it far more impure than Parochial Communion can upon any reaſonable account be ſuſpected to be. You cannot ſay Parochial Communion is at all impure, becauſe a Man does not defile himſelf with Sin in making his way to it, or having his Share in it, as they do that make their way to yours through a ſinful Schiſm. So that upon the whole matter, there is incomparably more cauſe to ſcruple Communion in your Aſſemblies, under your Circumſtances, than Communion in our Pariſh-Congregations.

Nor does a Defect in the Exerciſe of Diſcipline, by reaſon whereof ſome are admitted perhaps to Parochial Communion that ſhould be debarr'd it, make the Communion impure to them who cannot help it. A Man is to *examine himſelf*, and then he may eat of that Bread, and drink of that Cup: His examining another's caſe is not made the condition of it. There were but *a few Names* in the Church of *Sardis*, but what had defiled their Garments and were dead, having only a Name to live, and yet thoſe few held Communion in the ſame Church, without defiling their own, *Rev.* iii. 4. You may, if you pleaſe, exerciſe that Diſcipline which the Scripture directs private Perſons to uſe towards ſcandalous Church-Members; that is, not to *keep Company with them, or to eat or drink with them* in a way of familiar, voluntary and unneceſſary Converſation, 2 *Theſſ.* iii. 14. 1 *Cor.* v. 11. But this is no bar againſt doing your Duty in coming to God's Ordinances, and in communicating with others there who have not ſo defiled themſelves, as was ſaid before. The want of due Diſcipline is, indeed, a great Calamity: But Diſcipline is not of the Eſſence of the Church, no more than the Rod is of the Family, but is only neceſſary for the well-being and good Government of it.

There are two things, I perceive, which ſome of you make much of.

The one is, *That when any thing becomes a Condition of Communion, which is vehemently ſuſpected to be unlawful, it frees a Man from the Guilt of Schiſm, although he break Communion upon it.*

The other is, *That when that is impoſed as a Condition of Communion which ought not to be made a Condition, if Schiſm be occaſioned thereby, the Guilt of it lies only on the Impoſers, and not on them upon whom it is impoſed.* It argues, in my Opinion, That Arguments run very low with you, when you are fain to make ſhift with ſuch as theſe.

For the firſt of theſe: Mens Opinions of things, or Suſpicions concerning them, does not alter the nature of the things themſelves, or make that no Schiſm which is ſo in it ſelf. It may make a difference in the nature of the Offence to be greater or leſſer before God, according as Men have been diligent or negligent in the uſe of means to underſtand their Duty in order to Practice, but does by no means excuſe them from all Guilt in the caſe, for the reaſon aforeſaid. This Poſition therefore is doubtleſs falſe.

But is there indeed ſuch a virtue in Suſpicion, as to ſanctifie Schiſm it ſelf, and to make it to be no Schiſm, though otherwiſe it were? Why then, I pray you, will not your Suſpicion do as much on the other hand? Why does not your Suſpicion of making your ſelves guilty of a notorious Schiſm, make that very lawful for you to do to avoid it, which were it not for the danger of Schiſm, and the Evil of thwarting publick Laws, might otherwiſe ſeem inconvenient for you to do? Is there more danger in doing that, in the doing whereof it is uncertain to you, whether you do well or ill, in reference to your perſonal concern, than there is in doing that which it's certain tends to ſo publick a Hurt and Damage as Schiſm does?

When you alledge, *Rom.* xiv. 23. where it's ſaid, *He that doubteth is damn'd if he eat, becauſe he eateth not of Faith: For whatſoever is not of Faith, is Sin:* I ſay, when you alledge this to juſtifie your Schiſm upon the account of your doubting of the Lawfulneſs of ſome things in the Adminiſtration of holy things; you make things equal in your Apprehenſion, which are altogether unequal in themſelves. The Caſe, there touched, was about the eating or not eating of ſuch Meats, the eating of which the Chriſtians were not obliged to by any Law of God or Man: In which caſe a Man might be ſure he ſhould not offend againſt either, in forbearing to eat that about which the Doubt was raiſed, nor againſt the publick Peace of the Church. But you are at no ſuch liberty in your caſe: It is not a matter of ſuch indifferency, whether you make a Schiſm in the Church, and act contrary to publick Laws, as it was for a Man to forbear one ſort of Food, by the forbearing of which he ſhould do no hurt to the Church by diſturbing the Peace of it, nor to Religion by cauſing it to be evil ſpoken of. But yet that is not all, but your caſe, and that there ſpoken of, is vaſtly different in another reſpect. The doubting of ſome Chriſtian Jews touching the lawfulneſs of eating ſome Meats, which the Chriſtian Gentiles did eat without ſcruple, did ariſe from a want of ſatisfaction in their own Minds touching the abrogation of the Moſaical Law, by which the eating of thoſe Meats was once expreſly forbidden. So that your caſe is no ways parallel with theirs there handled by the Apoſtle; unleſs you could ſhew that thoſe undetermined Circumſtances in the Adminiſtration of Holy Things, the uſe of which you ſcruple, had been expreſly forbidden by ſome Law of God, the abrogation whereof you queſtion; which you will never be able to do. And therefore this Text is altogether impertinently alledged to juſtifie you in your practice, as many more have been.

If you ſay, Though theſe words, *Whatſoever is not of Faith is ſin*, be brought to confirm a particular Propoſition, yet they contain in themſelves an univerſal one: Admit this, for I will not deny it; yet they will not prove the contrary, that whatſoever is of Faith (in this ſenſe of Faith) is no Sin; that is, it does not prove that whatſoever a Man is perſuaded is no Sin, is therefore no Sin. And if it does not prove this, it will not prove that the act by which you make a Schiſm ſinful in it ſelf, does not do any ſuch thing, though you are perſuaded it does not. Though a Man's doubtfulneſs of the lawfulneſs of an Action, ſo long as the Reaſons of it preponderate and weigh down the Reaſons that tend to his ſatisfaction, make it unlawful for him to do it under thoſe Circumſtances: Yet this will not free him from Sin, in caſe he be in an Error in being ſo perſuaded, but he remains guilty of that Error, and conſequently is acceſſary alſo unto the Evil that is cauſed thereby. If Men's Ignorance and Unreſolvedneſs in what is their Duty, were a protection to them from Sin-guiltineſs, though in Error, it would be an inducement to them to indulge themſelves in their Ignorance and Irreſolution. But when a Man does not know but that he is in ſuch a *Dilemma*, as that he ſins whether he act or forbear to act, either in acting againſt his Conſcience, or in neglecting his Duty through error of Conſcience, it will then awaken a Man that deſires to keep a good Conſcience both towards God and towards Men, to uſe both Diligence and Impartiality in his Enquiry after what is his Duty indeed.

It is I think but needful upon this occaſion to caution many among you againſt an *affected* Scrupuloſity. I call that an affected Scrupuloſity, when People love to be ſcrupulous about ſome things, when they are far from it in other things, wherein they have more reaſon to be ſcrupulous. As when they are nice, curious, and ſqueamiſh about undetermined Circumſtances in forms of Adminiſtration of Holy Things, but do not at all, or nothing ſo much ſcruple the laying waſte the Peace of the Church, and the grieving and hurting others thereby, nor to lay Government it ſelf low, nor to ſpeak Evil freely enough of them that differ from them, and the like; not to mention what is of more private concern. That ſuch things are abroad, is too apparent to be denied: But whence they proceed, is not perhaps ſo eaſily perceived. Only this is viſible, that Perſon's Scrupulouſneſs about conforming to publick Orders, hath obtained them among many the Reputation of the ſtricter ſort of Profeſſors: And from thence it's poſſible they may fanſie themſelves to be of more tender Conſciences than others, and think it may be a good ſign of the truth of Grace in them; and upon that account, and of being thought to be ſuch by others, they may affect ſuch a Scrupuloſity. But ſuch as are thus unequal in their ſcrupling of things, may do well to conſider, that ſuch Scrupuloſity is a more ſure ſign of Hypocriſie than of a tender Conſcience, or of the truth of Grace, in whomſoever it is found, as ſymbolizing with the Phariſees, who ſtrained at Gnats, and yet could ſwallow Camels. Whereas a tenderneſs of Conſcience of the right kind will make a Man as much afraid of erring on the right hand as on the left; which Temper is in Scripture given as the Character of a good Man, a Man that turns not aſide to the right hand nor to the left, but is the upright Man. Though Tenderneſs of Conſcience is a right-good thing, if you underſtand thereby a fear of tranſgreſſing any known Rule or Duty, in one thing as well as another, in conjunction with a careful endeavour to know his Rule in every thing; yet Scrupuloſity which is a fear of offending in that which a Man does not know is forbidden, is not ſuch a commendable thing as that Men ſhould be in love with it, or indulge it in themſelves, but is rather proper to thoſe who are Superſtitious, than to the truly Religious. Becauſe it proceeds generally from the falſe Doctrine of Men, and from a wrong Notion of things, rather than from the Obſcurity of the Rule of Duty. It's no marvel if there be no end of Scruples with them who believe that nothing can be done in Faith, eſpecially in the external Adminiſtration of God's Worſhip, but what they can bring a Divine Command or Inſtitution for; there being none of them that ſo teach, but practiſe otherwiſe, as you may ſoon perceive if you try all particular Circumſtances in their Worſhip or Adminiſtration of Holy Things, and muſt do ſo, unleſs they will confine themſelves to the very words of the Lord's Prayer, and to the form of Words preſcribed in Baptiſm and the Lord's Supper.

There are but two ways of knowing God's Mind concerning our Duty, Natural Light and Supernatural Revelation. And whatever we are not confined to by Divine Determination, or reſtrained from by Divine Prohibition, in one of theſe ways, we may ſecurely and without any ſcruple do, when we are thereunto called by Parents, Maſters, Magiſtrates, or Eccleſiaſtical Governours. That which is not againſt us, is for us in this caſe, as our Saviour alſo ſaid in another caſe. The Rule of that which is our Duty indeed, is doubtleſs very plain: And it would be a Reproach to the Wiſdom and Goodneſs of God to think otherwiſe: *He hath ſhewed thee, O Man, what is good*, ſaith the Prophet. It is Mens Additions to God's Word, and their teaching that, as commanded or forbidden by God, which he hath not commanded, and which he hath not forbidden, that is the true cauſe of our Diſtractions. If Men would but keep cloſe to what God hath plainly determined, and follow the Reaſon of their Governours in other things which are undetermined, and their own beſt Reaſon where they are at liberty to do it; there would be little room for Mens Scrupuloſity, or occaſion of Diviſions in point of Practice. And yet this is nothing but what the Scripture calls for, when it directs and enjoins Children to obey their Parents, Servants their Maſters, Subjects their Princes, and that *in all things*, *only in the Lord*, or wherein they are not countermanded by him.

Now concerning that other Poſition, wherein is aſſerted, That when that is impoſed as a Condition of Communion which ought not to be made a Condition, if Schiſm be occaſioned thereby, the guilt of it lies only on the Impoſers, and not on them upon whom it is impoſed: I anſwer, As to matter of Fact it is true, that more may, and ſometimes is made the Condition of Communion, than is neceſſary. And when it is ſo, it uſually becomes a Temptation to more or leſs to run into Schiſm; and it likewiſe furniſheth ſuch with ſome pretence to draw Diſciples to themſelves, who are ambitious of heading a Party. In which reſpects it may be matter of great Prudence in order to the Church's Peace and Unity, to make no more than is neceſſary the Condition of Communion. But although more ſhould be impoſed as the Condition of Communion than is neceſſary, yet if it be not ſo much more as makes it ſinful to hold Communion on thoſe terms; then they muſt needs be guilty of the Sin of Schiſm, who ſeparate upon account of ſuch an Impoſition. And the reaſon is, becauſe ſuch a Schiſm is without ſufficient cauſe, or juſt ground: Which juſt ground is, when one cannot do otherwiſe than ſeparate without a neceſſity of ſinning. Things may be ill impoſed, as when they are inadequate to their end, and yet well obſerved by them on whom they are impoſed; as when not ſinful in themſelves, and when by that means they and the Church ſuffer leſs in point of Inconvenience, and enjoy a greater benefit in preſerving Peace in the Church, than could be obtained in a way of Oppoſition. If we ſhould allow a liberty, much more if we hold it a Duty, for Inferiours under Government to oppoſe and withſtand the Commands of their Superiours, as oft as they think they command things inconvenient, though they ſhould think right, ſo long as they do not command things which they know to be unlawful for them to obſerve, we ſhould ſoon bring intolerable Confuſion into Church and Common-wealth, into Families and all Communities of Men where Government is exerciſed. Inconveniencies in ſuch caſes muſt be yielded to, rather than greater Miſchiefs drawn on us, and on the Community by not yielding.

But you, at leaſt many of you, think, that it is an *infringing* of your Chriſtian Liberty, for Men to determine and impoſe upon you, where God hath not determined and impoſed: And that in ſuch caſes it would be a betraying of that liberty, ſhould you not withſtand ſuch Impoſitions.

To which I anſwer, That thus far 'tis true, that when any thing is impoſed by Men, under the Notion of being commanded by God, of Divine Inſtitution, or of neceſſity to Salvation, which is not ſo; as this would be a teaching for Doctrines the Commandments of Men, ſo a yielding to them ſo impoſed would be a betraying of our Chriſtian Liberty; and more than ſo, it would be a betraying of the Prerogative of our Lord, unto the Uſurpation of Men, and a making to our ſelves other Maſters than Chriſt, and our ſelves Servants of Men in the prohibited Senſe, and all contrary to the expreſs Doctrine of our Saviour and his Apoſtles, But though this be the caſe in the Church of *Rome* in many things, and in ſome reſpects among your ſelves alſo: Yet this is not the caſe touching the things in diſpute between you and the Church of *England.* The things impoſed, at which you moſt ſtick, are not at all impoſed under the notion of Divine Right, but only upon a prudential account, being things mutable in their own nature, and alterable at the pleaſure of them who impoſe them, and are ſo declared in the Preface before the Book of *Common-Prayer.* So that your Conſcience is not impoſed upon to take the things themſelves for any other than they are in their own nature things left undetermined by God one way or other.

But then there is a ſenſe in which it is not true, that our Chriſtian Liberty is unduly infringed by the Impoſition of Men, although we were at liberty to do or not to do the things enjoined us, before ſuch an Impoſition was laid upon us. Our Chriſtian Liberty does not exempt us from the Duty of Obedience to our Superiours in things which in their own nature are but indifferent, and out of ſuch Circumſtances might be done or let alone. The ſame Divine Authority which enjoins us to call no Man on Earth Maſter, nor to be Servants of Men, enjoins Children alſo to obey their Parents, Servants their Maſters, Church-members their Spiritual Guides and Governours, and Subjects their Princes, and that in all things in which they ſhall not diſobey God in doing contrary to his Commands. So that when things indifferent, or undetermined by God, are impoſed by our Governours, Domeſtick, Politick, or Eccleſiaſtick, only as their Commands; our Chriſtian Liberty is no bar nor plea againſt them. And whoever pretends that it is, draws too near the wicked *Gnoſticks*, who pretended Exemption from being commanded and governed by Men, by their being Chriſt's Freemen. Againſt which abuſe of Chriſtian Liberty, St. *Peter* cautioned the Chriſtians then. For after he had exhorted them to *ſubmit themſelves to every Ordinance of Man for the Lord's ſake*, 1 Pet. ii. 13, 14. he preſently adds in *ver.* 16. *As free, and not uſing your liberty as a cloak of maliciousneſs*; not to pretend Chriſtian Liberty to cover their Diſaffection to Government, as the *Gnoſticks* did.

Our Chriſtian Liberty is ſo far from being a Bar to our Obedience to our Governours in all things, not otherwiſe ordered by God, as that it is a great Accommodation to us in yielding Obedience to them without ſcruple of Conſcience. For when Circumſtances in the external Adminiſtration of Holy Things are left ſo much undetermined by God as they are, we are at the greater liberty to yield Obedience to the prudential Determinations of our Governours, either one way or other, ſo long as they do not determine any thing againſt what God hath determined. In things even of this nature we are to be ſubject to our Governours for Conſcience-ſake, *Rom.* xiii. v. that is, out of Conſcience to God, who commands our Obedience to our Governours, but not out of Conſcience to the things commanded by them, as if by any inherent Holineſs in them our Conſciences were engaged unto them. And here lies the difference between Superſtition, and lawful Obedience to Authority.

In the caſe of Superſtition, the Act is done out of Conſcience to the Thing done, as if ſacred, though but indifferent in its own nature. But in the caſe of lawful Obedience in indifferent things, the ſame Act is done out of Conſcience to God, not as commanding the thing, but as commanding my Obedience to him, in all lawful things, who commands me to do it, and commands it under no other notion but as a thing indifferent in its own nature, and not made ſacred by any Command or Inſtitution of God. Let me ſay this farther to you: There is more of real Religion and true Chriſtianity, in thus obeying the lawful Commands of our Governours, out of Conſcience to God, who would have it ſo, than I fear is well conſidered: And more of Irreligion, Profaneneſs, and Hypocriſie, in ſlighting God's expreſs Command in this, whilſt we ſeem ſo very fearful and ſcrupulous to offend him in other things, where there is no ſuch danger, nor concerning which we have no ſuch expreſs Declaration of God's Will. If we would but yield Obedience to our publick Governours, in ſuch ſort as Servants are required to do to their Maſters, in ſingleneſs of Heart, fearing God, and whatever we do therein, doing it heartily as to the Lord and not unto Man, we ſhould therein ſerve the Lord Chriſt, and to better purpoſe than by many things on which greater ſtreſs is laid, and be as capable of *the Reward of the Inheritance* thereby, as by any other Worſhip we give him, or Service we do him, *Col.* iii. 22, 23, 24. I doubt it is not well conſidered what diſſervice is done to Religion when ſo much more than needs pretended from it to trouble and diſturb Government, and make Men fickle and uncertain in their Obedience to Authority. Doubtleſs the way to make the great Men of the Earth hearty Friends to the Chriſtian Cauſe (and when they are ſo, it's much to its advantage) is to give them the Experience of its Goodneſs in making the moſt ſincere Profeſſors of it, more hearty, forward, and conſtant in their Obedience to them againſt all Temptations to the contrary, than any other Men. Which is one reaſon, as I am apt to think, why this Duty of Obedience to Governours is ſo much inculcated on the Minds of Chriſtians in the New-Teſtament as it is, and why ſo black a Brand is ſet on them that *deſpiſe Government or Dominion*, and *ſpeak Evil of Dignities*, as is in the Epiſtles of St. *Peter* and St. *Jude*.

I Cannot but think it a bad thing and of dangerous Conſequence, for you to ſtrain things too far in making that in it ſelf neceſſary to Church-Communion, which either is not at all neceſſary, or but only *conveniently* neceſſary under ſome Circumſtances: And ſo in like manner in laying too great a Streſs on this or that Mode of Adminiſtration, to the Excluſion of others not unlawful. For when you make thoſe things as abſolutely neceſſary to Communion as if they were peremptorily commanded by God which yet are left to the Liberty of Chriſtians to uſe, or others in their ſtead as Circumſtances in the caſe ſhall direct; you then both tranſgreſs againſt the Laws of *Chriſtian Liberty*, and make your ſelves guilty of *Superſtition*. And upon this very ſcore, I fear, there is much more of Superſtition among you, than you have any cauſe to ſuſpect in the Parochial way. For thoſe things at which you are moſt offended, in the Pariſh-way, are not at all uſed or required to be uſed under the Notion of their being enjoyned by God, but only as things which may be uſed, or others in the ſtead of them, if our Governours pleaſed and thought it more convenient, as was ſaid before. Whereas you placing Religion in refuſing thoſe things, which as they are not commanded, ſo neither are they forbidden by God, as fearing you ſhould diſpleaſe him if you ſhould uſe them, do therein plainly act a part of *Superſtition*, while others who uſe them but only as they are, not placing any Religion in them at all, are altogether free from, whom yet you are ready cauſeleſly to charge with it. For Superſtition as it is an *Exceſs of Fear*, conſiſts as much if not more, *in refuſing and rejecting things as forbidden by God which are not*, as it doth in uſing things as commanded by him which are not. *Touch not*, *taſt not*, *handle not*, *were Doctrines of Superſtition* (Col. ii.) as well as that of the Phariſees, in requiring waſhing before eating as a piece of Religion, an Action otherwiſe in it ſelf not unlawful.

Beſides, when you place Religion ſo much as you do in this or that external Form and Way, when perhaps neither that nor another which differs from it, is at all made neceſſary by God to the Excluſion of the other, but that either the one, or the other, or a third, may competently anſwer the end for which external Modes of Worſhip ſerve and are appointed, which is for the adminiſtring the Subſtance of that Worſhip which is determined and appointed by God: I ſay, when you do thus place ſo much of Religion in one, to the Excluſion of the reſt, it becomes a dangerous Snare to many People to place their Religion much, and ſometimes moſtly in that Form and way, and to think themſelves better Chriſtians than thoſe of another Form; though thoſe other do not at all place their Religion in the external Form they uſe, but in the Spiritual Subſtance to which the Form is but as the clothing, and may be ſhifted and varied as occaſion requires. There is neither the one Form nor the other, but that Chriſtians may be very affectionately devout and ſerious in their Addreſſes to God by it, if the Fault be not their own, if they do not by their own Prejudice againſt it, or by Careleſneſs in uſing it, deprive themſelves of being ſo: This, ſome that have had Experience of both know. And it is not the uſe of the beſt Form, whatever it is, will avail a Man to make him inwardly in Soul devout towards God, unleſs his Mind exerciſe it ſelf about the Spiritual Matter and Subſtance of the Worſhip it ſelf. And they that reſt in the Form, be it what it will be, and ſatisfie themſelves only with uſing it, do but preſent God with the Skin of the Sacrifice, inſtead of the Sacrifice it ſelf.

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AND now I have uttered my Mind thus freely unto you, I ſhould be very ſorry if it ſhould produce no better Effect than only to make your Minds the more uneaſie in your way, whenas it was deſigned as a help to bring you to that Eaſe of Mind which is the effect of true Repentance. I have ſo much reſpect for many of you whom I know, as will make me very far from doing any thing to grieve you, otherwiſe than that you might be grieved *after a godly manner*, and to your Advantage; after which way, and for which end, St. *Paul* ſometime wrote to them who were very dear to him. I am, I aſſure you, ſo far from being gratified in my own Mind by any Inconvenience you ſuſtain by reaſon of your differing Thoughts and way, and ſo far from deſigning any Increaſe of Trouble to you by dealing thus plainly and openly with you, as I have done, as that for your ſakes I ſhould be very glad if our Governours ſhould be enclined out of Compaſſion to you, to make the Terms of Communion ſomewhat eaſier for you.

I do not indeed expect that you ſhould be perſuaded by any thing, I ſay, as they are my words. But I do expect, as well I may, that you ſhould ſo much regard the Concernment of your own account to God, and of the Welfare of his Church, and of this Nation, as that you ſhould conſider, and that ſeriouſly, the *reaſon* of what I have laid before you. I dare not indeed be over confident of any great Succeſs in this Addreſs, when I conſider how little the Endeavours of others have had which have been of ſomewhat a like Nature. But this Diffidence proceeds not at all from any Suſpicion I have touching the Sufficiency of the Reaſon and Argument which is offered to perſuade you by, but from the *Rootedneſs*, and Strength of your *Prejudice*, by which the ſtrongeſt reaſoning is many times reſiſted. *Elihu* ſaith (*Job* xxxiv.) *that the Ear trieth Words as the Mouth taſteth Meat*. Now we know that that Meat which is good and ſavory in it ſelf, and pleaſant to the Taſte of thoſe who are in a healthful Habit of Body, is unſavory and perhaps nauſeous to thoſe of a vitiated Palate. And there is juſt a like difference between the Taſte which Men have of the ſame Argumentation, upon the account of the Corruption and Uncorruptneſs of their Judgments. And therefore it will be your Wiſdom in order to your making a right Judgment, to diveſt your Mind as much as poſſible you can of all Prejudice, when you come to peruſe Diſcourſes of this Nature.

Some, I underſtand, have taken up a Prejudice againſt ſomewhat I have done formerly of this Nature, from a Miſtake and Miſinformation, as if the turn of Times had cauſed that Alteration which hath been made in my Mind about the things diſcuſſed in this Addreſs. But to the end that none may be taken off from peruſing and conſidering this Diſcourſe upon any ſuch Pretence, they may certainly know the Untruth of ſuch Suggeſtions by this, to wit, that I publiſhed my *Retractation of Separation*, in the Year 1659. when Separation was in greateſt Repute, and the turn of Times they ſpeak of then out of Proſpect to ſuch as my ſelf.

St. *Paul* counted it but a ſmall thing with him to be judged by Men, or of Man's Judgment, becauſe he was to ſtand or fall not by their Judgment but by God's. And conſidering that every one of us may ſay as he did in this; it very much concerns us in our Enquiry, what is, and what is not to be done and practiſed by us, not much to mind what this or the other Party will think or ſay of us, or whether this or that way will beſt accommodate us in our Worldly Intereſt, but with Uprightneſs to do all as unto God in the Sight of God, to whom every one of us muſt give an account for himſelf. And becauſe we muſt do ſo, therefore we ſhould take as little as may be upon Truſt, no not from thoſe we have the beſt eſteem of, but every one to try his own Work, that ſo he *may have rejoycing in himſelf, and not in another*, as the Apoſtle ſpeaks. And becauſe there are not many that are willing to be at the Pains to put themſelves into a Capacity of doing ſo in things controverted among us: Therefore it greatly concerns you who are Leaders of the People, to be very diligent and very faithful in trying the Grounds on which you now go in ways ſo much differing as they do from all in a manner that have gone before you, yea, even from the old Non-Conformiſts themſelves: And if you have any Convictions, or Miſgivings, touching the Unſafeneſs or Unaccountableneſs of the way in which you Conduct the People, let no Worldly Intereſt, or Fear of diſpleaſing, or of loſing them, prevail upon you to conceal it from them, but truſt God in dealing faithfully, which will both bring inward Peace and Satisfaction, and intereſt you in his ſpecial Care.

I Will add one thing more, and that is to put you upon conſidering, whether by this dividing way in which you are, you either have, or are ever like to promote the *Power of Religion* among us in this Nation, as you might have done, if you had continued Communion in the Parochial way as heretofore. For I freely confeſs to you, that I vehemently ſuſpect, that you neither have nor are like to do it ſo well in the way you take, as you might in that. The Power of Religion, I conceive, does very much conſiſt, not in external Modes of Worſhip, or in a zealous crying up one, and crying down another, but in the Operation of the Mind, and inward profound Devotion of Soul to God, in reference to the ſpiritual Subſtance of his Worſhip, whether in this form or that: And in our being like to our Lord Jeſus Chriſt, in Humility, Meekneſs, Gentleneſs, Peaceableneſs, univerſal Charity in ſeeking the good of all Men by word and deed: In a patient bearing of unkind uſage from Men, without expreſſing any bitterneſs of Spirit towards them for it, by word or deed, but rather returning them Good for Evil, and the like. But now Diviſions in Churches, making of Parties, rending, and tearing, and ſeparating, hath quite another tendency than to promote theſe things. It tends to diſcompoſe the Spirits of Men in their reverend and awful approaches to God in the Duties of his Worſhip, to imbitter their Spirits one againſt another, ſo that it becomes far more difficult than otherwiſe it would be, *to lift up holy hands without wrath or doubting*, It tends to fill the Minds of Men with uncharitable Opinions of, and uncharitable Affections to one another, and to exaſperate their Spirits one againſt another: It tends to the deſpiſing and contemning one another, and to a proud and diſdainful magnifying of one Party againſt another; to a ſwelling and grudging one againſt another: It tends to Whiſpering, Backbiting and Slandering, and to miniſter Provocation and Evil-ſpeaking one againſt another. And theſe things are the oppoſites to the Power of Religion, and if you will believe St. *James*, tend to overthrow it, and to introduce an ill-ſpirited Religion in the room of it. *For where envying and ſtrife is, there is confuſion and every evil work*, James iii. 16. Theſe things, which are the natural fruits of Schiſm, are ſo like the fruits of thoſe who are deſcribed to have a Form of Godlineſs, without the Power of it, as may well drive you from the Schiſm which you have made, only for a form ſake. I would we had not too much Experience of the Truth of what I ſay, to need any proof from Scripture. However I will give you St. *Paul*'s Judgment in the Caſe.

I have told you before, that the Schiſm in the Church of *Corinth*, when St. *Paul* wrote to them, had not proceeded to any ſuch height as to break the Church in pieces by Separation, and diſclaiming Communion one with another; and yet upon the ſingle account of their Diviſions, and the effects of them, *they were yet but carnal, and walked as Men*, as he tells them, 1 *Cor.* iii. 3. although otherwiſe they were *in every thing enriched in all utterance and in all knowledge*, *coming behind in no gift*, Chap. i. 5, 7. And upon this very account *their coming together*, their ſolemn Meetings for Divine Worſhip, *were not for the better but for the worſe*, did not only keep them from growing, but ſet them backward, 1 *Cor.* xi. 17, 18. And then by what he ſays, *Chap.* iv. 6. and 2 *Cor.* xii. 20. we may ſee what the fruits and effects of their Schiſm were which made them ſo carnal in the Apoſtles account; ſuch as were their being *puft up for one Teacher againſt another*, and their *Debates*, *Envyings*, *Wraths*, *Strifes*, *Back-bitings*, *Whiſperings*, *Swellings*, and *Tumults*, that were among them. Juſt ſuch as your Schiſm hath brought forth among us in this Nation: Only I fear the effects of our Schiſm hath as much exceeded theirs then, as our Schiſm it ſelf hath exceeded theirs. And if theſe things have been, are, and will be the natural effects of Schiſm, which are ſo directly contrary and deſtructive to the Power of Religion; then you will do well calmly to conſider, whether you have not miſtaken the right method of promoting the Power of Religion when you made ſo wide a Breach as you have done in the Church to effect it.

If, inſtead of this, each Chriſtian of you had kept to a Parochial Communion, and each *outed* Miniſter had kept their Reſidence among them, and Communion with them, as private Members in the Pariſh way, and had alſo in a private capacity joined with thoſe Miniſters which have ſucceeded them, in doing all the good they could in the Pariſh; as by a private Application and Improvement of the publick Labours of their Miniſter, together with Catechiſing, and other perſonal Inſtruction and Exhortation privately adminiſtred to the ſeveral Families in the Pariſh: I ſay, if ſuch a thing as this had been done, inſtead of gathering ſeparate Congregations, I nothing doubt but that, by ſo doing, you would have taken an unſpeakably far better courſe to promote the Power of Religion in the Nation, than by what you have done, and to have procured a Removal alſo of your Burthens long before now, and to have been competently provided for in the mean time. But Separation hath always of old been counted an undue, irregular, and dangerous way of ſeeking what you deſire, even by the ancient Non-Conformiſts themſelves, and was as much inveighed againſt by them in thoſe times, as it was by the Conformiſts themſelves.

You know right-well, that when Sacrificing, Obſervation of Sabbaths, and other inſtituted Parts of God's Worſhip, came in competition with Mercy, Charity, and the like, it by no means pleaſed him, when theſe were thruſt out, that the other might take place. Much leſs have you reaſon to think, that he is in ſuch love as you are with one external Manner and Form of Adminiſtration of Worſhip, when another may be uſed, as that he would have that contended for to the loſs of Charity, Peace and Unity, when-as he hath commanded us *above all things to put on Charity*, Col. iii. 14. *and above all things to have fervent Charity among our ſelves*, 1 Pet. iv. 8. and that *Peace ſhould rule*, Col. iii. 15. Certainly, to think God is in ſuch love with one Form above another under ſuch Circumſtances, cannot proceed but from a miſapprehenſion of the Nature of God, and the Nature of his Worſhip.

If this then be true (and I cannot ſee how it can be denied, but) that your Separation, as all unlawful Separation in the Church is, be of ſuch ill abode to the power of Religion, as I have ſhewed; then if you be in any meaſure convinced that it is ſo, I hope it will not be grievous to any of you, to whom the Commandments of God are not grievous, to make a ſtand, and bethink you how you may take your ſelves off this way. And if the Higher Powers over us ſhall perceive any relenting in you for what hath been done, I dare not ſuſpect, but that they will take your Caſe into compaſſionate Conſideration, and be willing to do their part towards the making up the great Breach that hath been made in the Church, and in a healing way to hinder the growing Miſchiefs of it. Which God of his infinite Mercy grant before it be too late.

That which hath occaſioned all this Unhappineſs, under which the Church of God among us groans, and Religion in the moſt ſpiritual and moſt concerning part of it extreamly ſuffers, is a want of a right Underſtanding and due Uſe of our *Chriſtian Liberty*. It was that which occaſioned Diviſions, and the Unchriſtian Effects of them in the Churches firſt planted by the Apoſtles. And the ſame thing hath produced the ſame, and perhaps much worſe effects among us in this Nation. Very many of the Jews who believed, did not at the firſt underſtand their Chriſtian Liberty, but thought themſelves ſtill under the Obligation of the Ritual Law of *Moſes*; but others did, eſpecially the believing Gentiles. And the want of a Knowledge of it in the one, and the want of a due Uſe of it in the other, begot an Unchriſtian Carriage in them one towards another. Upon occaſion of which St. *Paul* ſaid, *Gal.* v. 13. *Brethren, you have been called unto liberty; only uſe not liberty as an occaſion to the fleſh, but by love ſerve one another.* When he ſaith, *ye have been called unto liberty*, his meaning doubtleſs in ſpecial was, that by the Chriſtian Oeconomy the Believers were ſet at liberty from being ty'd to the Obſervation of a great variety of external Modes and Forms of Worſhip, to which the Jews, by the Law of *Moſes*, were obliged. But though they were at liberty in theſe, yet they were ſtill as ſtrictly obliged to the Spirit and moral Subſtance of the Law as ever, one part whereof conſiſting in our Love one to another, according to the Apoſtle's words in the next Verſe, where he ſaith, *For all the Law is fulfilled in one word, even in this, Thou ſhalt love thy Neighbour as thy ſelf.* Now his Counſel therefore to them was, that they would uſe this liberty of theirs ſo, as that in the uſe of it they might *ſerve one another in love*, that they would ſuffer Chriſtian Charity to govern them in the uſe of their Chriſtian Liberty, and not to do any thing to the prejudice of that. And then cautions them, that by no means they ſhould *uſe this liberty as an occaſion to the fleſh*, by gratifying any carnal ſelfiſh Humour, under colour of Chriſtian Liberty, to the diminiſhing or quenching Love, or to the ingendring *Variance*, *Emulations*, *Wrath*, *Strife*, *Envying*, or the like, which are part of the Works of the Fleſh which he after reckons up, *ver.* 20. And intimates in *ver.* 14. that if they did thus abuſe their Chriſtian Liberty, what the conſequence of it would be, and that was their *biting one another* firſt, and then their being *conſumed one of another*.

Contrary to which Counſel of the Apoſtle, thoſe Chriſtians abuſed their Chriſtian Liberty when they put ſuch a ſtreſs on it, and on ſtanding unmoveably in it, without giving any ground to thoſe Chriſtians which did not underſtand it, and in placing ſo much of Chriſtianity in it, as to deſpiſe, ſlight, and ſet at nought thoſe Chriſtians who did not underſtand and uſe it as they did, and that to ſuch a degree, as to cauſe Diviſion, Strife, and uncharitable Cenſuring one another; by means whereof their *good*, the good way of Chriſtianity it ſelf, came to be evil ſpoken of, *Rom.* xiv. Whereas if they had rightly uſed their Chriſtian Liberty, they would have denied themſelves in not uſing that Liberty, though lawful in it ſelf, at ſuch times and in ſuch caſes, when their doing ſo would have amounted to no more than the ſuffering of ſome Perſonal Inconvenience, and when their uſing of it apparently tended to a greater and more publick Inconvenience, or Miſchief rather, ſuch as the breaking the Church's Peace and Unity, and the bad effects of it, both among themſelves, and in reference to them without, in cauſing them to think the worſe of Chriſtianity it ſelf.

Thus St. *Paul*, to avoid the abuſe of his Chriſtian Liberty, would, as he ſays, *eat no fleſh while the World ſtands, rather than by eating it, to make his Brother to offend*, 1 Cor. viii. 13. And that was not all neither; but in caſe the ſuſpending the uſe of his Liberty were not enough to ſecure the Peace and Unity of the Church, and what depended thereon, then the ſtrong were to make uſe of their Chriſtian Liberty, in complying with the weak in things not in themſelves unlawful, though out of thoſe Circumſtances altogether inconvenient, rather than by ſtanding on their Chriſtian Liberty, to run the forementioned hazards of diſturbing the Peace of the Church, diminiſhing Charity, cauſing Diviſions, to the ſtumbling of the Weak, and hardening of Adverſaries. And thus St. *Paul* uſed his Chriſtian Liberty, in complying ſo far as lawfully he might, though ſomething againſt the grain, when Circumſtances made it neceſſary for him ſo to do, and that too by the advice of *James, and all the Elders at Jeruſalem*, Acts xxi. 23, 24. For he, as he ſays, *became as a Jew to the Jews, and as without Law to thoſe without Law, (yet in that under the Law to Chriſt) yea, all things to all Men, and all for the Goſpel ſake*, as he ſays, that the Chriſtian Religion might the better get up in the World, and not by a contrary courſe to loſe ground, 1 *Cor.* ix. 20, 23.

And if we in this Age had been ſo wiſe, and ſo Chriſtian, as to have followed St. *Paul's* Doctrine and Example in uſing our Chriſtian Liberty in a way of lawful complyance, and in forbearing the uſe of it to ſhun a greater Inconvenience, Chriſtianity would have had a more lovely and attracting aſpect, and have yielded more Satisfaction and Pleaſure to the Minds of the Profeſſors of it, and gained more upon others, than by the courſe we have taken we have ſuffered it to have or to have effected. O that there were but more of this Spirit and Temper of St. *Paul* among us, how happy ſhould we be!

But the want of this, the want of a right underſtanding and due uſe of Chriſtian Liberty, hath doubtleſs been the great occaſion of Church-diviſion among us in theſe days, and of the unhappy effects of them, as well as they were of thoſe that fell out in the days of the Apoſtles. There are and have been many People who have not underſtood the latitude of their Chriſtian Liberty; and from thence have proceeded many needleſs Scruples, and thoſe needleſs and groundleſs Scruples have turned many out of the way of their Duty into other ways, ways of Separation and Oppoſition, and from thence have followed the lamentable effects I have formerly mentioned.

I ſay, many have not underſtood the Latitude of their Chriſtian Liberty about the uſing and forbearing to uſe, as Circumſtances ſhould direct, ſeveral Circumſtantial Matters in or about the external Adminiſtration of God's Worſhip. And this hath been occaſioned very much by ſome *falſe Doctrine* which hath been formerly broached by ſome out of an ignorant Zeal, and imbibed by many, and is ſtill kept on foot by ſome among us: And that is, *That nothing is to be done in the Worſhip of God which he hath not commanded*; or at leaſt, nothing but what is of natural neceſſity, as Time and Place, or the like. And by this means People have been brought to ſcruple Communion in the publick Worſhip of God among us, becauſe of ſome Circumſtances in the Adminiſtration, which are not expreſly commanded by God. And ſome, to perſuade themſelves and the People, that this Doctrine of theirs hath been true, have made uſe (ill uſe indeed) of many Scriptures which refer only to the Subſtance of God's Worſhip, and not to external Circumſtances of Adminiſtration. Such, for inſtance, as forbid adding to, or diminiſhing from the Word of God; and ſuch as, in a figurative Scheme of Speech, condemn worſhipping of falſe Gods: As when leſs is ſaid, and very much more meant, as when the worſhipping of the Sun and Moon, and Mens offering their Children in Sacrifice to *Baal*, to *Moloch*, is called the doing of that which God had commanded them not, when in truth he had with a high hand forbidden it, *Deut.* xvii. 3. *Jer.* vii. 31. and xix. 5. and xxxii. 35. This manner of ſpeaking is an Hebraiſm not unuſual, *Iſa.* lxvi. 4. *And choſe that in which I delighted not*, Pſal. v. Heb. x. 38. They have made uſe alſo for their purpoſe, of ſuch Scriptures as have condemned the changing and altering of ſome Circumſtances of Worſhip which God had by expreſs Appointment fixed and determined. As the *offering with ſtrange Fire* by *Nadab* and *Abihu*, ſuch as *God commanded not*, Levit. x. 1. when he had otherwiſe expreſly determined, that they ſhould offer with Fire *taken from off the Altar*, Levit. xvi. 12. and vi. 12, 13. And *Jeroboam*'s *keeping the Feaſt on the fifteenth Day of the eight Month*, *the Month which he had deviſed of his own Heart*, or a Feaſt *like unto the Feaſt in Juda*; things contrary to what God had expreſly appointed. And *Uzza*'s touching the Ark to guide it in a Cart, when God had expreſly appointed, that it ſhould be *born on the Prieſts Shoulders*, and the like. Theſe things were not only Circumſtances not commanded by God, but they were uſed and done to the juſtling out what he had commanded; like the Phariſees making void the Commandments of God through their Traditions, that is, by thruſting the one out, and bringing the other in their room.

And if any thing of this Nature could be proved to be in our publick Worſhip, theſe Scriptures might have been pertinently alledged to condemn it, but not to prove that nothing may be done in the Worſhip of God which he hath not commanded. For it's one thing to leave that which God hath commanded undone, and to do ſomewhat of our own deviſing inſtead of it; and another thing to do that which God hath appointed, and ſomething more, but not in Oppoſition to it, but in purſuance of the ſame end. And thus *Solomon* offered Sacrifice in the middle Court of the Temple, beſides the offering on the Brazen Altar, though God had appointed the Brazen Altar only for that purpoſe, 1 *Kings* viii. 64. And thus alſo King *Hezekiah*, with the Princes and People, kept the Feaſt of the Paſſover, not only for ſeven Days, which was according to God's Inſtitution, but after that for *ſeven days more alſo*, and yet ſo far as appears, with good Approbation from God, 2 *Chron.* xxx. 23. And whether the Super-Addition of the Croſs in Baptiſm, with the words concomitant, were not at firſt made upon Reaſons of like Nature, I cannot ſay, but may be conſidered. And yet again, it's one thing to do a thing in the Worſhip of God otherwiſe than he appointed, when he hath appointed how it ſhall be done, both in reference to the intrinſick Subſtance, and external Circumſtance; and another thing to do it this way or another, as to the external Adminiſtration, when he hath determined only the Subſtance of Worſhip what ſhall be done, and after what manner, as to the ſpiritual part, but hath left it at Mens Liberty, and undetermined in which of the ways it ſhall be done, as to the outward Circumſtances of Adminiſtration, when there are more ways than one in which it may be done. In the former caſe we are bound up to one way only, in the other we ſin not, if we do the thing, either in the one way or the other. Only general Rules in this caſe, will direct Men to chuſe that which appears to them beſt in it ſelf, other Circumſtances concurring, and where we are at liberty to uſe that we judge beſt, without ſcandalizing any others, and without making any Schiſm by croſſing ſuch publick Orders as are appointed to keep Peace and Unity in the Church, and to preſerve what depends upon them.

Now if there be ſuch a Liberty left in the outward Adminiſtration of Worſhip, as I have ſuppoſed, at leaſt in ſome caſes; then the Propoſition cannot be true, That nothing is to be done in the Worſhip of God, which he hath not commanded. And that there is ſuch a Liberty left, will beſt appear by trying the Matter in ſome Inſtances. I will inſtance in that of Prayer, which is an eminent part of God's Worſhip. The Subſtance of this piece of Divine Worſhip, God hath expreſly determined, as that we pray to him, and in the Name of his Son Chriſt Jeſus, and for things according to his Will, neceſſary or lawful, and with Seriouſneſs and Devotion of Soul, in Faith, and with Fervency. But he hath no-where told us, that this ſhall be done without any fixed Form or Method, or without being pronounced out of a Book, or that it ſhall be done only according to the inſtantaneous Conception of the Mind, both for Matter and Method. And therefore for any Man to pretend that to do it one of theſe ways only, is neceſſary by Divine Appointment, and the other diſallowed by the ſame Authority, is indeed an *adding to God's Word*, or a ſaying he ſaith what he hath not ſaid. So that in truth many in this caſe, and upon this account run into Superſtition, while they cry out moſt againſt it; and the Teachers of ſuch Doctrine fright the People into *Superſtition*, while they pretend to deter and draw them from it. This is a plain caſe, if plain Truth would ſatisfie ſuch of you as moſt need it.

Geſture in Prayer, ſuch as is Kneeling, lifting up Hands and Eyes, and the like, are as well Signs and Expreſſions of inward Devotion and Means to excite it, as words are, and as really circumſtantial parts of the external Mode of Worſhip. And yet I am confident you do not believe but that God hath left a Liberty of Choice in theſe, as Circumſtances ſhall direct. And if that Doctrine were true, that nothing is to be done in the external Mode of God's Worſhip, but what he hath commanded, I vehemently ſuſpect, that upon your utmoſt Enquiry into what is commanded in the New Teſtament, in reference to the external manner of Prayer, that you would find your ſelves confined only to the uſe of the Lord's Prayer, by that Precept of our Saviour, Luke xi. 2. *When ye pray*, *ſay*, *Our Father*, &c. For I do not find any Command in the New Teſtament but this, as to the external manner of Prayer. For when our Saviour in *Matth.* vi. 9. at a time, and on occaſion different from that mentioned by St. *Luke*, ſaith, *after this manner therefore pray ye*, *Our Father*, &c. I reckon, That herein he gave Direction, touching the Matter and Order of Prayer, but not at all how this Matter ſhould be uttered and expreſs'd to God, farther than in the Form here mentioned. Though on the other hand, I am far from thinking, That our Saviour thereby intended to limit his Diſciples to thoſe words only. And although a Liberty to uſe other words in expreſſing the ſame Matter, ſeems to be thereby granted, yet in what manner it is not ſaid, as whether in a fix'd Form, or otherwiſe. So that a Liberty is ſtill left, herein to be guided by emergent Circumſtances, in what way and manner to pray, as to what is external.

The like is true, concerning other parts of God's Worſhip, as the two Sacraments, Baptiſm and the Lord's Supper, and alſo of ſinging of Pſalms. Although there is a Command for the Subſtance of theſe, yet there is no Command for ſeveral Circumſtances conveniently neceſſary about the Adminiſtration and Uſe of theſe, and without which the Subſtance cannot be adminiſtred, but a Latitude is left therein, ſo that Reſpect be but had unto general Rules of Edification, Order, Decency, and Peace; and that things of leſs moment be under Control and Government of greater. In all which much is, and muſt be left to the Prudence of thoſe, into whoſe hands the Providence of God hath put the ordering of Affairs of this nature. So that, if nothing be done to the corrupting of the Subſtance of Worſhip expreſly determined, nor to the juſtling out any thing relating to it which is determined and expreſly appointed, nor to the defeating of the Ends to which an external Adminiſtration of Worſhip ſerves, nor under pretence of Divine Appointment, when there is no ſuch thing: It will, I aſſure my ſelf, never be proved, That uncommanded Circumſtances, in the external Adminiſtration, are unlawful, though ſome of them ſhould in ſimple Conſideration be thought inconvenient by ſome, who yet are under a neceſſity of uſing them, or of doing that which is far more inconvenient, indeed ſinful, by making a Schiſm. When *David* had reſolved to build a Temple for the ſame Ends for which a Tabernacle by God's Appointment had been built, God told him, That he *did well in that it was in his Heart to do it*, (1 *Kings* viii. 18.) even then when he told him alſo, That he had never ſaid to any of the Tribes or Judges of his People, *Why build ye not me an Houſe of Cedar?* 2 Sam. vii. 7. Many more Inſtances of this Nature are elſewhere taken notice of, out of the Scriptures of the Old Teſtament, in which times, things relating to the external Adminiſtration of God's Worſhip, were far more minutely determined by God, than they are in the New.

Myſt. of Iniquity unfolded, pag. 133, 134, 135.

Now the caſe under Conſideration being thus, thoſe who firſt broached, and thoſe who have ſince abetted this Doctrine, that aſſerts nothing to be lawful in the Worſhip of God which he hath not commanded, when they extend it farther than to the Subſtance of Worſhip, have corrupted, or rather gone about to overthrow the Doctrine of Chriſtian Liberty in great part. And they have thereby hid from the Peoples Eyes the Liberty left them by Chriſt in theſe Matters, and filled their Minds with endleſs Scruples, and hurried them into unlawful Schiſms. If thoſe formerly, or more lately, who deſired ſome Alteration in the external Form of Adminiſtration uſed in our Church, had not run ſo high, as to aſſert things unlawful, which by all their *Mediums* they could never prove to be ſo, but had peaceably and modeſtly purſued their Deſires from time to time, only upon account of the Inconveniency of ſome things, as apprehended by them, and had ſatisfied themſelves, That in doing ſo, they had gone as far as in Duty they were bound, without ever rending themſelves from Communion with the Church, or diſturbing the Peace of it, by unſetling the Peoples Minds, and filling their Heads with Jealouſies, and their Conſciences with Scruples; they would, without

out doubt, have taken a more ſafe and chriſtian, a more prudent and probable way to have obtained their Deſires in time, than by that courſe by which they have expoſed the Church and Religion to the unſpeakable Diſadvantages they have done. And therefore, after tryal of other ways, to come now to this at laſt, will doubtleſs be a more Honourable and Chriſtian Courſe, and more prudential, as to all worthy Ends, both in reference to the Honour of Religion, and its influence upon Mens Hearts and Lives, the Peace of the Nation, the compoſing of Peoples diſtracted Minds, the reducing of the Erroneous, the fruſtration of the Deſigns of Adverſaries, and the reſtoring Chriſtian Liberty to its right uſe.

For I have ſhewed before, That Men then uſe their Chriſtian Liberty beſt, when they can and do act in ways, though but only lawful, when the common good of Chriſtians, and the Intereſt of Religion in the main in the World, calls for it, though otherwiſe and in ſome reſpects not pleaſing to themſelves. And ſo did St. *Paul*, and ſo he exhorted others to do, when he ſaid, *Give no offence, neither to the Jews, nor to the Gentiles, nor to the Church of God: Even as I pleaſe all Men in all things, not ſeeking my own profit, but the profit of many, that they may be ſaved*, 1 Cor. x. 32, 33. And again, *Let no Man ſeek his own, but every Man another's wealth*, ver. 24. And again, *We then that are ſtrong ought to bear the infirmities of the weak, and not to pleaſe our ſelves. Let every one pleaſe his Neighbour for his good to edification: For Chriſt alſo pleaſed not himſelf*, &c. Rom. xv. 1, 2, 3. And again, *Look not every Man on his own things, but every Man alſo on the things of others*, Phil. ii. 4. And again, *I am made all things to all Men, that I might by all means ſave ſome, and this I do for the Goſpel ſake*, 1 Cor. ix. 22, 23.

And if ever you would follow him both in his Doctrine and Example, you muſt certainly alter your courſe. For I cannot imagine, when I ſee how far St. *Paul* denied himſelf in his own Liberty in things not otherwiſe acceptable to him, and perſuaded others to do ſo likewiſe, rather than Breaches ſhould be made, or continue in the Church, and Charity be thruſt out; and rather than Jews or Gentiles without, or in the Church, ſhould be ſcandalized againſt the Chriſtian Religion: I ſay, when I conſider this, I cannot imagine, but that if he had been in your Circumſtances, he would have yielded to have done any thing not ſinful in it ſelf, and every whit as much as you need to do, to have prevented or removed ſuch manifold and intolerable Evils, as Schiſm hath brought upon us.

You may, and do perhaps think, that if things relating to the external Adminiſtration of God's Ordinances and Worſhip, are, at leaſt in great part, left ſo much undetermined, and at liberty to chuſe this or that, as Circumſtances ſhall direct, as I have aſſerted they are: Then why ſhould you be reſtrained from making uſe of that which you apprehend to be the beſt? There is no doubt but that this may be done, this Liberty being uſed, when other Mens good or hurt is not concerned in it. But when my forbearing to uſe this Liberty will tend to the publick good, and my uſing of it to a publick hurt (which is plainly the caſe before us) then I ſhould not act like ſuch a Chriſtian as St. *Paul* was, if under theſe Circumſtances I ſhould uſe that Liberty, which out of them I might freely uſe. St. *Paul* ſaith, *All things are lawful for me, but all things are not expedient: All things are lawful for me, but all things edifie not.: All things are lawful for me, but I will not be brought under the power of any*, 1 Cor. vi. 12. and x. 23. His meaning, I doubt not, is, that though thoſe things which he ſpeaks of, were in themſelves ſimply conſidered Lawful, and ſuch as to which he had an affection alſo, yet he reſolved this notwithſtanding, that he would not be brought under the Power of them, but would hold and keep himſelf at liberty, to uſe his liberty one way or another, according as it would be conſiſtent with, or tend to the publick good, or to forbear to uſe it when it tended to the contrary. Now I have repreſented to you before in part, how many, great, and lamentable, the Evils are, which are brought on his Church and Nation, by your aſſuming the Liberty you uſe under the preſent Circumſtances in which you are. And therefore methinks if you can but tell how to reconcile your ſelves unto St. *Paul*'s Mind and Reſolution, you ſhould quickly and without any great heſitation, deſiſt and put a ſtop to your preſent proceeding, and return to Parochial Communion.

I Hope you do not think that the Intereſt of Religion in the Souls and Lives of Men, is more advantaged than damnified in the total account by your dividing: Or that it would at all have loſt in the general account of Profit and Loſs, in caſe it never had been begun ſince the Reformation. If you do, I acknowledge my ſelf herein to differ from you: Unleſs you eſtimate Men's Religiouſneſs by their Zeal for and againſt outward Modes, and Forms, and Opinions in Religion, and for and againſt Parties, upon account of thoſe Forms and Opinions; and not by their ſober and ſerious Piety, Modeſty, Humility, Fidelity, Juſtice and Charity, together with their Faith in our Lord Jeſus Chriſt; which are the things by which I meaſure Mens Religiouſneſs. And I appeal to all ſuch among you as are in a like capacity with my ſelf in point of Age and Experience in this matter, to make a Judgment of this nature; whether there be not juſt cauſe to fear that Religion hath loſt ground among us upon the account of our Diviſions, ſo as it never would have done, if they never had been begun. Beſides the hazard we run of expoſing our Poſterities to loſe the Subſtance by our contending for Circumſtance: And beſides the Temptation we have thereby put upon Men to call the whole of Chriſtianity into queſtion, and thereupon to give Reins to their Luſts more than ever before ſince the Reformation was firſt made. I pray God ſo to bind the Conſideration of theſe things upon your Minds, that you may be awakened thereby, out of I know not what Dream, into which a great many of the good People of this Nation have fallen.

There is nothing hardly in Chriſtianity more evident than that matters of leſs moment are to give way to thoſe of greater, Circumſtance to Subſtance, Conveniencies to Neceſſaries, a leſs Convenience to a greater, a greater Inconveniency to a leſs, Duties only by poſitive Inſtitution, to thoſe which are morally or naturally ſuch; as might be ſhewed in many other Scriptures, beſides thoſe now touch'd on about Chriſtian Liberty. And I think nothing gives a more direct Contradiction to all this, than the Schiſm that is made among us, or the things by which it is made: Becauſe by this you make matters of greater moment to truckle and yield to thoſe that are leſs, Circumſtance to Subſtance, Matters neceſſary to thoſe of Conveniency, a greater Convenience to a leſs, and ſo on. For I appeal to the Light of your own Reaſon, and to your Conſcience, whether the affairs of Religion, in reference to the Church of God and to the World, are ſo much concerned in having God's Worſhip and Ordinances adminiſtred in your way, rather than in the way of the Church of *England*, as they are in the Peace and Unity of the Church, and in what depends upon them: Whether the Souls of Men in general, both of thoſe which adhere to you, and of thoſe which do not, are advantaged by your way of Adminiſtration above what they are and would be in the way of the Church of *England*, more than they are hurt by the Diviſion and Separation that is made about that Difference: Whether the Chriſtian Religion be more honoured abroad in other Nations, among Chriſtians and Infidels, by the one, than hurt by the other: Whether the *Proteſtant* Cauſe, both at home and abroad, gains more by the one, than it is hurt by the other: And whether more ſecured to Poſterity by the one, than endangered by the other: Whether Error and Hereſie be more ſuppreſs'd by the one, than propagated by the other. And laſtly, Whether Charity, Humility, and other Chriſtian Vertues or Graces, wherein the Subſtance and Power of Religion conſiſts, are farthered in your way above what they are and would be in the way of the Church of *England*, more than they are hindered by Schiſm and Separation.

Hoſea vi. 6. *Matth.* xii. 4, 5, 6, 7.

Now if the Affairs and Concerns of Religion among Men, do in theſe and many other reſpects loſe more by your Schiſm, than they get by having the Worſhip of God adminiſtred in your way rather than in the way of the Church of *England*, as doubtleſs they do, and the thing is too manifeſt to be denied; Then you muſt needs be as certainly guilty of making matters of greater moment to ſtoop and ſubmit to thoſe of leſs, as ever the Phariſees were of paſſing over the weightier matters of the Law, and contenting themſelves that they tithed Mint, Aniſe, and Cummin.

There is no ſuch proportion of *Value* in your way of external Adminiſtration of Holy Things, as different from that of the Church of *England*, as makes it worthy to be put in *competition* with the Peace and Unity of the Church, and what depends thereon. For the Scripture no where lays any ſuch Injunction upon us, to obſerve one way or manner of external Adminiſtration of the right Subſtance of Worſhip, (ſuppoſing it to be done in common Language) as it does for the *keeping the Unity of the Spirit in the Bond of Peace:* Nor gives any ſuch caution againſt any external Form of Adminiſtration, except that which is made in an unknown Tongue, as it does againſt the breach of the Peace and Unity of the Church, and the many conſequent ill effects thereof. Nor is there any ſuch *utility* in your way of Adminiſtration, as different from that of the Church of *England*, as makes it worthy to be put in competition with the Peace and Unity of the Church. I preſume there is no ſober, ſerious

Chriſtian among you, will ſay that your way of Adminiſtration makes any ſuch difference in the Hearts and Lives of Chriſtians, but that there were heretofore, and are now, Chriſtians in Communion with the Church of *England*, as ſober, righteous, and godly, as any among you. I know nothing therein to hinder a Man from being as holy, and as good as he hath a mind to be. It is the difference in Mens more or leſs Attendance to the Subſtance of Chriſtianity, that makes them better or worſe Chriſtians, and not their uſing different undetermined Circumſtances in the Adminiſtration of Worſhip.

And if it be ſo that your way of Adminiſtration, as different from that of the Church of *England*, holds no ſuch Proportion of Value or Utility, as makes it worthy to be brought in Competition with the Peace and Unity of the Church; then for you to bring it into Competition therewith, nay, to prefer it above the Peace and Unity of the Church, and what depends thereon, as it is apparent you do, is a thing altogether unaccountable, and a flat Contradiction to that Vein of Doctrine in the Scripture which I have mentioned above.

I know you will be ready enough to ſay, that if it be ſo bad a thing in us to put undetermined Circumſtances in the Adminiſtration of holy things into Competition with the Peace and Unity of the Church, as you ſay it is; then it cannot be good in them, who by impoſing ſuch things upon us as Conditions of Communion, do put them into Competition with the Peace and Unity of the Church alſo, which is divided upon that account.

There is, I grant, little Queſtion, but that the impoſing of nothing as a Condition of Communion but what is generally freeſt from Exception, is a very good way to preſerve Peace and Unity in the Church. But yet the uſing of ſome indifferent Circumſtances in the Worſhip of God upon the firſt Reformation from Popery in this Nation, was doubtleſs thought as convenient for the bringing People to Church then, as ever a complying with the Jews in their Uſages not ſinful in themſelves, was at the firſt Converſion of them to Chriſtianity, thought convenient to bring them to, and to keep them in the Church then. And though you think the caſe is ſo altered ſince the Reformation, as that what was a reaſon of their Uſe then, to wit, the bringing Folk to Church, is a reaſon of their Diſuſe, and laying aſide now, as tending to the ſame end; yet if this Thought hath not hitherto taken place in the Minds of the Powers above us, or ſuppoſing they ſhould be under a Miſtake in thinking otherwiſe, do you think that their preferring undetermined Circumſtances before the Peace and Unity of the Church, which you deem Matter of juſt Complaint in them, would at all juſtifie you in doing the like? I am ſure it will not, but greatly aggravate your Fault. *For wherein thou judgeſt another* (as St. *Paul* ſaith) *thou condemneſt thy ſelf; for thou that judgeſt, doeſt the ſame things*, Rom. ii. 1.

The Conſideration of the Inequality and Diſproportion that is between ſome undetermined Circumſtances in the Adminiſtration of holy things, and the Unity and Peace of the Church; would, as I have reaſon to preſume, have prevailed before now to have obtained ſome Eaſe for the ſake of ſuch as are really conſcientiouſly ſcrupulous, but withal peaceable, and as ſcrupulous to diſturb the Peace of the Church on the one hand, as they are to diſturb the Peace of their own Conſcience on the other; I ſay, this probably would have obtained ere now, had not your carrying things with ſo high a hand of Oppoſition, obſtructed it, and hardened their Hearts againſt you, in whoſe Power it is to eaſe you. And I am very full of Confidence, That that very Conſideration I have now mentioned, would yet prevail with them to give you Eaſe, if you would but abate your open Oppoſition, and comply ſo far as I am confident the greateſt part of you can do, without offending your Conſcience. For if you could but yet be prevailed withal thus to do; who is ſo hard-hearted and ſo regardleſs of the Unity and Peace of the Church, and what depends thereon, as would not in their Places and Capacities ſeek your Eaſe? But if you cannot be prevailed withal, I cannot eaſily tell you how much I dread the Conſequence of it.

TIME was when it was the Apprehenſion of many of you, That private and perſonal Application, by you that are Miniſters, to the People of your reſpective Pariſhes, from Houſe to Houſe, was of very great uſe for their profiting in Religion; yea ſo great, that ſome of you have thought you did more good that way, than by your publick Miniſtration; and that, in great Pariſhes eſpecially, more Miniſters than one were neceſſary, for the carrying on of this, and the publick Work. Yea, you thought this ſo profitable and ſo neceſſary, as that the Miniſters in ſeveral Counties, as of *Worceſter*, *Eſſex*, *Cumberland*, *Weſtmorland*, &c. did enter into a mutual Agreement, to engage in this Work, and publiſhed the ſame with Intent, as I ſuppoſe, to excite others to do ſo likewiſe. This conſidered, if the promoting of Religion among the People, both in Knowledge and Practice, was and is your great Deſign, (and I will not be ſo uncharitable, as to judge it neither was nor is) I cannot but think, I confeſs, that you were ſomewhat unhappy, and the Nation too, in that you did not think of, and undertake this Method of employing your Talents, rather than that you have choſen, when Neceſſity, in ſome ſort, put you upon it, and wherein you might have been ſo greatly ſerviceable; and that not only without offending againſt the publick Laws and Peace of the Church, but alſo to your great Honour and high Acceptation with good Men. And if thoſe, who now ſupport you in point of Livelihood, in the way you are in, would not or will not do the ſame or more in that other way (not to ſay what might reaſonably be expected from many others who do not like the way you are in) they would give a ſhrewd ground of Suſpicion, that not the Advancement of the Power and Practice of Religion among us, but ſomewhat elſe prevails with them to do what they do in that kind.

Undoubtedly the Peace and Unity of the Church, (as I have ſhew'd, and you cannot but know) is a Matter of that mighty Moment, for the Increaſe and Growth of all *kindly* Religiouſneſs in your ſelves and the People, and the contrary ſo certain to produce contrary Effects, that it would be very worthy of you to do what poſſibly you can to ſtop the one, and to procure the other, though it ſhould coſt you ſome conſiderable Self-denial to do it. Remember and conſider that excellent Advice of *Clemens Romanus*, in his Epiſtle to the Church of *Corinth*, in a time when ſad Diviſions and Contentions prevailed among them, as they do now among us. *He therefore* (ſaith he) *that is ſtrong, merciful, full of Charity among you; let him ſay, If it be for me, that Sedition, Contention, and Diviſion ariſe, I will depart, I will be gone whither you will: I will do what the People command me: So be it that the Flock of Chriſt may live in Peace with thoſe Presbyters that are ſet over them. He that ſhall do this* (ſaith he) *will win himſelf much Honour in the Lord, and every place will gladly receive him.* Let me ſay to you upon this occaſion, as St. *Paul* alſo did in his Epiſtle to the ſame Church, *Chap.* xiv. 36. *What? Came the Word of God to you only, or from you only?* Do you think that Religion in the Nation depends ſo much upon your publick Labours, as that it would ſink if you did not thereby uphold it? Methinks you ſhould not, I am ſure there is no reaſon why you ſhould. And if not, then either *Clemens Romanus* was out in his forementioned Advice, or elſe you ſeem to be ſo in your preſent Practice, as differing much from it.

Pag. 69.

I Will add one thing more before I conclude. I find, by ſome of your printed Papers as well as by perſonal Diſcourſe, that it runs much in your Minds, That if you could but be indulged a Liberty by the Civil Powers, in the ſeparate way in which you now act, it would free you from the Imputation of Schiſm; which I apprehend, under your Favour, to be a great Miſtake, for theſe Reaſons.

Firſt, becauſe your Practice herein, notwithſtanding ſuch an Indulgence, would be a Deviation from the primitive Pattern of Church-Communion. All the Chriſtians then, as I have ſhewed before, did ſtill aſſociate together in Church-Communion, in the places where they did reſide; and accordingly the Churches received their Denomination of being the Church at *Rome*, at *Corinth*, &c. from the civil Bounds. And I have ſhewed alſo, That ſo to do is moſt accommodate to the Ends and Purpoſes of Church-Communion. And for any in theſe Churches, whiles they did reſide upon the place, to have rent themſelves off from Communion with thoſe, and to have ſet up for themſelves in the ſame place (otherwiſe than what was done with conſent when their Numbers made it convenient to meet in diſtinct Aſſemblies) or ſhould have gone and have united themſelves with a Church in another place, as diſowning Communion with thoſe from whom they went off, when there was no neceſſity of doing ſo, or of ſinning, would have been a downright Schiſm, and ſeems to have been the very caſe of thoſe St. *Jude* ſpeaks of, that *ſeparated themſelves, being ſenſual, not having the Spirit*, Jude xix. Now then when there have been Churches of Chriſtian Profeſſors in this Nation, and diſtinguiſhed by the civil Bounds and Precincts, for Order and Government ſake, in like ſort as they were in the Apoſtles times; for you in this caſe to rend from them, and ſet up other Churches in the ſame places, and renounce Communion with the firſt, by Word or Deed, without a neceſſity to do ſo or ſin; though you ſhould not perhaps ſin againſt the Civil Power in doing ſo, in caſe you had their leave, yet this would not free you from Schiſm, in making a cauſleſs Breach in the Church.

Secondly, I have ſhewed, that a gathering out the better People from among thoſe which are not ſo good, and to make a new Church thereof, is croſs to one principal end of Church-Conſociation, which is, that the better might help the worſe, and the ſtrong bring forward the weak, the more ſpiritual part help to ſpiritualize the more carnal. The contrary is, as if the grown Perſons in a Family ſhould withdraw from the Children, and the Healthy from thoſe that are Sick, which every body would cry out of. And if the Higher Powers ſhould connive at ſuch Diſorders, the thing would be never the better in it ſelf.

Thirdly, I have ſhew'd what bad effects Schiſm does naturally produce, and how contrary it is in it ſelf to the Doctrine of the Apoſtles; and if it be and do ſo, Leave from the Civil Powers to perpetrate this Evil, would never ſanctifie it, or make it other than it is in its own nature, that is, ſinful.

HAving ſaid thus much, as you ſee, I ſhall not need to make any farther Apology why I have done it, than what you have in the beginning of this Addreſs. And as to what it conſiſts of, I ſhall Truſt it to ſpeak for it ſelf, (if you will but make that allowance to the Author, which conſidering his Circumſtances, I am confident Ingenuity will not deny him.) Only this I can, and therefore may ſay, that I am not conſcious to my ſelf of having offered any abuſe to the Scriptures by any undue Interpretation, or to you by any Miſapplication of them, nor by any Miſrepreſentation of you, in Principle or Practice: Though I do not think you are all of a piece in both: And therefore all that's ſaid is not to be applied to all alike, all being not alike guilty of the Schiſm ſo much complained of in this Addreſs. As my Intention in the undertaking of which was the publick good; ſo upon review, I cannot perceive that I have ſaid any thing but what is one way or other agreeable to that Deſign, nor unbecoming any Man of a modeſtly publick Spirit. And if the removal of a publick Grievance out of the Church, and the procuring its publick Benefit, hath made the mention and diſcovery of thoſe things neceſſary, the mention and diſcovery of which are likelieſt to offend ſome; yet the neceſſity of that, as a means to ſo worthy an End, will, I hope, plead my excuſe with them, and ſatisfie them upon after-Thoughts. And if this Addreſs may contribute any thing to the publick good, either while I am Alive, or after my Death, though but in the leaſt degree, (of which I do not altogether deſpair) I ſhall not loſe my end.

Wherefore to conclude: If you would not then have the Power and Spirit of Religion ceaſe from among us, or degenerate into form and unkindlineſs of Temper: If you would not leave the People in Superſtition, into which you ſeem to have led them, nor be guilty of adding to God's Word, by making them believe he hath forbidden and commanded, what he hath not forbidden nor commanded, but left to ſuch direction as general Rules and emergent Circumſtances ſhall ſuggeſt to prudent Men: If you would not vary from the primitive Pattern, by ſeparating from the Chriſtian Congregations where you reſide, when you are not neceſſitated to it, or to ſin: If you would not tempt Men to think that Religion is but an uncertain thing, and matter of ſquabble: If you would not give occaſion of Jealouſie, that due regard is wanting in you to Order and Government: If you would not betray our Poſterity into the hands of Popiſh Policy and Power, nor expoſe the Church of God in this Nation to that ruine which hath befallen other Churches in other Places and Ages of the World through Diviſions among themſelves; Then be perſuaded, I beſeech you, to conſult ſome better things than the keeping ſtill open the wide Breach among us, can poſſibly promiſe you.

Farewel.

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CATHOLICISM:

Or, Several

ENQUIRIES

TOUCHING

Viſible Church-Memberſhip, Church-Communion, the Nature of Schiſm;

AND THE

Uſefulneſs of National Conſtitutions for the Furtherance of Religion.

BRITISH MUSEUM

THE PREFACE TO THE READER.

ONE would think any thing ſhould be acceptable to Diſſenting Brethren, which has a true Tendency to deliver them from thoſe miſtaken Notions of things which do expoſe them to much Trouble from Men, and from the Laws themſelves, and by means of which they are an occaſion of Trouble and Danger to the Nation. And it is but reaſonable to expect that things of this nature ſhould be conſider'd by them now at ſuch a time as this, tho' neglected during the time in which thoſe Opinions put them to no Trouble. The Hope of which, and the Sorrow to ſee Chriſtian Brethren to ſuffer great Inconveniencies to themſelves needleſly, has been a Motive to me to make theſe Sheets publick at this time; as not doubting but that if judiciouſly and impartially weighed, they with other Writings of like nature, may be of good uſe to diſcover to them their miſtakes.

Their Separation from Parochial Communion which does expoſe them to trouble, does proceed principally from their Miſtakes (as I conceive them to be) either about that which makes Men Members of the viſible Church, or that which gives them right to the external Privileges thereof, or about the external manner of publick Worſhip. There are many of the Diſſenters whoſe Notion of the viſible Church, and of Mens Right to Communion in the external Privilege of it, ſeems much narrower than the Scriptures repreſent thoſe things to be. They make that to be neceſſary to Viſible *Church-Memberſhip and Communion, which is but neceſſary to* Inviſible *Church-Communion, And then they make this Qualification neceſſary not only by way of* Duty, *but of* Condition *alſo, without which in humane Judgment Perſons ought not to be admitted into Church-Fellowſhip, or unto Communion in the external Privileges of the Church. Which Notion and correſpondent Practice of theirs, I have endeavoured to diſcover to be plainly contrary to the whole Current of the Scriptures touching theſe Matters, both of the Old Teſtament and of the New, both as to Doctrine and Matters of Fact.*

That which hath betrayed them into this miſtake, ſeems to have been the want of diſtinguiſhing between the internal and external State of the Church; for want of which they confound them, and make that which is but neceſſary to the Being of the Church as inviſible, to be ſo likewiſe to the Being of it as it is viſible. The Church being deſcribed in Scripture but as a little Flock, and that as our Saviour ſays there are but few which find the narrow way which leads to Life, and enter in at the ſtrait Gate; and becauſe the Qualification of thoſe of the inviſible Church who ſhall be ſaved, as deſcribed in Scripture, ſeems to agree but to a few of thoſe who profeſs the Chriſtian Religion; and becauſe the Church is but One; hereupon they come to be perſuaded that none are really and truly of the Church but ſuch whoſe Qualification agrees with their Deſcription to whom Salvation is indeed promiſed. But as for others, they eſteem them no more to be true and real Members of the Church, than wooden Legs and glaſs Eyes are Members of the Body of a Man.

But then there are Scriptures which muſt be conſidered likewiſe which have foretold of the coming of many whole Nations into the Church both Kings and their People, and of the numerous increaſe of it, when a little one ſhall become a thouſand, and a ſmall one a ſtrong Nation: When the Stone cut out of the Mountain without hands ſhall fill the whole Earth, *when for Number* they ſhall ſay the place is too ſtrait for me:

Give place to me, that I may dwell, *and the like; for there are many ſuch Predictions in Scripture. Now unleſs they will ſay, that whole Nations, and thoſe vaſt Numbers forementioned, are all of the Church as inviſible, (which is more than they will or can ſay) they muſt of neceſſity admit of a diſtinction of a twofold State of one and the ſame Catholick Church, the one external and viſible, the other internal and inviſible, And if this Diſtinction be admitted, then theſe Predictions concerning the vaſt extent of the Church, will be fairly reconcileable to thoſe other Scriptures, which ſpeak of it in a more contracted and limited ſenſe; without which they ſeem irreconcileable. For what ſome Scriptures ſpeak touching the paucity or fewneſs of Church-members, and what others ſay touching a far greater number, of which the Church doth and will conſiſt, are both true in different reſpects; the one in reſpect of the internal and inviſible State of the Church; the other in reſpect of that which is external and viſible. And this Diſtinction is fairly juſtified by what our bleſſed Saviour hath ſaid more than once, to wit, that* many are called, but few are choſen.

And if any ſhould fancy that this twofold ſtate of Church-members implies two Churches, the one viſible, the other inviſible; there is no ground for it, ſince thoſe who are of the Church as inviſible, are the ſame Perſons which are in external and viſible Union and Comunion with thoſe who are of the Church only as viſible, and ſo make one Church with them. But we cannot ſay they make one Church with theſe, and another by themſelves, for then there would be two Churches indeed, and yet of the ſame Perſons for a conſiderable part.

Conſidering then this twofold ſtate of the Church, it will not be difficult at all to conceive how and why a participation in the external Privileges of the Church, does belong to all that are externally and viſibly of it, when yet a participation in the internal and inviſible Privileges of it, belongs only to thoſe who are of the Church, in reſpect of its inviſible as well as viſible ſtate. As there are different Qualifications of Perſons of the ſame Church, ſo there are different Privileges which belong to them accordingly; external ones to them who are only externally qualified, and both external and internal ones to them that are qualified for both.

Now this different State of the Church being ſo apparent as it is in Scripture; as alſo that thoſe who have but common Grace, and yet Baptized, are really and truly of the viſible Church: I ſay, the Conſideration of theſe things hath enclined me to touch upon ſeveral things which ſeem to render it very improbable, at leaſt, that the Apoſtles ſhould admit none into the Church by Baptiſm, but ſuch as they judged to believe ſo effectually, as to be thereby Regenerate before they would Baptize them. To what is ſaid in my Inquiries into theſe Matters, I ſhall here add a little more for our better underſtanding that Caſe or Queſtion.

The Queſtion is, Whether it be probable that the Apoſtles admitted none into the Church by Baptiſm, but upon Suppoſition that they had a true juſtifying ſaving Faith before ſuch admiſſion? And hereby Faith in this Queſtion is not meant Faith objectively, but ſubjectively conſidered. For it is agreed, that a Profeſſion of a Belief of the ſame Truth, Doctrinally conſidered, is neceſſary to viſible Church-memberſhip by Baptiſm in the Adult, which, if believed as it ought to be, will be ſufficient unto Juſtification and Salvation: And ſuch is the Belief, That Jeſus Chriſt is the Son of God, *John* xx. 31. *Acts* viii. 37. *But the Queſtion is, Whether a leſs degree of Belief of ſaving Doctrine be not ſufficient to viſible Church-memberſhip, than is ſufficient unto Juſtification and Salvation? and whether it is not probable, that the Apoſtles did admit ſome into the Church by Baptiſm, upon the Appearance and probable Evidence of ſuch a Faith? And in order to the making a due Judgment in this caſe, it is neceſſary to know what this Faith is, and wherein it differs from juſtifying and ſaving Faith. The one, for diſtinction-ſake, we call a Faith* initial *or* inchoate, *the other a Faith* conſummate *or complete. The initial Faith ſtands in ſuch a lower degree of aſſent of the Mind unto the Truth of the Goſpel, concerning Chriſt his being the Son of God, or Saviour of Sinners, as has not yet, thorow its Power over the Will, renewed the whole Man, ſo as to become Regenerate or a new Creature. But the Faith conſummate or complete lies in ſuch a firm aſſent of the Mind unto the Truth of the Goſpel, as by which, through frequent Conſideration of the things aſſented to, the Will is changed and renewed in its Inclinations, Motions and Affections, in reference both to Sin and Duty.*

This difference between Faith and Faith, is fairly ſet out in the Scriptures. St. James, *Chap.* ii. *treats of a Faith that will not avail to Juſtification and Salvation, and of that alſo which will. The one is the Faith which is* alone, or by it ſelf, *ver.* 15.

which has not yet purified the Heart from earthly Affections, and fleſhly Luſts; nor brought forth the fruit of the Spirit, but is dead, and remains barren. But the other Faith, which will avail to Juſtification, is operative and vigorous, producing internal and external Acts of Chriſtian Obedience, by which it's made perfect, ver. 22. *That is, it is thereby made to attain its end in the Juſtification of the Perſon that hath it. This Faith worketh by Love, and is thereby conſummate or made perfect,* Gal. v. *For the* Greek *word, according to learned Authors, is in the middle voice, and may be taken actively or paſſively, or rather both,* it working by Love, *is thereby conſummate or made perfect. Dr.* Hammond *underſtands it in a paſſive ſenſe, and reads it thus,* Faith which is conſummate by Love. *When St.* Paul *ſaith,* I could not write to you, as unto Spiritual, but as unto Carnal, even as unto Babes in Chriſt, *becauſe of the Envy, Strife and Diviſion they lived in,* 1 Cor. iii. 1. *his words ſeem to intimate, that Men might be Babes in Chriſt by ſuch a Faith as fell ſhort of purifying the Heart, and working by Love, and which left them in a carnal State. And when St.* Peter *ſaith,* Add to your Faith Virtue, *&c.* 2 Pet. i. 5. *he ſuppoſeth it very poſſible for ſome Chriſtians to have a Faith without the addition of thoſe Chriſtian Virtues there enumerated, and to be* barren and unfruitful in the Knowledge of our Lord *Jeſus Chriſt, as it follows,* ver. 8, 9. *And we read of ſome who believed in Chriſt, when they ſaw his Miracles, to whom yet he would not commit himſelf,* John ii. 23. *and of others who believed on him, but would not confeſs him, leſt they ſhould be put out of the Synagogue, and becauſe they loved the praiſe of Men more than the praiſe of God,* John xii. 42. *And it's ſaid of* Magus *that* Simon *himſelf alſo believed,* Acts viii. 13.

This may ſuffice to ſhew what that Faith is which falls ſhort of that which is juſtifying, and wherein it differs from it. I ſhall now improve this to ſhew how unlikely a thing it is, that the Apoſtles ſhould receive none into the Church by Baptiſm but ſuch as they eſteem'd to have a juſtifying Faith.

1. *It is no ways probable, that thoſe who had lived in the darkneſs of Paganiſm, ſhould ordinarily, if at all, in their firſt beginning to believe, believe unto Juſtification; but that there was ſome ſpace of time between their firſt believing, and their believing unto Juſtification: And if ſo, then it cannot be probable that the Apoſtles, who baptized Men preſently, and when they firſt began to believe, would baptize them under the notion of their having already believed unto Juſtification. Now the Reaſon why it is not probable that ſuch Men, when they firſt began to believe, did then believe unto Juſtification is this: Becauſe Men do not believe unto Juſtification until their Faith hath wrought ſuch a change in the whole Man, as by which they become Regenerate, as I have ſhew'd: For we cannot ſay God juſtifies unregenerate Men while they are ſuch. Now ſuch a Change as this, is not ordinarily, if at all, wrought in an inſtant, and as ſoon as Men begin to believe. For the Word of God, by believing of which this Change is wrought, does not effect it phyſically, but morally, by cauſing ſuch Thoughts and Conſiderations to riſe in the Mind, as do by degrees alter and change the moral Frame and Conſtitution of the Soul. For though the Spirit of God is the principal Agent, and the Word of God his Inſtrument in this Work, yet he cauſeth this Change by working upon Mens Thoughts, and by bringing them ſeriouſly to conſider the things they believe, whereunto they tend, and how they were concern'd in them. And Mens diſcerning things of this nature, and conſequently their Thoughts and Conſiderations about them are brought on but by degrees, as Light comes in, being confuſedly and indiſtinctly diſcerned at firſt. And the aſſent of the Mind to the Truth of things to be believed, cannot exceed the Mind's diſcerning the Credibility of the Evidence upon which they are to be believed; but ſo long as the one is weak, the other will be weak alſo. And ſo far as the aſſent of the Mind is but weak, ſo far its Operation upon the Will, to alter and change it, will be but weak likewiſe; as the one is wrought gradually, ſo is the other. Men may be forced to believe, whether they will or no, through the ſtrength of Conviction, as that ſignifies the aſſent of the Mind, when yet the Will is not thereby prevailed upon to conſent and yield to the Dictates of the Mind, for ſome conſiderable time, and ſometimes never. And let a Man's Faith or Belief be what it will, yet until it prevails over the Will (which is the great Wheel in the Soul, that gives motion both to a Man's Affections and Actions) to alter and change it, as to its prevailing bent and inclination, it's far enough from putting a Man into a juſtified State. And when-ever the Will is brought to comply with the Aſſent and Judgment of the Mind in this great matter, yet it is then ordinarily a Work of Time, and the fruit of many Thoughts and Conſiderations: For want of which, though Men do believe, their Faith will languiſh, and bring forth no fruit to perfection, as we are taught in*

the Parable by the Seed which did ſo for want of much Earth, which anſwers to the want of many Thoughts and Conſiderations.

All theſe things conſider'd then, that ſince a Faith *which hath not regenerated thoſe in whom it is, falls ſhort of a juſtifying* Faith; *and ſince* Faith *in its beginning and loweſt pitch is ordinarily ſo weak and inoperative to effect ſo great a Change as Regeneration ſignifies, until by many* Thoughts *and* Conſiderations *it has gathered ſome ſtrength; and ſince for it to do ſo is a Work of time; and ſince the Apoſtles from whoſe Writings theſe things are collected, baptized thoſe upon their firſt believing or beginning to believe, who had until then lived in the Darkneſs of Paganiſm; I ſay theſe things conſidered, make it very improbable that the Apoſtles baptized none but upon Suppoſition and probable Preſumption that they all had a juſtifying* Faith *before they baptized them.*

If any ſhall ſay it was upon a charitable Perſuaſion in the Apoſtles that thoſe whom they baptized had ſuch a Faith *as by which they either were already regenerated and juſtified, or would be in time, that they baptized them, I ſhall not oppoſe them herein. But the ſaying thus does ſuppoſe and grant that the Apoſtles did not account ſuch a* Faith *as by which Men were already before Baptiſm regenerate and juſtified, neceſſary to qualifie them for Baptiſm, if they had but ſuch a Faith which gave them ground to hope that it might in time be improved ſo as to become a juſtifying* Faith; *which Conceſſion is every whit as much as I plead for.*

2. *It is not probable that the Apoſtles received none into the viſible Church by Baptiſm, but ſuch as they eſteemed to be of the Church as inviſible by a juſtifying* Faith, *becauſe they could not but know that many are really and truly of the viſible Church, and are ſo eſteemed by God, who yet are not of the Church as inviſible by ſuch a* Faith. *That ſuch are of the viſible Church in the account of the Scriptures, both of the Old Teſtament and of the New, I have, I ſuppoſe, ſufficiently proved in ſome of the following Enquiries. And if this was and is the current Doctrine of the Scriptures of the Old Teſtament and of thoſe written by the Apoſtles, we cannot ſuppoſe them to be ignorant of it: And if they were not, it is not reaſonable to ſuppoſe they would reckon more neceſſary to qualifie Men for their Entrance into the viſible Church, than was neceſſary to their being of it.*

3. *The Apoſtles had Commiſſion to baptize Diſciples and Believers without Limitation or Exception; and thoſe who had but the initial* Faith *which I before deſcribed, are in Scripture ſaid to have believed and to have been Diſciples, as is ſhew'd in the following Papers; and therefore the Apoſtles Commiſſion to baptize, muſt needs extend to the baptizing of ſuch. And it is no ways likely that the Apoſtles would make Exception in reference to the baptizing of Perſons, where their Commiſſion made none, but that they baptized all that were at all Diſciples as ſuch, without Diſcrimination or making a difference between Believers and Believers, or Diſciples and Diſciples, in reference to their baptizing of ſuch: Nor does it at all appear by any the leaſt hint in Scripture that they did. Indeed our Saviour in commiſſionating his Apoſtles, ſeems to make a difference between teaching Men ſo as to make them Diſciples capable of Baptiſm, and the teaching them afterwards how to live a truly Chriſtian Life: He ſeems to have directed them to bring them firſt to believe Chriſt to be the Son of God, the Meſſiah, the Saviour, the great Prophet that brought to Men the way of Salvation, and to engage them to become Diſciples unto him and his Religion, and to baptize them into it; and then afterwards to inſtruct them in the particulars of their Duty: And this the double teaching mentioned in their Commiſſion,* Matth. xxviii. 19, 20. *ſeems to imply, and their baptizing Men ſo ſuddenly and upon ſo little teaching as they did, does likewiſe infer.*

I have alſo given ſome account in the tenth Enquiry, how agreeable it is to the Wiſdom and Goodneſs of God towards Men in ſeveral reſpects, to admit ſuch as have but common Grace, into the Church as viſible: And if it be ſo, then they act croſs to God's gracious Deſign, who labour to keep them out of it.

Another Miſtake upon which Separation from Parochial Communion is founded, is an Opinion that our bleſſed Saviour has been more particular than indeed he has, in determining the external manner and Circumſtances of God's publick Worſhip.

For the Promoters of Separation were wont heretofore to ſuggeſt to us from thoſe words concerning Chriſt, Heb. iii. 2. That he was faithful to him that appointed him, as *Moſes* was faithful in all his Houſe. *That Chriſt had given Direction in particular about the Worſhip of God, and the Orders to be obſerved in his Houſe now under the Goſpel, as* Moſes *had done under the Law. And accordingly they often urged that*

Care ſhould be taken, that all things be done according to the Pattern in the Mount. By which many People became diſaffected to the Worſhip of God by the uſe of a Liturgy, inaſmuch as they could not find our Saviour to have given any Precept or Direction for the worſhipping God in ſuch a way, or after ſuch manner.

Whereas the Faithfulneſs of Chriſt to him that had appointed him, did not ſtand in being as particular as Moſes was in his Directions touching the Worſhip of God, and Orders of his Houſe, but in doing and teaching ſo much and all that the Father hath appointed him, as Moſes alſo had done. And ſince we find that our Saviour has not been ſo particular in his Directions touching theſe Matters as Moſes was, we thereby know that the Father did not appoint him to be ſo, becauſe he was faithful in obſerving all that was appointed him. Now that our Saviour has not been ſo particular in his Directions touching the external manner of God's Worſhip as Moſes was, will quickly appear if we do but compare what was done by him in this kind, and what was done by Moſes. Under the Law God did not only preſcribe the Matter and Subſtance of his Worſhip, as the ſeveral ſorts of Sacrifices and Oblations; but alſo the particular Circumſtances relating to them, as the place where the Sacrifice ſhould be killed, and on which ſide the Altar, and how it ſhould be dreſſed, and about the Fire of the Altar, and the orderly laying the Wood upon it, and how the parts of the Sacrifice ſhould be laid upon the Wood. And beſides all this, there were Laws directing how the Prieſts ſhould be accoutred in their Miniſtration, as of what, and after what manner and faſhion their Garments ſhould be made, and when put on, and when put off. And I might inſtance in many like things in other caſes.

But now in the New Teſtament it is far otherwiſe; there we are directed indeed in the Subſtance and Spiritual Nature of Divine Worſhip, and what is eſſential to it: But as for the external Circumſtances of Adminiſtration thereof, we have very little of particular Direction therein; but the Church in thoſe things is left for the moſt part, to guide and determine her ſelf and her own Actions by general Rules, ſuch as Edification, Peace and Order, and ſuch external Signs of Reverence and Devotion, as Natural Religion will direct Men in. And indeed there is ſo little of particular Direction in theſe things, as that there is no ſort of Chriſtians however diſtinguiſhed, but do more, and are under a neceſſity of doing more in the external manner of Worſhip, than there is particular Direction for in Scripture.

There is a Command for baptizing Diſciples in the Name of the Father, Son and Holy Ghoſt: But no particular Direction what Prayer ſhall be made, or what Inſtruction ſhall be given at the Adminiſtration of Baptiſm, nor after what manner or form the Party baptized ſhall by himſelf or Parents, enter into Covenant with God. The like may be ſaid touching the Lord's Supper: There is no particular Direction what Prayers ſhall be made, or Inſtruction given, or Exhortation made at the Adminiſtration of it, nor after what manner the Elements are to be conſecrated, otherwiſe than by reciting the words of Inſtitution; nor how in particular the Cup is to be bleſſed, nor what Geſture ſhall be uſed, nor when and how often it ſhall be received. In theſe things Churches in ſeveral Nations may and do vary more or leſs, and yet all is well done ſo long as they keep to general Rule, which may be obſerved and kept to in theſe and other Ordinances of Worſhip under ſeveral different Circumſtances; and this none can deny.

And ſo for publick Prayer, tho' we have particular Rules for the Matter of it, and to whom and in whoſe Name to be made, and likewiſe for the internal manner: Yet as to the external manner and Circumſtances (ſave that of being made in a known Tongue) as whether it ſhall be made in a ſet Form or without (except the Direction given for the Uſe of the Lord's Prayer) or whether with the uſe of a Book or without it, or whether kneeling or ſtanding, or how many ſhall be made at one Church-Aſſembly; theſe things are not particularly determined one way or other, but are left to the Prudence of Men to uſe one or another, according as the Exigence of Circumſtances ſhall require, or their Governours order.

And if our Bleſſed Saviour had not intended to have allowed ſuch a Liberty in the Choice of external Circumſtances of Worſhip; we cannot in reaſon but think he would have been as particular in determining them, as he has been in the Matter and Subſtance of Worſhip it ſelf, which yet we ſee he has not been. For he could not but know it impoſſible for all Church-Guides not immediately inſpired (tho' otherwiſe never ſo wiſe and good) to pitch upon the ſelf-ſame Circumſtances of Adminiſtration, where they have only general Rules to guide them in their Choice. And accordingly Experience ſhews that among good Men, ſome have thought ſuch and ſuch Circumſtances of

Worſhip beſt to agree with general Rules, when others, as good as they, have thought others to do ſo. And though in ſuch caſes both cannot be beſt under the ſame Circumſtances of things, yet that which is not beſt in it ſelf may be beſt to be uſed as Circumſtances may fall out, as when that which is not beſt cannot be refuſed without a greater inconvenience than the uſe of that, rather than a better, does amount to.

Our bleſſed Saviour then having left his People at ſo much liberty in the choice of External Circumſtances of Worſhip, as we ſee he has, it argues ſufficiently that the uſe of different Circumſtantial Modes of Worſhip is not at all diſpleaſing unto him, ſo long as they agree with the general Rule, eſpecially when the avoiding of a Breach, and the preſervation of Peace, Unity, and good Will in the Church, does influence the Choice.

If there be then ſuch a liberty left by Chriſt unto his Church of uſing different Circumſtantial Modes of Worſhip, ſo long as they anſwer to the general Rule, as none can with any colour of Reaſon deny but there is; then it cannot but be a great abuſe of this Liberty, for Chriſtians ſo to contend for one of theſe Circumſtantial Modes of Worſhip, in oppoſition to the other, as to ſeparate and break Communion about it, and thereby to involve the Church in unpeaceable Strife and Contention; Diſaffection and Feuds. When it is but matter of Liberty to uſe one or another, and not matter of indiſpenſable Duty to uſe one only and not the other; it cannot but be an abuſe of ſuch a Liberty to make uſe of it to a publick hurt to the Church. The making uſe of that which is but only matter of Liberty, when to do ſo cauſeth a Brother to offend, is ſeverely condemned by St. Paul; *how much more then is the making uſe of ſuch Liberty to be blamed when it tends to a great and publick miſchief in the Church? St.* Paul *ſaith,* Brethren, ye have been called unto liberty, only *uſe* not liberty for an occaſion to the fleſh, but by love ſerve one another, *Gal.* v. 13. *That the uſing of this Liberty we ſpeak of has been an occaſion for the Fleſh to ſhew it ſelf, and play its part, is ſadly viſible in that* Variance, Strife, Emulation *and* Envying, *which has been cauſed thereby; which are* works of the Fleſh, *and ſuch too, that as St.* Paul *ſaith,* They which do ſuch things ſhall not inherit the Kingdom of God, *Gal.* v. 19, 20, 21.

I know it will be ſaid, that if it be an abuſe of Liberty to contend ſo much for the uſe of one external way and manner of Worſhip, when another is lawful as well as that, and when to do ſo tends to Strife and Diviſion, and the deſtruction of Charity; then it muſt be a like abuſe of Liberty to impoſe the uſe of another, when ſuch an Impoſition is attended with the ſame, or like evil or inconvenience, as we ſee the Impoſition of that preſcribed by the Liturgy is. To this I ſhall ſay but theſe two things.

1. *If we ſhould ſuppoſe this to be ſo as they object; yet the abuſe of a Liberty one way by the Authors of ſuch an Impoſition, does not at all privilege the abuſe of a Liberty by others in the contrary extream.*

2. *The Impoſition they ſpeak of is no neceſſary* Cauſe *of Diviſion and Separation, or of the ill effect of them; and if it ſhould be any* occaſion *of them, yet there is a vaſt difference between the being an accidental occaſion of Diviſion, and actually to divide and ſeparate cauſleſly. And look how much the one is worſe than the other, by ſo much muſt the Diſſenters be more in fault by their actual Diviſion and Separation, than they can with any appearance of Reaſon pretend the other to be, for the ſeverity of their Impoſition.*

Now that the Impoſition of the Liturgy is no neceſſary cauſe of Diviſion and Separation, will appear in that the defects objected againſt it, are no ſufficient cauſe of Separation from the Worſhip performed according to it: And this I hope I have made out to the ſatisfaction of any Man, whoſe Prejudice is not greater than his Reaſon, in my enquiring into the nature of Schiſm among the following Diſcourſes. In which Diſcourſes I have endeavoured to remove thoſe bars and ſtumbling-blocks out of the Diſſenters *way, which have kept them from Communion with our Parochial Congregations; and this with a deſign of eaſe to them, as well as ſervice to the Church otherways.*

But this their narrowing and leſſening the extent of the viſible Church, and the terms of admiſſion into it, and of ſharing in the external Privileges of it; and likewiſe their confining the Adminiſtration of its Worſhip to one Circumſtantial Mode as only lawful, when Almighty God has not done ſo, is of very pernicious conſequence. For it has we ſee divided the Proteſtants among themſelves, and caſt them into Parties; and then engaged them in contentious Diſputes one againſt another, which has begot a kind of ſtrangeneſs and ſhineſs in them towards each other, yea, and diſaffection too; and the Oppoſition begot upon this account riſes ſtill higher and higher, and more and *more threatens ruine to both Parties, firſt and laſt. And the Papiſts themſelves could never have contrived a more likely way to diſgrace the Reformation, to lay low the Proteſtant Intereſt, to enfeeble its Strength, and to break down its Fence, and make way for the return of Popery, than we our ſelves have taken by dividing our ſelves by needleſs and unreaſonable Scruples, and by making a Reformation of the Reformation as neceſſary as the firſt Reformation from Popery was, and for want of it, to make a ſecond Separation as neceſſary as the firſt: For what would or could they do more than ſeparate, in caſe Popery were in place of Proteſtant Worſhip? And however an Emendation in ſome things of an Eccleſiaſtical Concern may be very convenient and deſirable when it can be had in a* legal *way; yet to make this as neceſſary as the firſt Reformation from Popery was, and a Separation from Parochial Communion for want of it as neceſſary as our firſt Separation from Popery was, is ſo unreaſonable, that it is a marvelous thing that Men of any Reputation for Wiſdom ſhould not ſee it, and be full of the ſenſe of it. And ſo it is likewiſe that they ſhould run ſo deſparate a hazard as they do, of loſing all the benefit they have of the National Reformation from Popery, rather than be denied or want that farther Reformation, as they eſteem it, which they deſire: And is it not marvelous alſo, that they will not do what they can do toward preventing of it, by complying with publick Order as far as they can? For they themſelves have given occaſion to believe, that very many, eſpecially of the more knowing of them, can join in the* Common Prayers *made in our Parochial Aſſemblies, yea and more than ſo, however it comes to paſs they refrain from doing ſo. And one would think the Apoſtle's Injunction,* If it be poſſible, and as much as in you lies, live peaceably with all Men, *ſhould weigh more with them than any politick Conſideration whatſoever; eſpecially when the publick Peace and Safety is ſo much concerned in it as it is, and as they know it is. It is hardly to be believed that they can think, that not to comply as far they can, ſhould be a more likely way to come into their End, ſo far as it is fair and reaſonable, than to do ſo is. God Almighty grant the things which belong to our Peace, may not ſtill be hid from our Eyes.*

I have been inform'd, and do perceive, that many of the Diſſenters can come to Church, but cannot kneel in receiving the Sacrament; by reaſon whereof they are obnoxious to the Law, though they ſhould come to Church. For whoſe help and ſatisfaction in this Caſe, I ſhall here add a few words, which were omitted in a more proper place. One reaſon of this Scruple of theirs is taken from our Saviour and his Apoſtles uſing another Geſture at the firſt Inſtitution of the Lord's Supper: But it muſt be conſidered,

1. *That if the Circumſtances attending the firſt Inſtitution of this Supper ſhould oblige us to an imitation of them, as well as in what is eſſential to the Ordinance it ſelf, then we may not receive it but in the Night, and after another Supper is firſt eaten, and in the Geſture and Poſture of lying upon Couches or Beds: For under thoſe Circumſtances it was firſt inſtituted and received. But now the different Practice of Chriſtians in after-times does declare, That they have not held themſelves obliged to imitate them in theſe Circumſtances. Nor is there any reaſon they ſhould; becauſe theſe things were but accidental to the Ordinance it ſelf, and were all occaſioned by this Supper, being inſtituted at the Paſchal Supper, and from the* Jews *Geſture uſed therein according to the Cuſtom of their Country. And the alteration of the Geſture does no more alter the Nature of the Ordinance, than the alteration of the other accidental Circumſtances does.*

2. *Scripture-Examples are no farther binding to us, than they were agreeable to ſome Precept or Rule of Duty otherwiſe. But now there is no Precept enjoining any one Geſture to be uſed in receiving the Sacrament, as excluſive of any other; and therefore any may be made uſe of when required by the Government over us: For where there is no Law, there is no Tranſgreſſion.*

But if there had been any one Geſture required by our Saviour as neceſſary and as excluſive of others, no doubt but St. Paul *would have made mention of it when he made known to the Church of* Corinth *what he had received from the Lord touching his laſt Supper; but we ſee no ſuch thing was mentioned by him,* Chap. xi.

3. *The* Jewiſh *Church having altered the Geſture in their eating the Paſſover from what was uſed at the firſt Inſtitution of it; our Saviour we ſee complyed therewith, and conformed to what was then become cuſtomary in that Church: And if we do the like for the like reaſon, who can blame us for it without reproaching our Bleſſed Saviour.*

Their other Reaſon of their Scruple is taken from the Papiſts having abuſed this Geſture of kneeling to Idolatry in worſhipping the Bread by it; for which cauſe they ſay we ſhould not uſe it in receiving the Sacrament, leſt we ſeem to ſymbolize with them therein. In anſwer to this, ſeveral things are to be conſidered: As,

1. *That though the Church of* Rome *doth ſtrictly enjoin Kneeling at the Elevation of the Hoſt, yet in the Act of Receiving it is not required by any Canon or Conſtitution of theirs. Dr.* John Burges, *of great Note in his time, in his Treatiſe touching the Lawfulneſs of Receiving the Sacrament kneeling, or in his Defence of the Three Innocent Ceremonies, Chap.* 21. *Pag.* 67. *and Pag.* 479. *of his Rejoynder, as he is recited (for I have not his Book) hath theſe words:* With us the Biſhops or Miniſters communicate kneeling, as well as the People: But with the Papiſts, the Pope, when himſelf performeth the Office, receiveth ſitting, as being a Type of Chriſt, the Maſs Prieſts receive ſtanding by the Canon of the Maſs. *For Confirmation of all which he cites ſeveral Authors.* He denies not but that the People receive kneeling, and ſays that the Prieſt did ſo too until the Doctrine of Tranſubſtantiation begot the Canon for his ſtanding. But he denies that kneeling in the very time of receiving was ever in the Church of *Rome*, any Rite of, or for Adoration of the Sacrament it ſelf; and ſays, never any Pope enjoin'd it, nor is there any direction in the Maſs for it. *The Reverend Dr.* Stillingfleet *hath aſſerted much to the ſame effect in his* Unreaſonableneſs of Separation, *pag.* 15.

2. *How or after what manner ſoever kneeling has been abuſed by the Papiſts to bad purpoſes, yet the Abuſe of a thing, otherwiſe lawful in it ſelf, does not make the Uſe of it unlawful when ſeparated from that Abuſe. Kneeling is abuſed by the Papiſts in their Prayers to the Virgin* Mary, *and other Saints, but this does not make the Uſe of Kneeling unlawful in our Prayers to Almighty God.*

3. *Our receiving the Sacrament kneeling, in complyance with Publick Order and Authority, can be no appearance or cauſe of Suſpicion of* Bread-Worſhip, *becauſe the ſame Authority which requires our Kneeling therein, has declared in the* Rubrick, *at the end of the Office of Communion,* That no Adoration is thereby intended, or ought to be done to the Bread and Wine, or to any Corporal Preſence of Chriſt's Natural Fleſh and Blood, but is intended and meant for a Signification and grateful Acknowledgment of the Benefits of Chriſt therein given. *By this we ſee all appearance and ſuſpicion of requiring Kneeling in order to any Bread-Worſhip is quite taken away.*

4. *Standing is a Geſture of Adoration, as well as Kneeling,* Mark xi. 25. *and yet the Diſſenters do not think it unlawful, for that reaſon, to receive the Sacrament ſtanding. And if its being a Geſture of Adoration be no juſt Exception againſt the Uſe of it in receiving the Sacrament, then the Adoration ſuppoſed or implied in the Geſture of Kneeling, can be no juſt Exception againſt the Uſe of that Geſture neither, in the performance of the ſame Duty.*

5. *Kneeling, its being a Geſture of Adoration, is ſo far from making the Uſe of it unlawful in receiving the Sacrament, as that it is the great reaſon why it is not unlawful, but fit and convenient. For no good Chriſtian will deny but that it highly becomes us inwardly to adore our Bleſſed Saviour, in the Act of receiving the Bread and Wine, for his wonderful Love in dying for us, and for giving his Fleſh for the Life of the World; and if ſo, then it cannot be incongruous or unfit to expreſs and ſignifie this internal Act of Adoration by another that is external; for we are to worſhip and glorifie him both in our Bodies and our Spirits.*

And now methinks no Man, who underſtands and conſiders theſe things, ſhould be able to think it unlawful to kneel in receiving the Sacrament of the Body and Blood of our Bleſſed Saviour.

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CATHOLICISM:

Or, Several
ENQUIRIES
Touching the
Nature and Extent of Viſible Church-Memberſhip, and Communion, &c.

BRITISH MUSEUM

NOtions narrower than thoſe which will hold Scripture-meaſure, concerning the Church, and what it is that makes Men to be of it; and concerning Church-Communion, and what it is that qualifies Men for it, have been the true Reaſon and Cauſe of our Church-Diviſions and Separations in great part, where ſuch Notions have been entertained.

My preſent Deſign therefore, which I intend to purſue in theſe Papers, is, to enquire into the true Meaſure which the holy Scripture gives us of theſe things, that thereby we may the more ſteadily, and with the more Certainty make a true Judgment of thoſe Separations in Church-Communion, which have been made and applauded by ſome.

I ſhall begin with what concerns the being of the Univerſal Church as viſible, and then enquire how, and by what means Men become Members of it. After this, I ſhall enquire farther what it is that qualifies Men for, and which gives them a right to external Communion in this Church, as exerciſed in particular Congregations, and likewiſe into the Nature of Catholick-Communion and Schiſm, and the Uſefulneſs of National Conſtitutions, for the furtherance of Chriſtian Religion.

QUERY I.

What is the true Notion of the Univerſal Church as viſible?

THE Univerſal Church as viſible, is that Body, Company, or Society of People throughout the whole World, which conſiſts of all ſuch as are *viſibly joyned or united to God in Chriſt as Head, by a Religious Bond.* And that which doth diſtinguiſh them from all other People in the World, is that *Relation* they bear to God different from that in which all other People ſtand related to him. And this Relation is a *Religious* Relation, by which they are brought nearer to God than all other People are. All other People are related as humane Creatures to God as their Creator and Governor; but theſe are related to him by another kind of Bond and Obligation, ſuch as is *Spiritual and of a Religious Nature*, of which I am to ſay more afterward.

And then as this Relation is external and viſible, ſo That by which this Relation *is effected* and wrought, is ſomething *viſible alſo*, which is the Reaſon why the Relation it ſelf is ſaid to be *viſible*.

Now the Perſons thus viſibly related to God in Chriſt, are not all Religiouſly related to him alike. Some of them are related and united to him *internally* and *inviſibly* by an inviſible Bond of Union over and beſides their viſible Relation to him, by that which is viſible: Whenas all the reſt are related to him only *externally*; or if in any reſpect internally alſo, yet not ſo, or by ſuch a Relation as will entitle them to the internal and beſt ſort of Privileges of God's People, ſuch as Juſtification, Reconciliation, Pardon and Eternal Life.

But yet this difference does not make this Body of People which are externally one, by a Relation to God common to the whole, to become two Univerſal Churches: For *all* which *eſſentially* belongs to the being of the Univerſal Church, *is not limited* and reſtrained to that part of it, which in reſpect of its internal and inviſible State does differ from, and excel the other; for the *external Relation* to God, *without which* the Univerſal Church does not exiſt, is common to the worſer part of it as well as the better, by reaſon whereof, they cannot be two Churches, and are but one.

One part of the viſible Church differs from another indeed, in reſpect of internal and inviſible State before God; this is plain from the Scripture: But then it is as plain from thence, that as touching their external and viſible State, they are *one*, and that the ſame external Privileges belong to the one as to the other; of which more afterward.

We have not indeed the words *Viſible* and *Inviſible* uſed in Scripture, in reference to the two different States of Men in one and the ſame Church; but yet we have thoſe different States of them ſufficiently revealed in Scripture, which we mean by thoſe words. I need not inſtance in Scriptures of this nature, becauſe they are ſufficiently and commonly known, and I ſhall have farther occaſion to mention them afterward.

QUERY II.

What is it which prepares or qualifies Perſons for that Relation to God in Chriſt, which makes them viſible Members of his Church?

THere is ſomething *previous* to that, by which the Relation in Men to God is wrought, which makes them viſible Members of his Church, and which does capacitate them for it: And that is their being externally *called* by God to be of the true Religion: Perſons are firſt to become Diſciples, before they be received into the Church by Baptiſm; and their becoming Diſciples, and their being called, is the ſame thing. This is the Foundation in which that Relation is laid, and upon which that which does effect it, is built. And People are thus called, either

1. When they are *converted* from a *falſe* Religion to own and profeſs the true: And thus the Pagans were called by the preaching of the Apoſtles, when they were brought to be Diſciples: Or,

2. When Almighty God cauſes them to be *born*, and to be *educated* in the true Religion, as thoſe are who are born of Parents externally in Covenant with God. Thus the Jewiſh People from *Abraham*'s time downward, were called to be God's People, and to profeſs the true Religion. And accordingly they were ſtiled God's *called* ones by the Prophet, *Iſa.* xlviii. 12. *Hearken to me, O* Jacob, *and* Iſrael *my called.* And how were they called? *Abraham* indeed he was called *extraordinarily*, by God who *appeared to him when he was in* Meſopotamia, *before he dwelt in* Charran, *Acts* vii. 2. But his Poſterity were called by being born to, and educated in the ſame Religion which he himſelf was of; and ſo were his Childrens Children from Generation to Generation.

And thus has it been in calling Perſons to be of the *Chriſtian* Religion. At the firſt Erection of the Church as Chriſtian, Men were *extraordinarily* called by the Preaching and Miracles of the Apoſtles and others; they were called and converted from the Pagan and Jewiſh Religion, to own the Chriſtian Religion. But ſince the times of firſt planting the Goſpel up and down in the World, God's *ordinary* and common Method of calling Men to the Profeſſion of the Chriſtian Religion, has been by their Chriſtian Parents *educating* them in it. And indeed their being born of Parents in an eſpecial Relation to God, is in it ſelf a *Providential Call* which qualifies them for the Privilege of being ſo related alſo. For upon that account they are both in the Old Teſtament and the New, ſtiled a *holy Seed*, that is, a Seed ſeparated from the Infidel World to God: And by this the Females of the Jews became Church-Members, and by this were their Males qualified to enter into Covenant with God by Circumciſion, at eight Days old. But of theſe things farther mention will be made in the proceſs of our Enquiries.

QUERY III.

What may that be by which People are made Viſible Church-Members?

THat by which People are conſtituted compleatly viſible Church-Members, *is a mutual covenanting between God and them*, between Chriſt and his viſible Members. In which Covenant, God on his part, promiſeth to be their God in Chriſt, to pardon them, and to confer eternal Life on them, upon condition they take him only for their God, and Chriſt Jeſus for their Lord and Saviour, by believing in him, and obeying him. And Men on their part covenant to perform the *Condition* of God's Covenant in taking him for their God, and Chriſt for their Lord and Saviour, by believing in him, and obeying him. Thoſe words, *I will be to them a God, and they ſhall be to me a People*, contain the Subſtance of the Covenant of Salvation, both on God's part, and Man's part, *Heb.* viii. 10. The mutual Covenant between God and his *Iſrael* of old is thus deſcribed: *Thou haſt avouched this Day the Lord [illegible] be thy God, and to walk in his ways, and to keep his Statutes, and his Commandments, and his Judgments, and to hearken to his Voice. And the Lord hath avouched thee this day to be his peculiar People, as he hath promiſed thee, and that thou ſhouldeſt keep all his Commandments,* Deut. xxvi. 17, 18.

This mutual covenanting is the *Copulative*, or Bond by which the Conjunction is made between the Head and his Members, Chriſt and his Body the Church: For the Nature of it, is to *unite* the Parties covenanting, and to convey a mutual Intereſt in each other. *I entred into Covenant with thee, and thou becameſt mine*, ſaith God, *Ezek.* xvi. 8. And this tying or knitting together by Covenant, is called the *Bond of the Covenant*, Ezek. xx. 37. I might multiply places, to ſhew, that Mens being *joyned* to the Lord in the common Notion of Scripture, is by *covenanting* with him to be his People. Thus *Jer.* l. 5. *Come let us joyn our ſelves to the Lord in a perpetual Covenant, never to be forgotten.* Alſo *Iſa.* lvi. 6. *The Sons of the Stranger, that joyn themſelves to the Lord, to ſerve him, to love the Name of the Lord, and to be his Servants, every one that taketh hold of my Covenant*, &c.

That this Union is thus made by Contract and Covenant between God and Men, we may the rather believe, and the more eaſily conceive, becauſe the Holy Scripture delights to reſemble and illuſtrate the Union between God and his People, Chriſt and his Church, by the Union that is between Men and their Wives, which is an Union by mutual Contract and covenanting, the one to take the Woman for his Wife, the other to take the Man for her Husband, with Promiſe to deport themſelves towards each other, according to the Nature of the mutual Relation between them, *Epheſ.* v. 28. *Iſa.* liv. 5. *Jer.* xxxi. 31. *Hoſ.* ii. 19. And thoſe who were *Strangers to the Covenants of Promiſe*, were ſaid to be *without God, and without Chriſt*; that is not related to him, nor he to them, as his Church and People, *Epheſ.* ii. 12.

And here let it be obſerved and remembred once for all, that the ſame thing which unites Men to Chriſt, unites them to thoſe alſo who are already one with him by Covenant. Union with the Head, is the reaſon of Union with all thoſe Members which make the Body of that Head; like as a Man becoming a Covenant-Servant to a Maſter, becomes a Member of that Family, and a Fellow-Servant to all the reſt of the Servants of that Maſter.

QUERY IV.

How and when is the Covenant between God and Men entred into, by which People are externally united to Chriſt, and viſibly made Members of his Church?

THis covenanting is tranſacted when People are *baptized*. For Baptiſm is a Sacred *Rite* inſtituted by Chriſt, by which the Covenant we ſpeak of, is ſolemnly entred into.

As for Almighty God, he has prevented Men on his part, in covenanting with them, and ſtands openly declared in his Word, to be a God to all thoſe, to pardon and ſave them, whoever they be, that ſhall become a People unto him, by believing in him, and ſerving him: And not only ſo, but he has alſo *authorized* his Miniſters to tranſact with Men in his Name, *according to that Declaration*, by bringing them into Covenant with him by Baptiſm, and thereby to receive them into his Church: For to that end are the *Keys* of the Kingdom of Heaven delivered to them, *viz.* to open the Door, and to let ſuch into the Church; and this they do as Stewards of God's Houſe.

Now whenever Men take hold on this Covenant of God, and openly and publickly Covenant with him to become a People unto him, and to perform the condition of his Covenant with them, in order to the obtaining the Benefits promiſed on his part, then and by that means is their viſible Relation to God, to Chriſt, and to his Church, conſtituted and made. And all this a being viſibly baptized in his Name, doth imply.

For this, I conceive, is the meaning of their being baptized into the Name of the Father, Son, and Holy Ghoſt, *Matth.* xxviii. 19. Not only that they are baptized *in* their Name, as that ſignifies its being done by their *Authority*, but alſo *into* their Name, as that ſignifies their being brought into a *ſpecial Relation* to them as their God, whom they covenant to worſhip and ſerve. And therefore from thenceforth they are called by that Name into which they are baptized; like as a Wife is called by the Name of her Husband, from that very Moment in which the Marriage-Covenant is compleated, *Iſa.* iv. 1.

Hence it is that St. *Paul* ſaith, *That as many as have been baptized into Chriſt, have put on Chriſt*, Gal. iii. 27. For by that they put on his Name, and put on their Relation to him. For this *Viſible Memberſhip* we ſpeak of, is nothing elſe but a *Viſible Relation* to Chriſt the Head of Chriſtians, and to all thoſe that are viſibly related to him. By Baptiſm they are *planted* into Chriſt, *Rom.* vi. which is another Metaphor by which our external Union with Chriſt by Baptiſm is ſignified. And by it they are *baptized into one Body*, 1 Cor. xii. 13.

Thoſe words of St. *Peter* ſhew likewiſe that there was a covenanting with God in Baptiſm, when he ſays, *The like Figure whereunto Baptiſm doth now ſave us, not the putting away the Filth of the Fleſh, but the Anſwer of a good Conſcience towards God, by the Reſurrection of Jeſus Chriſt*, 1 Pet. iii. 21. I find that which is here tranſlated, *The Anſwer of a good Conſcience*, is rendred by others, the *Promiſe* or Stipulation of a good Conſcience, and by ſome the *queſtion* or *queſtioning* of a good Conſcience. Now if the Greek will bear or countenance theſe ſeveral Readings, *Anſwer*, *Stipulation*, *Queſtioning*, yet the Matter may be thus well accommodated. The Anſwer of a good Conſcience here ſpoken of, was an Anſwer to ſomewhat propoſed; or put Queſtionwiſe to be reſolved, or anſwered to by them, who were to be baptized; and that the Anſwer to it, was of the nature of a Promiſe, Stipulation or Covenant, in reference to God. As when it was propoſed, or put Queſtionwiſe to the Party to be baptized, whether he did believe Jeſus Chriſt to be the Son of God, and Saviour of the World? And whether he would reform his ſinful Life, and in hope of Salvation by Jeſus Chriſt, henceforth live unto God according to his teaching in the Goſpel: The Anſwer to this was aſſertory and promiſſory Covenant-wiſe made, *viz.* that he did ſo believe, and that through God's Aſſiſtance he would ſo reform, and ſo live; to the Performance whereof he *bound himſelf* by being baptized in his Name.

Now when ſuch a promiſſory Anſwer as this proceeded from ſuch a frame of Mind as did produce, or would produce Effects ſutable to ſuch an Anſwer or Undertaking, it might very well be called *the anſwer of a good Conſcience towards God.* And St. *Peter* might well ſay, as here we ſuppoſe he does, That the entrance into the Church by Baptiſm, when accompanied with this anſwer of a good Conſcience, would as certainly be Salvation to them through the Reſurrection of Jeſus Chriſt, as ever *Noah* and his Family's entrance into the Ark was the means of their eſcaping periſhing by Water, that being the Figure to which St. *Peter* here likens Baptiſm.

And this way and method of bringing Perſons into the Viſible Church, as *inſtitutive*, by Covenanting with God in Baptiſm, does but anſwer to what was done in *Abraham*'s days, and after, for the gathering God a Viſible Church out of the World; for that was done by Circumciſion then, which is done by Baptiſm now. For it was the *ſacred Rite* of entering Perſons into Covenant with God, to take God for their God, and to be his People; and for that reaſon it is called *the Covenant of Circumciſion*, by St. *Stephen*, Acts vii. And it was the Badge by which they were marked and differenced from others, as belonging to God by Covenant, and is therefore ſaid to be the *Token* of the Covenant between God and them, *Gen.* xvii. 11. And juſt ſo is Baptiſm now, which is come in the room of Circumciſion.

We ſee then how excellently the Old and New Teſtament agree in this point: That ever ſince God has had a Viſible Church on the Earth by *Inſtitution*, he has made the way and means of becoming Members of it to be a Covenanting with him by an initiating Ordinance.

QUERY V.

How can Infants become viſible Church-Members by Covenanting with God, ſince they ſeem naturally uncapable of doing ſuch a thing while Infants?

THIS Enquiry ſeems neceſſary in this place upon occaſion of the Reſolution of the former Query. That the Infants of the Circumciſed were to be engaged to God Covenant-wiſe by being Circumciſed, is paſt diſpute. But then there will another Queſtion ariſe, and that is, whether they were ſo by their own Act and Deed, or by the Act and Deed of their Parents?

We cannot ſay that they were in their own Perſons *active* in Covenanting with God, and that therefore it muſt needs be by the Act and Deed of their Parents, that they were by Circumciſion engaged to God Covenant-wiſe. But then yet a farther Queſtion will ariſe, and that is, Whether thoſe Infants were *obliged* by their Parents entering them into Covenant by Circumciſing them, before they were in a capacity of *conſenting to it?*

And the Anſwer is, That there can be no doubt but that they were, ſuppoſing they were obliged at all, which none deny but they were. The Children were obliged by what their Parents did in their Minority on their behalf, with a purpoſe to oblige them, ſuppoſing the thing lawful. This was a thing commonly underſtood among the Jews, and taken for granted; and, as it appears, was ſo accounted by God alſo. I will give ſome Inſtances of both.

1. The Jews did ſo eſteem it, and that appears by what they did to oblige their Seed after them to obſerve the days of *Purim*. Eſther ix. 27. *The Jews ordained and took upon them, and upon their Seed, and upon all ſuch as joyned themſelves unto them, ſo as it ſhould not fail that they would keep theſe two days according to their writing, and according to their appointed time every Year: And that theſe days ſhould be remembred and kept throughout every Generation, every Family, every Province, and every City, and that theſe days of Purim ſhould not fail from among the Jews, nor the Remembrance of them periſh from their Seed.* So again, 1 *Sam.* xx. 42. *And Jonathan ſaid to David, Go in peace, for as much as we have ſworn both of us in the Name of the Lord, ſaying, The Lord be between me and thee, and between my Seed and thy Seed for ever.*

2. Almighty God did account and hold the Children obliged by what their Parents did, or had done on their behalf, with an intent to oblige them. For proof of this, I will inſtance in ſeveral caſes.

Firſt, the Lord did hold the Children and Poſterity of the *Jews* to be obliged by that Covenant which their Fore-fathers had made with the *Gibeonites* in the days of *Joſhua*. For there was three Years of Famine ſent by God in the days of *David*, for that *Saul* and his Houſe had ſlain the *Gibeonites*, contrary to the Covenant which their Fore-fathers had made with them, though it was ſeveral hundred of Years before, 2 *Sam.* xxi. 1.

Secondly, The whole Congregation of *Iſrael*, Men, Women, and *their little ones*, entred into Covenant with God, by his appointment, in the *Land of Moab*, Deut. xxix. 10, 11, 12, 13. *Ye ſtand this day all of you before the Lord your God —— your little Ones and your Wives —— that thou ſhouldeſt enter into Covenant with the Lord thy God.* And it muſt be by the Act of their Parents, or ſome in their ſtead, that their little Ones did ſo, by obliging them, as much as in them lay, to obſerve and keep that Covenant when they ſhould come to Years of Diſcretion to underſtand it. For it is not eaſie to underſtand how the little Ones, that were but Infants, could otherwiſe enter into Covenant with God. And if not, then we ſee from this Inſtance likewiſe, that God did account the little Children obliged, by what their Parents did on their behalf, with an intent to oblige them. Which is yet farther confirmed from what is ſaid in the 14th and 15th Verſes, in theſe words: *Neither with you only do I make this Covenant and this Oath; but with him that ſtandeth here with us this day before the Lord our God, and alſo with him that is not here with us this day*; meaning their Poſterity yet to come, as is generally underſtood. For it ſeems that God did intend to oblige the Poſterity to come, to take him for their God, by bringing their Fore-fathers into Covenant with him. Hence it is that the Jews defection to Idolatry is aggravated thus; *They rejected his Statutes and his Covenant which he made with their Fathers*, 2 Kings xvii. 15. And in this *Deut.* xxix. 25. *Then ſhall Men ſay, Becauſe they have forſaken the Covenant of the Lord God of their Fathers, which he made with them when he brought them forth out of the Land of Egypt*, &c. How could that have aggravated their Crime, in not obſerving the Covenant conſented to by their Fore-fathers, unleſs they their Poſterity had been obliged by their Fore-fathers conſenting to it?

Thirdly, God calls thoſe Children of Idolatrous Jews, *his* Children, whom they Sacrificed to their Idols, and ſays, *They were born unto him*, Ezek. xvi. 20, 21. and xxiii. 37. And upon what account were they ſo, but by being the Children of Parents in Covenant with God, though now they had violated it, and by being farther brought into Covenant with God by their Parents circumciſing them? It ſeems that Covenant which had obliged the Parents to be God's, obliged thoſe that were born of them to be ſo likewiſe, and much more were they thus obliged, when their Parents had brought them into Covenant with God by circumciſing them. Though ſuch Parents had forfeited their Covenant-*intereſt* in God, yet they had not by that, by which they did ſo, made void God's Covenant-*right* to them and their Children, but that they were ſtill under an Obligation to him to be his. Upon which account it is, as it is probable, that God is called the God of ſome Men, when yet they have been very bad, as we may ſee, 1 *Kings* xv. 3. 2 *Kings* xvi. 2. 2 *Chron.* xxviii. 5. and xxxvi. 5, 12.

Fourthly, It was the Parents that Circumciſed their Children of eight days old, and not the Children themſelves; and yet theſe Children were as firmly obliged by it, when grown to be Men, as if they had then Circumciſed themſelves. *I teſtifie again to every Man that is circumciſed, that he is a debtor to do the whole Law*, ſaith St. *Paul*, Gal. v. 3.

And if they were obliged by what their Parents did in circumciſing them, to perform the duty on their part, whenever they were capable of it; we may well conceive that by what their Parents did in entring them into Covenant by circumciſing them, they were inveſted with the Benefit promiſed on God's part, until they diveſted themſelves of it by their actual and wilful tranſgreſſing the Covenant, in not becoming a People unto God, in correſpondence to his Promiſe of being a God unto them.

And the truth is, according to Scripture-account, little Children, which were devoted to the Service of God by their Parents, and deſigned to be trained up to it, were by a favourable Conſtruction reputed to be doers of that Service while but little Children, which they could not actually perform until they were paſt their Childhood. This is plain and expreſs in one Caſe, and by parity of Reaſon muſt be allowed in other under like Circumſtances. The Children of the *Koathites*, of a Month old, were ſaid to *keep the Charge of the Sanctuary*, becauſe they were deſigned and devoted for it by their Parents then, tho' they could not actually perform that Service until they attained unto more Years, *Numb.* iii. 27, 28. *Theſe are the Families of the* Kohathites, *in the number of all the Males from a Month old and upwards, were eight thouſand and ſix hundred, keeping the Charge of the Sanctuary.* And the contrary Practice of Parents was accompanied with a contrary Event in their Children: If they did not devote their Children to the Service of God by circumciſing them when they ſhould, their Children were reputed Breakers of the Covenant, whereas their Parents properly were ſo, by neglecting to fulfil the Terms of it on their Childrens behalf. *The uncircumciſed Man-child, whoſe Fleſh of his Fore-skin is not circumciſed, that Soul ſhall be cut off from his People; he hath broken my Covenant*, Gen. xvii. 14.

And thus were the little Children of Proſelytes alſo made Parties in God's Covenant by their Fathers taking hold of it, and by entring their Male-Children with themſelves into it by Circumciſion, *Exod.* xii. 48.

Nor is it at all unreaſonable that the Children ſhould be obliged by what their Parents did to that end in their Minority, ſo long as it was in nothing but what the Children ought then to have obliged themſelves to, if they had been capable to have done ſo, and which in duty they ought to oblige themſelves to, when come to Years of Diſcretion, if their Parents had not done it for them before. Parents, as Parents, have ſo great an Intereſt and Propriety in their Children, and ſo great Authority over them, and Power of diſpoſing of them, that what they oblige them to by their Act and Deed, Will and Command, in their Minority, they ought in duty to obſerve and do; if the things be not unreaſonable in themſelves, nor countermanded by God, as having a greater Intereſt in them, and Authority over them than their Parents had. This is ſo reaſonable, as that we ſee God himſelf approves of it, and has founded his own Inſtitution upon it, of obliging little Children by covenanting with him by the Act and Deed of their Parents. If a Man by his Will and Teſtament oblige his Son and Heir to any thing which is fair and reaſonable, it is a diſhonourable thing among Men for ſuch a Child to eſteem himſelf not obliged thereby to do it. *If it be but a Man's Covenant or Teſtament, yet if it be confirmed, no Man diſannulleth it*, ſaith St. *Paul*, Gal. iii. 15.

And thus we ſee how little Children become obliged in Covenant with God, and viſible Members of his Church, by the Act and Deed of their Parents on their behalf, both before the Law of *Moſes* and under it.

Let us now conſider whether the little Children of Chriſtians under the New Teſtament, be not brought into Covenant with God, and made Members of the viſible Church by the Act and Deed of their Parents, as well, and as much as others had been in times of the Old Teſtament.

It cannot be denied but that Chriſtian-Parents have as great a Propriety in, and as much Authority over their Children now, as ever Parents had under the Law: And if ſo, they muſt needs be in the ſame Capacity of obliging their little Children by their Act and Deed on their behalf, in any thing that is for their Benefit, as they were. Nor is it leſs the Duty of Children now to be obliged by what their Parents do in their Minority on their behalf for their Benefit, than it was then. *Honour thy Father and thy Mother*, is of as much force to Children now, as ever it was in Old-Teſtament-times. Theſe things are clearly ſeen by the Light of Nature. And now we deny not but that it is as much the Duty of Parents now, to ſeek the good of their Children, by doing that for them in their Minority, which tends to their Benefit, as ever it was heretofore.

All theſe things being ſuppoſed it muſt be granted, that Parents are in as good a Capacity to oblige their little Children to God in Covenant now, by what they may do on their behalf in their Minority, as ever Parents were heretofore. They may dedicate and devote them to God and his Service by Baptiſm now, as well as Parents could by Circumciſion heretofore. And Baptiſm does as much oblige the baptized in Covenant with God now, as ever Circumciſion did the circumciſed heretofore. And it is now as much the Benefit of Perſons to be obliged in Covenant with God in their Infancy by Baptiſm, as ever it was for others formerly by Circumciſion.

Now as touching that Warrant or Authority which Chriſtians have to oblige their Infant Children by Baptizing them, to become Parties in God's Covenant, and to perform the Terms and Condition of it on their part, as they grow up into a Capacity of being active therein, I ſhall compare what of this kind Chriſtians have, with what

Abraham and his Seed, and others had for their obliging their Children to be a People unto God by circumciſing them. *Abraham* and his Seed had an expreſs Command for it, but the Gentiles, which were not of *Abraham*'s natural Seed, had only a favourable Allowance and Grant, that in caſe any of them had a mind to joyn themſelves to the Jewiſh Church, and to have Communion with them in the way of Worſhip preſcribed them, that then in order to this Attainment, the Father, or Man himſelf was to be circumciſed, and all his Males. But otherwiſe, as Circumciſion was not enjoyned the Gentiles, ſo we do not find that any Prophet or other, were ſent abroad among them to draw them into the Jewiſh Church; only we read indeed that the Phariſees *compaſſed Sea and Land to make one Proſelyte*, but it's probable it was but from among other Jews, to make him of their Sect, to ſtrengthen their Party.

Exod. xii. 48.

But when the viſible Church was to become Chriſtian, our Saviour commiſſionated his Apoſtles *to go into all the World, and to diſciple all Nations, and baptize them.* Now if this commiſſioning extended to the baptizing the little Children of Chriſtian Parents, as well as the Chriſtian Parents themſelves; then here is Warrant and Authority enough for ſuch Parents to engage their Children by baptizing them in Covenant with God, and to oblige them to perform the Terms of it when they ſhall be capable of endeavouring to do ſo.

And that this Commiſſion of our Saviour did extend to the Authorizing the Apoſtles to baptize ſuch little Children, I have endeavoured to make out in another Diſcourſe which I ſhall not here repeat, but refer the Reader to it. [*Addreſs* from p. 453. to p. 465.] The Subſtance of what is there ſaid, is reducible to theſe two Heads.

1. To ſhew what reaſon the Apoſtles had to underſtand the words of their Commiſſion to baptize in this Latitude.

2. What reaſon we have to believe that they did underſtand the words of their Commiſſion in this extenſive Senſe, and that they did practiſe accordingly.

Unto what I have ſaid there, I ſhall here add one very conſiderable reaſon to induce us to believe that the Apoſtles did baptize the little Children of Chriſtians, taken from the unanimous Agreement of all Chriſtians in all parts of the World, in the Practice of baptizing Infants in the purer times of the Church, and before the Defection into Popery. Now there are ſome things which render it *morally impoſſible*, that there ſhould be ſuch an unanimous Agreement in ſuch a Practice, unleſs they had it from the Apoſtles, or others ſent by them, in their firſt planting of Chriſtianity in thoſe places.

The Apoſtles went into all the World to preach the Goſpel, and were our Saviour's *Witneſſes unto the uttermoſt parts of the Earth*, according to his Commiſſion. *Their Sound went into all the Earth, and their words unto the ends of the World: The Goſpel was preached to every Creature under Heaven*, as St. *Paul* ſaith. There are ſome things which make it morally impoſſible that there ſhould be ſuch an univerſal Agreement as aforeſaid in all places, upon any other account, or for any other reaſon than their firſt receiving this Practice of baptizing Infants, from the Apoſtles, in their firſt planting of Chriſtianity there. As

Rom. x.
Col. i. 6, 23.

1. The vaſt *diſtance of one place* from another, where the Chriſtians lived, made it morally impoſſible they ſhould come into this Uſage by Combination, or Imitation of one another.

2. The *Diverſity* of their *Languages* made it impoſſible that this Sameneſs of Practice ſhould grow out of any mutual Correſpondence, or Intelligence held by them.

3. If theſe things had not made it impoſſible, and if it could be ſuppoſed that the Chriſtians in all parts, notwithſtanding their diſtance of place, and Diverſity of Language, might have held ſuch Correſpondence as by Agreement to have introduced ſuch a Practice as they had not from the Apoſtles, but had been impoſed upon them at firſt by ſome *Innovators*; yet it is morally impoſſible it ſhould ſteal into all Churches, and every where, without ſome *known Oppoſition* from ſome good Men or other, if it had not been Apoſtolical.

We cannot, with any reaſon, think that all Chriſtians, both in Office and out of Office in the Church, would have ſuffered ſuch an Innovation as this (if it had been an Innovation) without ſuch conſiderable Oppoſition as would have been taken notice of by ſome Author or other, who lived in or near ſuch time in which it had been firſt brought into the Church.

Since then no Man is able to aſſign the beginning of this Practice ſhort of the Apoſtles times: And ſince the whole World of Chriſtians were agreed in it, in the pureſt times of the Church, for ought appears to the contrary: And ſince all Chriſtians, how much ſoever they have differed in other things, have yet all along agreed in this, as much as they have in the Obſervation of the Lord's Day, a very few only excepted, and thoſe chiefly, or rather only, as have appeared ſince *Luther*'s Days, or the *beginning* of the *Reformation*: And ſince the Apoſtle's Practice recorded in Scripture of their Baptizing whole Houſholds, gives us ground to believe they practiſed the ſame in all places where they have been, and that their doing ſo, was the reaſon and ground of the univerſal practice of baptizing Infants in all Churches firſt planted by them, and in thoſe ſucceeding them: I ſay, all theſe things conſidered, there remains little reaſon for any impartial Man to doubt, but that the Apoſtles did practiſe Infant-Baptiſm in purſuance of their Commiſſion.

QUERY VI.

Whether in the Baptizing of Children, that method of proceeding be not moſt proper, by which the Children are moſt directly made to enter into Covenant with God by their Parents?

THE Reaſon of this Query ariſes out of the Matters diſcuſſed in the two former. For if that Union and Relation between God and Men, by which they become Members of his viſible Church, is made by entring into Covenant with him, to be his People, as he with them to be their God: And if little Children are obliged in Covenant with God, by what their Parents do in cauſing them to be baptized, with intent thereby ſo to oblige them; then I propoſe it to be conſidered, whether it will not thence follow, that it is moſt proper to demand of the Parents, whether in bringing their Children to be baptized, they do not intend thereby to dedicate them to the Father, Son, and Holy Ghoſt, and to engage them, as much as in them lies, to be God's faithful Servants, and to believe and live according to the Doctrine and Precepts of our Lord Jeſus Chriſt? or ſomewhat to that effect. And whether likewiſe ſuch Anſwers from the Parents ſhould not be expected, as are moſt ſuitable to ſuch Demands?

And farther, it would be conſidered, Whether Infants can be ſo well, or ſo directly and properly obliged to God in Covenanting with him in Baptiſm, by what Sponſors, which are not their Parents, then do to oblige them, as they may by what their Parents themſelves may do to that end.

And the reaſon of this Propoſal or Queſtion is this: If the Childrens being obliged to do that when they come to Age, which Parents obliged them to in their Baptiſm, does depend upon their Parents Property in them, and Authority over them, as is ſuppoſed it does from what has been formerly argued; then they cannot be ſo properly obliged by what other Sponſors do in their behalf at their Baptiſm, which have no ſuch Property in them, or Authority over them.

It is true indeed, Parents are not wholly unconcerned in entring their Children into Covenant with God by Baptiſm, when yet Sponſors act in the Parents ſtead: For it is the Parents that cauſe their Children to be baptized, and what the Sponſors act, is by the Parents procurement; and upon theſe accounts it is interpretatively their Act: But yet Parents immediately, and in their own Perſons, acting the part of entering their Children into Covenant, ſeems more proper, and better to anſwer the nature of the thing. Sponſors may be more uſeful in caſe Parents of Children to be baptized are dead, as poſſibly it might be the caſe of ſome Children, whoſe Parents were martyr'd in the Primitive Times, from which perhaps that uſage in the Church took its firſt riſe. There are other caſes in which Sponſors or Pro-parents may be uſeful and neceſſary, but hardly ſo as to exclude Parents from their proper Work.

But I ſpeak of theſe things with ſubmiſſion to thoſe of better Judgment, and more Authority, having only offered them to Conſideration.

QUERY VII.

For what Reaſon is Church-memberſhip ſaid to be Inviſible as well as Viſible in ſome, and yet but only as Viſible in others? And from whence does this difference ariſe?

THis difference proceeds from the difference there is between Viſible and Inviſible Chriſtianity, and from the different Union between Chriſt the Head, and his Members, which is cauſed thereby.

By Inviſible Chriſtianity, I mean thoſe inward Acts and Affections of Soul, by which Men *abhor that which is evil, and cleave to that which is good*, which are wrought by a ſerious aſſent of the Mind unto the Truth of the Doctrine and great Motives of the Goſpel, by which they are convinced of the neceſſity of Repentance and holy Living, in order to their eſcaping everlaſting Miſery, and becoming eternally Happy.

By Viſible Chriſtianity, I mean external and viſible Acts of Religion, in reference both to God and Men; ſuch as is the *Profeſſion* of the God that made the World, to be the only true God, and Jeſus Chriſt whom he hath ſent, to be his Son, and the reſt of the Articles of the Chriſtian Faith, and ſuch other Acts as conſiſt in an external Performance of the external Acts of Worſhip due to this God and Saviour, and in Acts of Juſtice and Charity towards Men, and in Sobriety of Behaviour in reference to a Man's ſelf.

Now by the Internal and Inviſible Chriſtianity forementioned, in Conjunction with that which is external, the Covenant entred into in Baptiſm is ſo performed, that by it a Man is internally and inviſibly united to Chriſt, and conſequently to all thoſe who are inviſibly one with him. But Viſible Chriſtianity alone is but an external performance of the Covenant entred into in Baptiſm; and this amounts to no more than an external and viſible Union with Chriſt, and with his Church as viſible. By this much then we may underſtand wherein the difference between Viſible and Inviſible Church-memberſhip lies, and from whence it doth ariſe.

Now that the internal Chriſtianity which conſiſts in an internal Change in the Faculties of the Soul, to wit, in their Apprehenſion, Inclination, Motions and Operations, in reference to their various Objects of Good and Evil, does produce or obtain an internal and inviſible Union of Men with the Father, and with his Son Jeſus Chriſt, will appear, if we conſider theſe things:

1. This internal Renovation of Soul contains in it an Union with God by *adheſion*; for by it a Man doth with his Heart and Soul, and out of Judgment and Choice, *cleave* unto the Lord: Which in the ſenſe of Scripture is a being *joined to him. He that is joined, or he that cleaveth unto the Lord, is one Spirit*; for it is rendred by both words, 1 *Cor.* vi. 17. And for a Man firmly and reſolvedly to adhere and ſtick to the Lord, and to the Intereſt of his Honour and Glory in the World, in worſhipping, loving and obeying him, and in placing his affiance in him, as his only God and Saviour, come what will (which is his cleaving to him) is ſuch a moral *Union* with God, as the Nature of Man is capable of.

2. This internal Renovation worketh an inviſible Union with God, by a *participation of the Divine Nature*, as the Apoſtle phraſeth it, 2 *Pet.* i. 4. By which Participation, Men are morally united to God. For they are thereby renewed to the Image of God, in Knowledge, Righteouſneſs, and Holineſs; and ſo are made one Spirit, or one in Spirit with Him, according to that of the Apoſtle in 1 *Cor.* vi. 17. *He that is joined to the Lord is one Spirit*, or of one Spirit. For ſo far as ſuch an one is Partaker of the Divine Nature by Renovation, he judgeth of Good and Evil, as God judgeth, and loves and hates, and deſigns the ſame things that he doth.

3. By this Renovation of the inner Man, Men come to have the ſame Spirit of God, and of Chriſt, to *reſide and dwell in them*, by which their *Union* with the Father and the Son is completed. The Holy Spirit firſt prepares them as living Temples, or an Habitation for himſelf to dwell in, by renewing them in a leſs degree, and then comes and takes up his abode, and dwells in them, by affording them a more conſtant and more plentiful influence and aſſiſtance. And the ſame Spirit dwelling both in Chriſt and in them, the *Union* between them becomes more intimous and more entire. *Hereby we know that we dwell in him, and he in us, becauſe he hath given us of his Spirit*,

1 John iv. 13. As the Union of all the Members of a natural Body is not made ſo much by their contiguity or cloſe joining, as by being all animated by one and the ſame Spirit which is in all the parts; ſo it is in the Union of the Head and Members of the Myſtical Body, Chriſt and the Church, and every particular Member of it; for they are united by the quickning Power and Influence of the ſame Spirit which abides both in the Head and all the Members.

By what hath been ſaid touching the inviſible *Union* between Chriſt and his Church as inviſible, it will be eaſie to diſcern whence and for what reaſon it is that many who are really Members of the Church as viſible, are yet no more but ſuch, and not at all of the Church as inviſible. And it is for want of ſuch an inward change of the Mind and Will, and all the Affections of the Soul, in reference to Sin and Duty, Good and Evil, as is made by a vigorous aſſent of the Mind to the great Truths of the Goſpel, and the mighty Motives of it, and by a ſerious and frequent Conſideration of them, and how a Man's own ſelf is concerned in them in point of Happineſs or Miſery, according as he yields up himſelf to be governed by them, or refuſes to do ſo.

I do not deny but that ſuch who are Members of the Church, but only as it is viſible, may yet in ſome ſort really aſſent unto the Truth of what the Goſpel reveals, touching Chriſt, his being the Son of God, and Saviour of Sinners; yea, touching the neceſſity of Repentance, in order to the obtaining the Pardon of Sin and Eternal Life by his Sufferings. I doubt not but that theſe may in ſome ſort believe, and undiſſemblingly profeſs to believe otherwiſe concerning the Chriſtian Doctrine, than profeſs'd Infidels do, though not ſo ſeriouſly and effectually as the truly Regenerate. We cannot ſay they properly diſſemble, when they profeſs to believe the Chriſtian Doctrine, or Articles of the Chriſtian Faith: We cannot ſay their Words are knowingly contrary to the ſentiment of their Minds and Thoughts in ſuch a Profeſſion. We ſee by Experience that ſome Sea-faring Men, otherwiſe vicious in their Lives, yet when taken captive by Infidels, will endure any hardſhip, rather than be drawn to ſay they do not believe the Chriſtian Doctrine; which is a good Evidence that they do in ſome ſenſe really believe it, though perhaps not ſo effectually as the truly Regenerate do. There were many in our Saviour's days, of whom the Scripture ſays that they did believe in Chriſt, whoſe Faith yet was not powerful enough to Regenerate them. And ſuch was *Simon Magus*, and ſuch were thoſe who, as St. *James* ſuppoſed, had Faith, and yet not juſtified by it, it being *alone*, and but a *dead Faith*; and ſuch Faith is the Faith, as may juſtly be feared, of many at this day, who are Chriſtians by Profeſſion, and of the viſible Church.

Nay farther, I do not deny but that this Faith of theirs, in conjunction with ſome external Motives, may produce a form of Godlineſs, ſo that they may do moſt of the *external Acts* of Religion which Regenerate Men do. They may enter into Covenant with God in Baptiſm, and worſhip him only, and in the Name of Chriſt: They may openly own the Articles of the Chriſtian Faith, and with Zeal diſpute for them: They may frequent the Ordinances of publick Worſhip; ſuch as Prayer, hearing the Word, and the Lord's Supper, and may obſerve the Lord's Day. They may be free from groſs and ſcandalous Sins, do many acts of Juſtice in their dealing with Men, and give Alms alſo: They may be thus outwardly Righteous and externally Religious, and yet be unrenewed as touching the inward Man: They may for all this be full of Envy, Malice, Hatred, and Revengeful Thoughts, of Emulation, Wrath, and Pride; of Ambition, Covetouſneſs, and Inordinate Affection; which are Sins of that ſort which the Apoſtle calls *works of the Fleſh*, and ſuch as exclude Men out of the Kingdom of Heaven. And while they remain thus unrenewed in their Minds and Wills; whatever Faith or Repentings they may otherwiſe have, or whatever their outward Performances may be, yet they fall ſhort of being of the Inviſible Church, for want of that inward Renovation that inviſibly unites Men to Chriſt.

But yet though this external Chriſtianity fore-mentioned will not make Men Members of the Church inviſible, yet it will evidence and declare them to be of the Church as viſible, and continue them in it. For it is in ſome ſort (though but partial indeed) an external performance of the Covenant of Baptiſm, by which they had their firſt entrance into the viſible Church, and by which their external Relation to God, in a Religious ſenſe, was firſt conſtituted. It is in reſpect of external Chriſtianity, that ſuch are ſaid to be in Chriſt, who yet are but unfruitful Branches, (*John* xv.) devoid of that fruit which is called the *fruit of the Spirit*, which conſiſts of thoſe internal Qualifications deſcribed in *Gal.* v. 22, 23. And their being *in Chriſt*, ſignifies an external *Union* between them, which is made by external Chriſtianity. And in ſuch an external reſpect the whole Multitude of the Children of *Iſrael*, who did not violate the Bond of the

Covenant between God and them, by running into Idolatry, were ſaid to *cleave* unto the Lord; which is another word, which ſignifies their being *joined* or *united* to him; which can be underſtood but of an external Union by external Religion, in reference to many of them at leaſt. Thus in *Deut.* iv. 3, 4. it is ſaid, *All the Men that followed Baal-peor, the Lord thy God hath deſtroyed them from among you: But ye that did cleave unto the Lord your God, are alive every one of you this day.* Where we ſee their continuing to worſhip the God of *Iſrael* in the uſe of his Ordinances, without following *Baal-peor*, as ſome others did, is called their *cleaving unto God*. And by that they continued their relation unto God uninterrupted. But of this I ſhall have occaſion to ſay more in the next Enquiry.

Thus we ſee that it is viſible Chriſtianity that makes Men to be of the viſible Church, and inviſible Chriſtianity which makes them to be of the Church as inviſible. Thoſe that have viſible Chriſtianity, are thereby differenced from the infidel and idolatrous World on the one hand, and by their having no more, they are differenced from the inviſible Church on the other, and thereby ſet in a middle State, between both, and that is in the viſible Church.

QUERY VIII.

Whether Men are no otherwiſe Members of the Church as viſible, than as they are reputed Members of the Church as inviſible?

THoſe of the Congregational way, whether called *Independents*, or *Anabaptiſts*, have been wont ſtrongly to adhere to the Negative of this Queſtion, *That Men are not otherwiſe Members of the Church as viſible, than as they are reputed of the Church as inviſible.* And it is upon the Authority of this Hypotheſis, *that they refuſe to admit any to Church-Communion, but ſuch in whom their Judgment, are found Evidences or Signs of inviſible Church-Memberſhip or ſaving Grace: That none but ſuch have right to Communion in the inſtituted Ordinances of Worſhip: That particular Churches are conſtituted, or to be conſtituted only of ſuch.*

But others do think that theſe do make the viſible Church much narrower than the Scriptures do: And do hold that all that are viſibly in Covenant with God, are thereby joyned in Relation to him, and are made Members of his viſible Church, as well thoſe which have no ſaving Grace as thoſe that have. Our Buſineſs then for the preſent will be to conſult the Scriptures in this caſe.

Before God had a Church in the World by *Inſtitution*, Men's viſible Relation to God was known by their worſhipping of *him only*, whether they had any other Signs of ſaving Grace or no, and tho' they were in no viſible Covenant with him. They were known to whom they did belong, by whom they worſhipped: *Every Man walked in the Name of his God*, as the Prophet ſpeaks, *Mica.* 4, 5. and thoſe that worſhipped a ſtrange God, were *the Children of a ſtrange God*, (Mal. ii. 11.) as thoſe that worſhipped the true God, were counted his Children. Natural Religion, eſpecially in point of Worſhip, was then the Meaſure of judging Mens viſible Relation to God.

But when Almighty God was pleaſed to ſet on foot, and begin the gathering him a viſible Church out of the reſt of the World in a way of divine *Inſtitution*, he laid the Foundation of it in his Tranſaction with *Abraham*, by inſtituting and ordaining two things.

1. That as God by Covenant engaged to *Abraham* to be his God, and the God of his Seed, ſo *Abraham* and his Seed muſt engage to God by Covenant to be his Servants, and a People unto him.

2. That this Covenant ſhould be entred into by *Abraham* and his Seed, by obſerving ſuch a ſacred Rite as God inſtituted and appointed for that purpoſe, and that was *Circumciſion*. And this was continued for this uſe, until the Meſſias came and inſtituted *Baptiſm*, another Sacred Rite for the ſame end. Now in God's thus founding his viſible Church, there was no ſuch thing as the appointing ſaving Grace in the Judgment of Charity, to be the Condition of Men's admiſſion into his Church by Circumciſion: But the Lord abſolutely commanded that *Abraham* and his Male-Seed after him, and all born in the Houſe, or bought with their Money, ſhould be circumciſed without any limitation or condition in reference to the appearance of ſaving Grace. By which it is evident that God did not deſign to have no others of his viſible Church than ſuch as had ſaving Grace.

Now the Poſterity of *Abraham*, when they came out of *Egypt*, were by virtue of their covenanting with God, all of them bad as well as good, viſibly related to God as his People; and ſo his as no other People were. And I hope we may ſafely ſay, that *God himſelf accounted them to be*, what *Moſes* and others by *Divine Inſpiration* ſaid they were. And if ſo, then we may ſay, that Almighty God did account them, all bad as well as good, (tho' not in the moſt emphatical Senſe) to be his *choſen* elected and adopted People (*Deut.* iv. 37. *Rom.* ix. 4.) *his Called*, (Iſa. xlviii. 12.) *a People near unto him* (Pſal. cxlviii. 14.) *his Saints*, *his holy People*, Deut. vii. 6. and xxxiii. 3. Pſal. l. 5.) *his Children* (Deut. xiv. 1.) *a ſpecial and peculiar People unto himſelf*, (Deut. vii. 6. and xiv. 2) *his Inheritance*, (Deut. ix. 29.) *his Portion*, (Deut. xxxii. 9.) *his peculiar Treaſure*, Pſal. cxxxv. 4.

All theſe Titles and Appellations given them by God, or by Men inſpired by God in giving them, do with as much plainneſs as words can expreſs, ſhew. that God himſelf owned them for his People, his Children, and related to him in ſuch a Senſe as other People not in Covenant with him, were not.

Now that they were not thus called or accounted for any ſuch reaſon as becauſe they had ſaving Grace, or becauſe they were reputed to be of the Church as inviſible, will appear with full Evidence. For the ſame inſpired Man, *Moſes* at the ſame time, and in the ſame Book, in and by which God owned them for his People under many of the foreſaid Appellations, did from God charge them with ſuch and ſo much Guilt, as no Man can with any colour of reaſon ſay was conſiſtent with an inviſible Church State.

Thus in *Deut.* ix. *Thou art a ſtiff-necked People*, ver. 6. *From the day thou didſt depart out of the Land of* Egypt, *even until ye came unto this place, ye have been rebellious againſt the Lord*, ver. 7. *They have corrupted themſelves, they have quickly turned aſide*, ver. 12. *I have ſeen this People, and behold it is a ſtiff-necked People*, ver. 13. *You have been rebellious againſt the Lord from the day that I knew you*, ver. 24. *I know thy Rebellion and thy ſtiff neck*, Chap. xxxi. 27. *They have corrupted themſelves, their Spot is not the Spot of his Children, they are a perverſe and crooked Generation*, Chap. xxxii. 5. *When the Lord ſaw it, he abhorred them, becauſe of the provoking of his Sons, and of his Daughters*, ver. 19. *A froward Generation, Children in whom is no Faith*, ver. 20. *They are a Nation void of Counſel, neither is there any Underſtanding in them*, ver. 28.

Theſe things are charged on them generally and in the groſs. And conſidering ſome other Paſſages, there is great cauſe to ſuſpect that much the major part of them at leaſt were thus guilty. For in *Numb.* xiv. 2. it's ſaid, *That all the Children of* Iſrael *murmured againſt* Moſes, *and againſt* Aaron; *and the whole Congregation ſaid, Would God we had died in the Land of* Egypt, *or would God we had died in the Wilderneſs*. And ver. 10. *All the Congregation bade ſtone them with ſtones*. And ver. 33. *Your Children ſhall wander in the Wilderneſs forty Years, and bear your Whoredoms, until your Carcaſes be waſted in the Wilderneſs*. And ver. 35. *I will ſurely do it to all this evil Congregation that are gathered together againſt me*. And ver. 29. *Your Carcaſes ſhall fall in this Wilderneſs; and all that are numbred of you, according to your whole number, from twenty years old and upward, which have murmured againſt me*.

All theſe things conſidered, they will not ſuffer us with any plauſible pretence to ſay, or to think that God owned this People in the Bulk of them, as his viſible Church, for any ſuch reaſon, as becauſe they ſeemed to be inviſibly related to him by ſpecial Grace. And if not, then it muſt be upon ſome, or all of theſe accounts following, unleſs any other more likely can be thought of, which I am not able to foreſee, nor to ſuſpect.

1. They were in ſome ſort *holy* and ſeparated unto God, as they were *born of Parents* who were *in Covenant with him*. Upon which account they were called a *holy Seed*, Ezra. ix. ii. Now the Holineſs of Perſons always ſignifies ſome ſuch ſpecial Relation to God, which is not common to all Perſons as ſuch. Almighty God has another kind of Right to the Children of ſuch as are his by Covenant, than he has to the Children of thoſe that are not, as indeed he is in ſome ſort more a God to ſuch Children, than he is to the Children of others. God has a right to all Children, and is related to them, and they to him, as he is their Creator, and they his Creatures. But he has a more ſpecial right to the Children of them that are in Covenant with him, tho' ſuch Parents have broken Covenant with God. And thus the Children of thoſe Jews which were offered in Sacrifice by the Parents unto their Idols, were claimed by God as *his* Children, and as *born to him*, Ezek. xvi. 20. *Thou haſt taken thy Sons and thy Daughters whom thou haſt born unto me, and theſe thou haſt ſacrificed to them to be deſtroy'd*, ver. 21. *Thou haſt ſlain my Children to cauſe them to paſs through the Fire*, Chap. xxiii. 37. *They cauſed the Sons whom they*

bare unto me, *to paſs for them through the fire*. Tho' theſe wicked Parents had forfeited their right to the Benefits of the Covenant on God's part, through their defection from him to Idolatry, yet they had not thereby made void his right to them, and to their Children, which he had by their having entred into Covenant with him to be his; and therefore he calls them *his Children*, and ſays they were *born unto him*. And it was in this reſpect, in all likelihood, that St. *Paul* called thoſe Children *holy* that had one Believing Parent, tho' the other were an Unbeliever, 1 *Cor*. vii. 14. The Children became related to God in ſome ſort as his (for that's the meaning of their being *holy*) by their Parents having devoted themſelves to God by Covenant. How elſe could the Females among the *Jews* be related to God as his, when they were not circumciſed? By which yet the Males became God's by right of Covenant, and ſo his, as that their Children became his, and to be related to him in an inferior degree by right of Birth. And in this ſenſe thoſe words of St. *Paul* may be underſtood when he ſays, *If the Root be holy*, *ſo are the Branches*, Rom. xi. 16. And thus *Jews by Nature* (or by Birth) are oppoſed to *Sinners of the Gentiles*, as Saints are oppoſed to Sinners, *Gal*. ii. 15.

And we ſhall find that Almighty God did not only claim a Right to the natural Seed of Jewiſh Parents, by virtue of their being in Covenant with him, but alſo a Right to thoſe Strangers of which they were abſolute Owners, whether they were born in the Houſe, or bought with Money, both Fathers and their Children: And accordingly he commanded them to be mark'd for his, and to be brought into Covenant with him by circumciſing all the Males, both Fathers and Children, *Gen*. xvii. 12, 13, 23. And thus again, when any other Strangers did voluntarily joyn themſelves to the Lord to be his Servants in a way of Proſelytiſm; the Lord, by virtue of the Fathers doing ſo, laid claim to their Children, and required them to be brought into Covenant with him by their Males being circumciſed.

And thus we ſee why the whole Body of the Jewiſh Nation might be all called God's holy People, and yet not upon account of inherent Sanctification.

By the way then, all theſe things conſidered, we may obſerve one reaſon why (as we may well conceive) the Apoſtles in their times baptized the Houſholds of Chriſtian Parents, when they baptized the Parents themſelves. For the Children of Chriſtian Parents became holy unto God with a *relative* Holineſs, by their Parents being his by Covenant, as well as the Children by Jewiſh and Proſelyted Parents had been in times before, as I ſhewed before from thoſe words, *Elſe were your Children unclean*, *but now are they holy*, 1 Cor. vii. 14. And they being ſo, I cannot apprehend any reaſon why they ſhould not be as capable of being brought into Covenant with God by Baptiſm, as ever the Children of Jews, Proſelytes, and of the Bond-men of the Jews, had been by Circumciſion. And until there can be a good reaſon aſſigned for the contrary, it is but reaſonable to believe that the Apoſtles in baptizing Houſholds, did baptize little Children. For ſuch Children, being born of Parents in Covenant with God, were qualified for being entred into Covenant themſelves: Becauſe they were thereby called by God to profeſs the true Religion, ſuppoſing they ſhould live to be inſtructed by their Parents; who always teach their Children to be of the ſame Religion which they profeſs themſelves. And this was under the Old Teſtament, and has been under the New, God's ordinary way of calling Men to profeſs the true Religion, as I have formerly ſhew'd.

2. Another reaſon why the whole Body of the Jews were called *God's Children*, *his Saints*, *or holy People*, might be, becauſe they were ſuch by Covenant, in an external conſideration; that is, they had covenanted with God to be ſuch; and by that they were alſo ſeparated from other People that were not called by his Name.

3. Becauſe of a partial Performance of Covenant on their part. For they worſhipped the true God, and him only as yet, (except in the caſe of the *Golden Calf*) who therefore was called the *God of Iſrael*, when almoſt all the World beſides worſhipped Idols. They alſo worſhipped him with a Worſhip of his own appoinment; the Matter of their Worſhip conſiſted of God's own inſtituted Ordinances, when the Worſhip of all the reſt of the World, in a manner, conſiſted of Superſtitious and Idolatrous Inventions. And by theſe they were a People ſeparated to God, and differenced from the reſt of the World: And thus far they glorified the God of *Iſrael*, when the reſt of the World generally diſhonoured him by falſe Worſhip, both in the Object and Subject of it.

That which they were chiefly wanting in, was *Morality*, a true Love to God, Confidence in Him, and Submiſſion to Him; and in Juſtice and Charity towards Men, and Humility, Temperance and Sobriety in reſpect of themſelves.

Notwithſtanding which, God did not put this People of his out of his ſpecial Protection, by delivering them into the hands of Spoilers, as in the days of the Judges, until they ſo groſly broke Covenant with him, as to *ſerve other Gods*. And when the Lord did at laſt put them away from him, as it were, and caſt them out of his ſight by ſending them into Captivity, the ten Tribes into *Aſſyria*, and the two into *Babylon*; yet this did not befal them, until they had forſaken the Covenant they had made with God, and that in the higheſt, in *worſhipping other Gods, and in obſerving the Statutes of the Heathen*. Tho' their Immoralities were otherwiſe very great, yet God did not give this People a *Bill of Divorce*, until they had horribly corrupted themſelves with Spiritual Whoredom in point of Worſhip. See how their being caſt off by God is charged in ſpecial upon this kind of Breach of Covenant, *Deut.* xxix. 25. and xxxi. 20. 2 *Kings* xvii. 15, 16, 35, 38. *Jer.* xxii. 9. *Ezek.* xvi. 59. and other places. All which does intimate, that Almighty God owned them for his People externally, ſo long as they owned him only for their God, according to their Covenant with him, tho' otherwiſe they had great guilt upon them.

This ſtill confirms what was ſaid before, that tho' the Immoralities of this People, for the generality of them, were ſuch in other reſpects, as that all that they had done in Covenanting, and in a partial performance of Covenant, could not give them the Reputation of being Members of the *Inviſible Church*; yet their Covenant with God, and partial Performances of it, in worſhipping him only with a Worſhip of his own appointment, did denominate them in an external and viſible reſpect to be his People, and ſo his, as the reſt of the World were not.

By the way then, if thoſe of this Church under the Old Teſtament, were ſtiled *Saints*, *a holy People*, and the like, upon other accounts and in other reſpects than their being really and *inherently holy*, as I have ſhewed they were, by inſpired Men; then it cannot be concluded but that the People of the Churches in the New Teſtament were ſo likewiſe, when the Apoſtles in their Epiſtles to them, ſtiled them *Saints*, *the Sanctified in Chriſt Jeſus*, and the like. For the ſame Epithets and Appellations ſignifie but the ſame thing in the Old Teſtament as in the New. In both they ſignifie a People ſeparated from the Pagan unbelieving World, unto God, among whom ſome were more ſo, and ſome leſs, ſome by *external* Covenant and Profeſſion, and ſome by that and much more, to wit, by *the Renovation of the whole inner Man*.

I the rather note this as I paſs along, becauſe thoſe of the Congregational way lay ſo great a ſtreſs as they do upon St. *Paul*'s ſtiling the Churches to whom he wrote, *Saints*, for the proving, as they would have it, that none but ſuch as are ſavingly ſanctified are Church-Matter, or to be admitted as Church-Members, except when it is done through miſtake of them that admit them.

Having taken a brief ſurvey how things ſtand related touching viſible Church-Memberſhip under the Old Teſtament: I ſhall now proceed to enquire how matters ſtand declared touching the ſame under the New. And our Enquiry muſt be, whether Perſons adult are by no other means viſible Church-Members, unleſs they are *reputatively* Members of the Church as *inviſible*? Or whether they do not become truly Members of the viſible Church in Scripture-account by their voluntary Covenanting by Baptiſm with God the Father, Son, and Holy Ghoſt, tho' it ſhould be ſuppoſed that there is not enough in them to denominate them Members of the Church as *inviſible*?

The Queſtion is not, Whether it does not become thoſe who admit Men into the Church by Baptiſm, and the Baptiſmal Covenant, to think the beſt of them who are ſo admitted, and to hope they do it with a ſincere Mind, when they therein give up themſelves to God. But whether their due admiſſion thereto does depend upon ſuch a Judgment in thoſe that admit them? Or whether ſuch Perſons may be refuſed, and not ſuffered to Covenant with God in Baptiſm, and thereby to enter into the Church, tho' they offer themſelves thereto and deſire it, in caſe thoſe whoſe Office and Place it is to admit Men thereto, ſhould be unſatisfied touching the truth of their ſaving Converſion or Regeneration?

Or thus: The Queſtion is not, Whether it be not the duty of every Man that enters into Covenant with God in Baptiſm, to do it with a ſincere Mind, and with all his Heart: But whether this be required by way of *Condition*, without which it is neither lawful for the Perſon himſelf to Covenant with God, nor for others to ſuffer him to do it, if they ſuſpect he will do it, with ſuch a frame of Mind, as is ſhort of Regeneration.

Nor is the Queſtion, whether a Man might not be refuſed admiſſion into the Church, in caſe there were cauſe to ſuſpect him to have an evil deſign in deſiring it, to betray the Chriſtians to their Enemies; upon account of which Suſpicion, it's probable, the Diſciples refuſed *Saul*'s joyning with them after his Converſion, though he deſired it, until they had received better ſatisfaction concerning him: But the Queſtion is, whether ſuch as have only ſome general and indiſtinct Belief, that Chriſt is the Son of God, and Saviour of the World by his Death; and that the way of Chriſtianity is the way of Salvation, and do deſire admiſſion into the Chriſtian Church to be farther inſtructed in that way; and in order thereto are willing to enter into Covenant with God, and to be baptized: I ſay the queſtion is, whether ſuch may be ſuffered to covenant with God, and enter into the Church by Baptiſm, ſuppoſing them as yet to have no thorow ſaving Work of Converſion wrought in them, but only ſo much as may be hoped is preparatory and diſpoſitory thereto, but yet have ſomething, tho' not all, which is neceſſary to it, and whoſe Profeſſion is ſerious and ſincere ſo far as it goes, as that is oppoſed to diſſembling knowingly.

And to prove that they may, and that the Lawfulneſs of ſuch covenanting by Baptiſm, does not depend upon their being ſavingly regenerate: And that our Saviour himſelf owns unregenerate Men received into the viſible Church by ſuch covenanting in Baptiſm, to be as well Members of it, as the regenerate, I ſhall offer ſeveral things.

1. And I ſhall lay down this firſt as a Foundation to build upon in this Proof, *viz.* That it is not a thing unlawful in it ſelf, for ſome ſuch as are not of the Church as inviſible by regenerating Grace, to enter into Covenant with God to be his People; nor is ſuch a Qualification enjoyned as a neceſſary condition of doing ſo.

When all the Males at Age in *Abraham*'s Houſe were commanded to enter into Covenant with God by Circumciſion: And when his Seed after him were required to cauſe all the Male-ſtrangers bought with their Money to do the like: And when the Proſelytes from among the Gentiles were required to circumciſe themſelves and all their Males, and thereby to enter into Covenant with God: I ſay, in all this, there was no ſuch thing as their being circumciſed in heart, enjoyned as a condition of their ſo entring into Covenant by Circumciſion. The Lord alſo commanded *Joſhua* to circumciſe all the Hebrew Males that in the ſpace of forty Years had been born in the Wilderneſs, which was an entring them into Covenant with God, and this without any condition of ſuch Qualification as would have made them of the Church as inviſible.

Nay, Almighty God at another time commanded all *Iſrael*, Men, Women, and Children, and the Strangers in their Camp, to enter into Covenant with him, and into his Oath, *Deut.* xxix. 10, 11, 12. This Command was abſolute and peremptory alſo, and without condition. The Lord did not in this, nor in any of the other Inſtances require Men to enter into Covenant with him only upon this condition, that they did already truly fear him, and ſincerely love him, or otherwiſe to forbear: No, but he required this covenanting with him, to this end, that they might truly fear and love him, and cleave to him only; as a means to ſuch an end.

No Man will ſay, that Almighty God did fore-know when he commanded all thoſe forementioned to enter into Covenant with him, that in doing it, they would all of them be qualified with ſuch regenerating Grace, and ſpiritual Life, as all thoſe are, who are of the Church as inviſible; which yet they muſt ſay or ſuppoſe, if they will ſay, that the Lawfulneſs of covenanting with God does depend upon their being regenerate when they do it; unleſs they will ſay, that God commanded ſuch of them as were not ſo qualified, to do a thing which in its own Nature was ſinful and unlawful, which I preſume none will dare to ſay.

By all which, it appears with full Evidence, as I apprehend, that it is not unlawful for ſome ſuch as are not of the Church as inviſible, to enter into Covenant with God to be his People: And that the Lawfulneſs of ſuch covenanting does not depend upon Mens being qualified with regenerating Grace. And if ſo, then the Lawfulneſs of Mens being admitted into the viſible Church by covenanting with God by Baptiſm, does not depend upon their being reputed Members of the Church as inviſible, or ſuch as are regenerate.

2. My next Reaſon, or Argument, I draw from our Saviour's Commiſſion to his Apoſtles, directing them, who or what manner of Perſons they ſhould baptize, and by Baptiſm receive into his viſible Church, *viz.* ſuch as were made Diſciples. The words of the Commiſſion run thus, *Go ye therefore teach all Nations, baptizing them*, &c. Or *diſciple* all Nations, or make Diſciples in all Nations, ſo others render it. The Apoſtles then according to their Commiſſion, were to baptize all thoſe who firſt were made Diſciples, and by their Baptiſmal Covenant to enter them into the Church.

Mens being *made Diſciples* then was the *Rule* given by our Saviour, by which the Apoſtles were to govern themſelves, touching *who* and what manner of Perſons they were to *receive* into the Church *by Baptiſm*. And thoſe were Diſciples, who did attend upon the teaching of Chriſtian Teachers with a deſire to learn their Doctrine, whether they had attained to Regeneration thereby or no. And ſuch the Apoſtles had in Commiſſion to baptize. From this Commiſſion of Chriſt then I argue thus

If our Lord Jeſus commanded his Apoſtles to baptize all that were Diſciples, and thereby to bring them into the Church (as he did) then he commanded or authorized more to be brought into the viſible Church by the Baptiſmal Covenant, than were truly regenerate. For Men might be Diſciples in an inferiour Senſe, and were ſo, who yet were not regenerate. Such Diſciples had our Saviour himſelf. Such were thoſe, who upon the *ſight of his Miracles believed on him*, with whom yet he would not *truſt himſelf, becauſe he knew what was in them*, John ii. 23, 24. And ſuch were thoſe, *John* vi. 66. of whom it is ſaid, *From that time many of his Diſciples went back, and walked no more with him.* And ſuch an unregenerate Diſciple was *Judas*. And ſuch perhaps were *Ananias* and *Saphira*, and ſuch was *Simon Magus*, and many other unprofitable Branches, that by Baptiſm had been planted into Chriſt the true Vine.

And that our Saviour by commiſſionating the Apoſtles to baptize Diſciples, intended no leſs but that they ſhould baptize all ſuch as were made or became Diſciples as ſuch, whether regenerate or not; and that they could underſtand his Commiſſion no otherwiſe, our Saviour's own Practice and Example will infer it. For tho' he knew all Men, and what was in them, and had declared in their hearing, that ſome of his Diſciples did not rightly believe (*John* vi. 64) yet did not reject thoſe as no Diſciples, whom he knew to be unregenerate, ſo long as they followed him as Diſciples, but cauſed them to be baptized as well as thoſe he knew to be better, as thoſe words imply, *John* iv. 1, 2. *When therefore the Lord knew how the Phariſees had heard that Jeſus made and baptized more Diſciples than* John; *tho' Jeſus himſelf baptized not, but his Diſciples*, &c. Theſe words imply both, that he cauſed as many to be baptized as were made Diſciples, and that there were great Numbers famed to be ſo made and baptized. And yet ſo far, as appears there were but few of them that firmly cleaved to our Saviour till the laſt: For we read of but about an hundred and twenty Men and Women that appeared as his avowed Diſciples after our Saviour's Reſurrection, till the Day of Pentecoſt, *Acts* i.

From all which, we may obſerve theſe two things.

1. That it was not diſagreeable to our Saviour's Mind, that more ſhould enter into Covenant with God by Baptiſm, and thereby be brought into the viſible Church, than were truly regenerate: Which is a farther Confirmation of our former Argument.

2. That if the Apoſtles had known (as our Saviour did) thoſe Diſciples that offered themſelves to Baptiſm, being unregenerate, to be ſo; yet that would not have made it unlawful to admit them to Baptiſm, and into the Church, no more than what our Saviour cauſed to be done in like caſe, did.

All this ſhews, that Men were received by the Apoſtles into the Church, upon other Terms than the Reputation of their being of the Church as inviſible, before they were ſo received.

3. My next Argument to prove that they were, and that our Saviour would have his Apoſtles to underſtand that they were to be received upon larger Terms, I gather from our Saviour's inſtructing his Apoſtles ſo thorowly, and ſo frequently as he did, that his Church would conſiſt of bad as well as good: Which is alſo an Argument that he did account ſuch to be a part and Members of his viſible Church. Which we cannot think he would have done without cautioning them to look to it, and to take heed of letting ſuch into his Church; much leſs would he, on the contrary, have bid them compel Men to come in, that his Houſe might be full, if he had deſigned that the Apoſtles ſhould keep all out of the Church, but ſuch of whoſe effectual Converſion to God they were well ſatisfied.

Our Saviour by many Parables did thorowly inform his Apoſtles, that his Church would conſiſt of a Mixture of bad as well as good, of fooliſh as well as wiſe. Thus he told them, that the *Kingdom of Heaven ſhould be likened unto ten Virgins, whereof five wiſe and five fooliſh*, Matth. xxv. 1, 2. By the Kingdom of Heaven our Saviour in his Parables, and ſo in this, means the Kingdom of the Meſſias here on Earth, which is his viſible Church, in which he reigns and rules by his Goſpel, as the Law of that Kingdom. And thoſe are the People or Subjects of this Kingdom, who own him for their King, and his Goſpel for the Law of his Kingdom. And the different Effects which this Goſpel was to have in the Lives and Behaviour of ſuch as ſhould receive it, was accordingly foretold by our Saviour, and reſembled by various Parables, as it is here by the wiſe and fooliſh Virgins.

Thus we have it again in another Parable concerning the Marriage of a King's Son, to which both good and bad were invited, and did come, and the Wedding was furniſhed with ſuch Gueſts, *Matth.* xxii.

The Parable of the Wheat and the Tares that ſprang up amongſt it: The Parable of the Draw-net, that being caſt in the Sea, gathered of every kind, bad as well as good, are of the ſame import. And ſo is the Parable of the Sower and his Seed: Wherein four ſorts of Hearers or Profeſſors of the Goſpel are reſembled by four ſorts of Ground, into which the Seed fell, of which there is but one thorowly good, *Matth.* xiii.

Add unto this, that our Saviour did not only fore-tell his Apoſtles by theſe Parables, what different ſucceſs the Preaching of the Goſpel would meet with, even among thoſe that would receive it, and how his Church would be filled with many bad as well as good; but alſo told them plainly, without a Parable, *That many would be called, and yet but few choſen*, Matth. xx. 16.

Wherefore, and for what reaſon (may we conceive) did our Saviour thus inſtruct his Diſciples, touching what the State and Condition of his Church would be, which ſhould be gathered by the Preaching of the Goſpel? but that they might not be diſappointed in their Expectations, nor be offended when afterwards they ſhould find it to conſiſt of ſuch a mixture, or ever expect (tho' they ſhould obſerve his Rules for the purging his Church) to find it otherwiſe, until the end of the World, the time appointed for a total *gathering out of his Kingdom, all things that offend, and them which do iniquity*.

And that the Apoſtles did not underſtand otherwiſe by our Saviour's Parables and Doctrine, but that the worſe, as well as the better Chriſtians, were of this Kingdom of Heaven, the viſible Church, their Epiſtles to ſuch Churches, in which there was ſuch a mixture, ſhew; for they counted them, and treated them as Chriſtian Brethren; inſomuch as St. *Paul* would not have ſuch as deſerved Church-cenſure, and in ſome ſort were under it, to be *counted as Enemies, but admoniſhed as Brethren*, 2 Theſſ. iii. 14, 15.

The Apoſtles then being thus thorowly inſtructed by our Saviour afore-hand, touching the Conſtitution of his Church, of bad as well as good; it is no ways likely that they would receive none into the Church, but under the notion of ſuch as were truly Regenerate.

4. There are ſome Circumſtances relating to the Apoſtles receiving Perſons into the viſible Church by Baptiſm, which render it incredible that they did not ſo receive any, but upon the Reputation and Eſteem they had of being of the Church as inviſible.

Firſt, one thing was the *Doctrine* by which they moſt prevailed with Men to become Diſciples: Which Doctrine was the Preaching, that pardon of Sin, and the happineſs of Eternal Life, are to be had by Chriſt's ſuffering for Sinners, if they believe in him, and the Preaching to the People, that this Jeſus roſe from the Dead, after his Enemies had put him to Death, and confirming the Truth of what they ſaid by aſtoniſhing Miracles. It's true, they did, together with this, preach the neceſſity of *Repentance alſo*: But the glad Tidings of Pardon and Salvation by a Saviour, ſo extraordinarily confirmed as it was, being *new*, and never heard of before, eſpecially among the Gentiles, and being ſo hugely comfortable as it was, did ſo ſtrongly affect the People, as made them inſtantly turn Diſciples, and to promiſe, no doubt, a Reformation of Life, with an intent to perform, while they were thus filled with joy. But many of them, after this tranſport of Affection and newneſs of Joy was over, tho' they held faſt the comfortable part of their Profeſſion of Faith in Chriſt, and in his Death, yet proved partial and defective in reforming their Lives, which rendred the work of Regeneration in them very doubtful, at leaſt, or rather worſe than ſo.

And the Apoſtles were fore-warned and pre-inſtructed by our Saviour, that upon their Preaching the joyful News which the Goſpel brings, many would be ſo taken with it, as readily and joyfully to become Diſciples, and turn Chriſtian in Profeſſion, who yet would afterwards, when times of Tryal came, either apoſtatize and fall off, or foully faulter in retaining that Profeſſion, by carnal ſhifts to ſecure themſelves from Perſecution. For our Saviour had told them this, by opening to them who or what manner of Hearers he meant by thoſe reſembled in the Parable to the ſtony Ground on which the Seed fell; and ſaid they were ſuch, as when they heard the Word, would *immediately receive it with gladneſs*, but afterwards in time of Temptation, would be offended, as not having Root in themſelves, *Mark* iv. 16.

All which conſidered, it was no ways probable that the Apoſtles received all they baptized under the notion of Perſons already truly Regenerate, but as Diſciples only, according to the tenour of their Commiſſion.

Secondly, another Circumſtance is the *great haſt* the Apoſtles made to baptize Perſons when once they had prevailed with them to conſent to it. *The ſame day* of Pentecoſt they preached to thoſe mentioned *Acts* ii. they baptized about three thouſand of them And ſo *Philip* baptized the Eunuch *preſently* upon the Road, after *once* Preaching to him. And the Jaylor and all his were baptized *ſtraight-way*, and *in the ſame hour of the night* in which *Paul* and *Silas* firſt preached to them, *Acts* xvi. 33. I think there can no inſtance be given of their delaying ſo much as four and twenty hours to baptize any after they were willing to be baptized.

This is another thing which renders it very incredible, that the Apoſtles baptized none but upon account of their being eſteemed Regenerate, or that they did baptize Perſons ordinarily by any other Rule than that contained in the Letter of their Commiſſion, which was to baptize thoſe that were Diſciples, as ſuch. If they had thought it neceſſary to baptize none but whom they could prudently eſteem to be of the inviſible Church, they would in all likelihood have ſuſpended the baptizing of many, at leaſt, until they had had ſome tryal of the Conſtancy of their Reſolution, and Experience of their Reformation. And ſo much the rather, becauſe it is hard to make any good Judgment of Mens Sincerity by what they do on a ſudden under ſome tranſport of Affection, and before they have had ſome time in cooler Thoughts to deliberate upon what they engage to do.

Thirdly, their *refuſing none* that were willing to be baptized, argues that they did not think none were to be baptized before they were regenerate, or did ſeem to be ſo. They refuſed none (ſo far as appears) that were willing to be baptized, and to come into the Church, how notoriouſly bad ſoever they had been before. *Simon Magus* is a famous inſtance of this nature. And ſome were admitted into the Church by Baptiſm, before they had quite left off their Idolatrous Worſhip. For *ſome with conſcience of the Idol unto this hour, eat it as a thing offered to an Idol, and their conſcience being weak, is defiled*, ſaith St. *Paul*, concerning ſome in the Church of *Corinth*, whom he afterwards admoniſheth to *flee from Idolatry*, 1 Cor. viii. 7. and x. 14.

Now if a Judgment of Mens being truly regenerate, had been the Rule by which the Apoſtles and others had governed themſelves in baptizing of Men, Suſpicion would hardly have ſuffered *Philip* to have baptized ſuch an one as *Simon* the Sorcerer without ſome conſiderable tryal of him. And conſidering what diſcerning Men the Apoſtles were, it is very ſtrange that they ſhould diſcern none of thoſe unfit to be baptized, whom yet they did baptize, that were very bad before they were baptized, and proved ſtill to be ſo ſhortly after: I ſay, this would ſeem ſtrange, in caſe nothing leſs had qualified them for Baptiſm, than a Reputation of their being Regenerate.

Theſe Circumſtances conſidered, together with the plain Rule the Apoſtles had in their Commiſſion, whom to baptize, to wit, Diſciples as ſuch; it is more than probable that they governed themſelves by that Rule, and baptized thoſe they did baptize under the notion of Diſciples, or ſuch as were learning to be Chriſtians, without tying themſelves to a Judgment that they were already Regenerate.

5. Our bleſſed Saviour, who does not judge according to outward appearance, but according to his certain knowledge of things, does account ſuch to be of his Viſible Church, whom yet he knows to be none of the Inviſible. This I gather from his own words, *John* xv. 2. *Every Branch in me that beareth not fruit, he taketh away*. By which he ſuppoſeth, and plainly intimates, that there would be many ſuch Branches *in him*, by being in his Viſible Church; which yet being unfruitful, and to be taken away, are therefore not of the Inviſible. For by their being *in him*, is doubtleſs meant of their being externally and viſibly *united to him*, as Members of his Body, the Church as Viſible. And how can we conceive them to be united to him, ſo as to be ſaid to be *in him*, but by covenanting with him in Baptiſm? For by that they are brought into him: *Baptized into Chriſt*, as St. *Paul* ſpeaks, *Gal.* iii. 27. and *planted in him by Baptiſm*, Rom. vi. 5.

And upon the ſame account, and for the ſame reaſon for which our Saviour judgeth and accounteth Men to be in him, to be of his Viſible Church, we may, we muſt ſo account them likewiſe. The Scripture knoweth no other being *in Chriſt*, but by being united and related to him, either by external Covenanting with him, or by internal Renovation. In this latter ſenſe, ſuch unfruitful Branches as our Saviour ſpeaks of in the Text aforeſaid, are not in him: And therefore it muſt be underſtood in the former ſenſe, unleſs any third ſenſe of Mens being *in Chriſt* can be found out in Scripture, which I never yet heard of.

6. Our Bleſſed Saviour in the primitive Times owned ſuch to be of his Viſible Church as were not of the Inviſible, by pouring out upon them miraculous Gifts of the Holy Ghoſt. That there were ſuch Gifts poured out upon ſuch Men, as tho' they did believe, yet not to the ſaving of the Soul, is evident by our Saviour's own words, *Matth.* vii. 22. *Many will ſay unto me in that day, Lord, Lord, have we not propheſied in thy Name, and in thy Name have caſt out Devils, and in thy Name done many wonderful Works? And then will I profeſs unto them, I never knew you. Depart from me, ye that work iniquity.* And the Author to the *Hebrews* plainly ſuppoſes, that ſuch as were *partakers of the Holy Ghoſt*, might be ſo bad as quite to fall away from the Chriſtian Profeſſion, *Heb.* vi. 4, 5, 6.

And that our Saviour by pouring out ſuch Gifts upon ſuch Men, did own them as related to him, and as Members of his viſible Church, will appear when we conſider that the Promiſe of theſe was made to ſuch as ſhould believe, and only to ſuch, *Mark* xvi. 17. *Theſe ſigns ſhall follow thoſe that believe: In my Name ſhall they caſt out Devils, they ſhall ſpeak with new* Tongues. By conferring which upon ſuch Believers, whoſe Faith did not operate to Regeneration, he ſet his Seal upon them as mark'd for his in a viſible Relation. For the pouring out of miraculous Gifts of the Spirit, is called the ſealing of the Spirit. *After ye believed, ye were ſealed with the holy Spirit of Promiſe*, Eph. i. 13.

There was a two-fold Seal of the Spirit; the one by inward Sanctification, or renewing Men to the Image of God. Of this St. *Paul* ſeems to ſpeak, 2 *Cor*. i. 22. *Who hath ſealed us, and given the earneſt of the Spirit in our Hearts.* This ſealing belongs to the inviſible State of the Church. But then there was a ſealing of the Spirit which belonged then to the viſible State of the Church, by which, a viſible Mark or Seal was ſet upon them, and by which God owned them as related to him as Members of his viſible Church, and that was the conferring upon them ſome extraordinary or miraculous Gifts. And this was common to thoſe that had but common Grace, and were unregenerate, as well as to them that had ſpecial, as appears by the 7th of *Matth.* and 6th of *Heb.* fore-mentioned. Theſe extraordinary Gifts of the Holy Ghoſt ſeem to be confined to the viſible Church, 1 *Cor*. xii. 28. *God hath ſet in the Church, Apoſtles, Prophets and Teachers, then Miracles, Gifts of Healing, Diverſities of Tongues*; by which thoſe that had them beſtowed upon them, were known to be of the Church, and to be owned by God to be ſo.

The conferring miraculous Gifts upon ſuch Men as yet ſhall be rejected by Chriſt at laſt, as Workers of Iniquity, argues theſe things. Firſt, that they were Believers in Chriſt in a Senſe, becauſe they wrought their Miracles in his Name, and by virtue of Faith in his Name: And becauſe our Saviour had ſaid that ſuch Signs as they ſhew'd ſhould *follow them that believe*, Mark xvi. 17. Secondly, That they profeſſed the Chriſtian Doctrine: For that miraculous Power was conferred upon them for the Confirmation of the Doctrine they profeſſed and preached. *The Lord working with them, and confirming the Word with Signs following*, ver. 20. Beſides, our Saviour brings them in pleading that they had propheſied in his Name. Thirdly, They being Believers, Profeſſors and Preachers of the Chriſtian Doctrine, it argues that they had been baptized, and by Baptiſm made Members of the viſible Church, and that our Saviour did own them for ſuch, by conferring on them ſuch extraordinary Gifts which he did not beſtow upon Unbelievers.

7. I might add in the laſt place, that our Saviour owns ſome bad Men to be related to him as *his Servants*. Hence it is that he calls them *Servants*, tho' *ſlothful Servants*, Matth. xxv. 26. *unprofitable Servants*, ver. 30. *evil Servants*, Matth. xxiv. 48. *wicked Servants*, Chap. xviii. 32. The Title of Servants is given to ſuch as theſe, becauſe they are of the Houſhold of the great Lord and Maſter; that is, Members of his viſible Church, which is his Houſe. And St. *Paul* ſaith, *in a great Houſe* (and ſo in the Church he means) *there are not only Veſſels of Gold, and of Silver, but alſo of Wood and of Earth, and ſome to Honour, and ſome to Diſhonour*, 2 Tim. ii. 20. And our Saviour hath ſaid, *that many ſhall come from the Eaſt and Weſt, and ſhall ſit down with* Abraham, Iſaac, *and* Jacob *in the Kingdom of Heaven; but the Children of the Kingdom ſhall be caſt out into outer Darkneſs*, Matth. viii. 11, 12.

Having ſeen what Evidence the Holy Scriptures do afford to prove that God, that Chriſt himſelf does own others to be part of his viſible Church, than ſuch as are of the Church as inviſible, I ſhall now proceed to take into Conſideration ſuch Texts of Scripture as in the Apprehenſion of ſome ſeem moſt to favour the contrary Opinion.

I will begin with 1 *Pet*. iii. 21. *The like Figure whereunto Baptiſm doth alſo now ſave us, not the putting away the Filth of the Fleſh, but the anſwer of a good Conſcience towards God, by the Reſurrection of Jeſus Chriſt.* Whence it is argued, that thoſe who were received into the Church by Baptiſm, were always ſuppoſed ſuch as had the Anſwer of a good Conſcience towards God, the inward Qualification which anſwers the outward Figure or Sign in Baptiſm, Death unto Sin, and a Reſurrection unto a new Life.

But the Anſwer to this is very eaſie. The Apoſtle, in theſe words, was ſhewing what is neceſſary in the Parties baptized, beſides their Baptiſm, to make their Baptiſm available to their Salvation; but not what is neceſſary by way of condition to their being baptized: This Text meddles not with that, ſo far as appears by any Clauſe or Circumſtance in it. And is much of the ſame nature, and much like to that of St. *Paul*, Rom. ii.

28, 29. where he ſaith, *That is not Circumciſion which is outward in the Fleſh, but that which is of the Heart and in the Spirit.* By which, he does not mean that Circumciſion which was but outward in the Fleſh, ſerved to no other ends, but to ſignifie Heart-Circumiſion: For it did engage the circumciſed in Covenant with God, and initiate them, and give them entrance into the Church, and made them Partakers of the Oracles and Ordinances of God there, as he ſhews in the following words in the next Chapter: But his Meaning was, that Circumciſion in the Fleſh alone, without Circumciſion of the Heart, would not avail to any Man's having Acceptance with God.

So here, that Baptiſm which conſiſts in outward waſhing only, the putting away the Filth of the Fleſh, will not ſave, will not avail to Salvation without the Anſwer of a good Conſcience towards God. But then it does not follow, but that it may avail as well as Circumciſion in the Letter did, to bring Men into the viſible Church, and to procure them the Benefit of the outward Privileges of it.

Another Text is, *John* iii. 5. *Except a Man be born of Water, and of the Spirit, he cannot enter into the Kingdom of God.* Some that are of the Opinion which I am oppoſing, by the Kingdom of God here, underſtand the Church, as well viſible as inviſible, and then infer, that none can enter into the Church without being born of the Spirit as well as of Water.

But the Anſwer to this is very eaſie. For if by Kingdom of God here, we underſtand either the Church as inviſible, or the Kingdom of Glory, it is granted that Men cannot enter into the Kingdom of God except they be born of the Spirit. But then this does not at all oppoſe what I have been proving, *viz.* That Men may be, and many really are Members of the viſible Church, and that in God's account, who yet are none of the inviſible Church by being born of the Spirit, or internally regenerated.

And that by Kingdom of God here, cannot be meant the viſible Church, is evident, becauſe many have entered into it, who yet have not been born of the Spirit, as I have, I think, abundantly proved, againſt all reaſonable Contradictions. Our Saviour, we ſee, ſpeaks here of a being *born of Water*, and of a being *born of the Spirit*, which are two diſtinct things. And there are many that have been born of Water, and thereby entered into the viſible Church, that have never been born of the Spirit. And there are many alſo that have entered into the viſible Church by being born of Water, who have been born of the Spirit, but not till afterwards, not till ſome time after they have been in the viſible Church. We muſt ſuppoſe this, or elſe ſay there is no Poſſibility of effectual Converſion in the viſible Church; which is a thing ſo abſurd to imagine, and ſo much againſt all Experience, as that no Man, I think, has the Heart to aſſert it, which yet muſt be aſſerted if the other be denied.

It is farther alledged from thoſe words, *Tit.* iii. 5. *According to his Mercy he ſaved us by the waſhing of Regeneration, and renewing of the Holy Ghoſt.* I ſay it is hence alledged, that ſince Baptiſm is called the waſhing of Regeneration, that therefore thoſe who are admitted to Baptiſm, muſt be ſuppoſed to be regenerated before or in Baptiſm.

Anſwer. This follows not, ſince Baptiſm may be called the waſhing of Regeneration for another reaſon, and in another reſpect more probable, and that is, becauſe Men by Covenant are engaged to become new Men, and to lead new Lives. And it is from this Engagement by Baptiſm that St. *Paul* ſo often exhorts and perſuades Chriſtians to Mortification and a new Life, as we ſee he does, *Rom.* vi. 2, 3, 4, 5, 6. *Col.* ii. 12. & iii. 1, 2. As *John* the Baptiſt baptized the People *unto Repentance*, Mat. iii. 11. So they are baptized *unto* Regeneration; that is, they are thereby brought under a ſolemn Engagement to repent, and ſo to be regenerate. And in this reſpect Baptiſm is properly enough called the Laver of Regeneration. Not that Baptiſm does inwardly regenerate by the Act done or ſuffered to be done, tho' it does engage to it; but it is the Work of the Holy Ghoſt as the principal Agent, and therefore is here called the renewing of the Holy Ghoſt.

And it's evident, that the waſhing of Regeneration, and the renewing of the Holy Ghoſt are here mentioned as two different things as they are in their own Nature. Altho' the Chriſtians here ſpoken of, were ſaid to be ſaved according to God's Mercy by both, yet it no ways follows that this end could not be attained, unleſs they were renewed by the Holy Ghoſt at the ſame inſtant in which they were baptized, for the one might ſucceed the other in point of time, as often it hath done. And if ſo, there can no neceſſity be inferred from hence of not admitting Men to the one, but upon Suppoſition of their being already qualified with the other.

It is true, Men by Baptiſm it ſelf are brought into a new State externally; they are brought into a new Relation to God, to Chriſt, and to the Church his Body, and to new Enjoyments alſo in the Church. And it is to be noted, our Saviour calls Baptiſm, a being born of *Water*, as a Birth diſtinct from that of being born of the *Spirit*. Our Saviour in that Diſcourſe of his with *Nicodemus* about Baptiſm and being born again, ſeems to allude to the Jews cuſtom of receiving *Proſelytes* by Baptiſm, as well as by Circumciſion, who did reckon they were thereby born again as it were, and brought into a new ſtate of Life, as is well known by the tenour of the Writings of the Jewiſh Doctors. And altho' by being born of Water, Men may be ſaid to be born of the Spirit in one ſenſe, for they are baptized into the Name of the Holy Ghoſt, as well as into the Name of the Father and the Son: And *by one Spirit we are all baptized into one Body*, as the Apoſtle ſaith, 1 *Cor.* xii. 13. Yet in a higher and more emphatical ſenſe, all that are born of the Spirit, are not ſo born when they are baptized, but moſt of them afterwards, as the Experience of the Church doth abundantly manifeſt.

Again, another Scripture is *Acts* ii. 38. *Repent and be baptized every one of you in the Name of the Lord Jeſus, for the Remiſſion of Sins.* Now it may be ſome will argue hence, that ſince Baptiſm is enjoyned in order to the obtaining Remiſſion of Sins: And ſince Baptiſm alone without Repentance here required with it, will not avail for the obtaining ſuch Remiſſion, that therefore a being Baptized for the Remiſſion of Sins, always ſuppoſes Repentance in him that is baptized.

Anſwer: The moſt that can be inferred hence, is, that Baptiſm as well as Repentance, and Repentance as well as Baptiſm are directed to, and enjoyned in order to the obtaining Remiſſion of Sins; but not that ſuch Repentance as is available to this end, is enjoyned as *the condition* of being baptized, and by that to be received into the Church. Tho' I deny not, but that in the Adult a profeſſion of Sorrow for Sin paſt, and a promiſe of amendment for time to come, was always required before Baptiſm; but Sorrow for Sin alone, avails not to the obtaining of Remiſſion of Sin, and what the promiſe of amendment for the future would prove, was uncertain to thoſe who received Perſons into the Church by Baptiſm. The Apoſtles, we may well ſuppoſe, received ſuch raw Diſciples to Baptiſm, as thoſe were to whom this counſel was here given, upon like terms that *John* the Baptiſt received the multitudes that flock'd to him for Baptiſm; *and they were baptized, confeſſing their Sins:* They confeſſed themſelves ſuch Sinners as needed amendment, and profeſſed Sorrow for what was paſt; and by receiving Baptiſm, engaged themſelves to amend for time to come, and accordingly he is ſaid to *baptize them unto Repentance*, Matth. iii. 11. But very many of them fell ſhort afterwards of performing their Engagement, *John* v. 35. Baptiſm and Repentance as ſaving are not inſeparable in point of Time, in reference to the obtaining Remiſſion of Sin. If a Man do effectually repent, tho' it be not till long after he is baptized, yet his Baptiſm and Repentance will be effectual for the obtaining Remiſſion of Sins. And if ſo, then ſuch Repentance as is ſaving, is not of neceſſity before Baptiſm, to the obtaining Remiſſion of Sins.

But the truth is, if we will infer any thing from the Text under Conſideration, in reference to our preſent Enquiry, it may be that which is ſo far from proving Mens viſible Church-memberſhip to depend upon the Credibility and Reputation of their being of the Church as inviſible, as that it will much rather prove the direct contrary, *viz.* That the credibility of Men's being of the Church as inviſible, depends upon their being of the Church as viſible. For it tends to prove, that Men living under the Goſpel (and others I meddle not with in this matter) cannot approve themſelves to be Members of the inviſible Church, until they are firſt made Members of the viſible by Baptiſm. For we ſee Men are as well to be baptized for the Remiſſion of Sin, as to repent to obtain it: As the the Promiſe of being ſaved is elſewhere made unto a being Baptized, as well as it is to Believing, (*He that believeth and is baptized ſhall be ſaved*, Mark xvi. 16.) And if ſo, then a Man cannot be concluded to be in a pardoned ſtate, that through his own default is not baptized, by which he ſhould be made of the viſible Church: And if he cannot be concluded to be in a pardoned ſtate without this, then he cannot be duly reputed to be in the inviſible Church-ſtate, becauſe there are none in that Church-ſtate but what are pardoned.

If any ſhould alledge the words of St. *Paul*, *If any Man be in Chriſt he is a new Creature*, (2 Cor. v. 17.) and infer that none are by Baptiſm, or otherwiſe in Chriſt, but what are new Creatures. The Anſwer to them is this:

If by any Man's being in Chriſt, be underſtood of ſuch a being in him as is ſaving, then he is indeed a new Creature, and truly Regenerate. But then that is ſuch a being in Chriſt as is not viſible to Men, and therefore does not belong to our preſent Enquiry. But if you read the words according to the Margin, *If any Man be in Chriſt, let him be a new Creature*, then this Text does not infer, that if Men be in Chriſt they are new Creatures, but that they ought to be ſo, according to their Covenant-engagement, when they were planted into him by Baptiſm.

Acts viii. 37. It is likewiſe urged to prove, that a true ſaving Faith, ſuch as makes Men Members of the Church as inviſible, is required as neceſſary to qualifie them for Baptiſm and viſible Church-memberſhip. For when the Eunuch ſaid to *Philip*, *Here is water, what doth hinder me to be baptized? Philip* ſaid unto him, *If thou believeſt with all thine heart, thou mayeſt:* And he anſwered and ſaid, *I believe that Chriſt is the Son of God.* Here *Philip* ſeems to make a believing with all the Heart to be the *condition* of admitting the Eunuch to Baptiſm: And what leſs can a believing with all the Heart be, than a true ſaving Faith?

To which I anſwer thus: That the Apoſtles and Evangeliſts, ſuch as *Philip* was, did indeed ſuppoſe and expect a Faith in Chriſt, in all Adult Perſons whom they baptized into him, is not to be doubted. Nor is it to be doubted, but that they preſs'd and perſuaded them to be very hearty and ſerious in their undertaking the Chriſtian Profeſſion when they baptized them into it; and ſo did *Philip* here. But yet we ſee, that for all that, *Philip* baptized this Eunuch upon his bare profeſſing that he believed Jeſus Chriſt to be the Son of God; tho' he did not ſay that he believed with all his Heart. And upon like terms we may ſuppoſe he had baptized *Simon Magus* a little before, *ver.* 13. concerning whom the Scripture tells us, not only that he ſaid he believed, as it does here of the Eunuch, but that he did indeed believe. *Then Simon himſelf alſo believed*, ſaith the Text. And ſo did thoſe mentioned *John* ii. 23. And ſo did thoſe who were likened to the *ſtony Ground*, for they *believed for a time*, but after fell away, *Luke* viii. 13. *And many among the chief Rulers alſo believed on Chriſt*, who yet would *not confeſs him*, John xii. 42. So that when Men are ſaid to believe in Chriſt, it does not always and neceſſarily imply a ſaving Faith, or a new Birth, or an inviſible Church ſtate. Men might and did believe in Chriſt before they were baptized, who yet we cannot ſay were Regenerate by their believing, or in the inviſible Church-ſtate; as *Simon Magus* for inſtance: And yet ſuch believing, or profeſſing to believe, qualified them for Baptiſm.

And when *Philip* here required of the Eunuch a believing with all his Heart, in order to his being baptized; we cannot reaſonably think that he meant more thereby (if he propoſed it as a *condition* of his being baptized) than that he ſhould be *ſerious and real* in it, in oppoſition to *diſſembling*. For that was as much as we can reaſonably think the Eunuch was then capable of knowing concerning himſelf, and therefore no more could be expected from him.

But then ſuch a Believing with all the Heart, could be no Argument from which it could be concluded, that therefore either he, or any other in his or lower Circumſtances that did ſo believe, were therefore ſavingly Regenerate. For it may very rationally be preſumed, that *all* generally, who in the firſt times of the Goſpel, made profeſſion of Faith in Chriſt, in order to their being baptized, tho' many of them Unregenerate, yet did really believe in Chriſt, more or leſs. For what reaſon is it imaginable, that they ſhould diſſemble when they profeſs Faith in Chriſt, as the Son of God, in order to their being baptized and received into the Church; when yet, as the times were then, they could have no worldly advantage in proſpect, as a motive for them to diſſemble, and to profeſs and ſay they did believe what they *knew* they did not believe?

And that ſuch a Believing as is real, and not diſſembled, may be ſaid to be a believing *with all the Heart*, tho' it proceed not from, nor is accompanied with a Principle of Regeneration, or Sincerity in a moral ſenſe, will be yet rendred the more credible, if we conſider what the Scripture ſays in a caſe not much unlike this under Conſideration. It is ſaid of *all Juda*, and *Benjamin*, and of the Strangers out of *Ephraim*, *Manaſſeh*, and *Simeon*, that they *entred into Covenant with an Oath*, *to ſeek the Lord God of their Fathers*, *with all their Heart*, *and with all their Soul*, 2 Chron. xv. 12. And it's ſaid again at the 15th Verſe, *That all Juda rejoyced at the Oath*; *for they had ſworn with all their Heart*. Now this Covenant and Oath entred into, was to engage them to worſhip the true God only, in oppoſition to their worſhipping of ſtrange Gods, in which many of them had been tardy, till *Aſa* the King ſet upon this work of Reformation, as we may ſee, *Chap.* xiv. 3.

And when it's ſaid that *all Juda* did thus Covenant and Swear *with all their Heart* to ſeek the Lord God of their Fathers, it can in reaſon import no more, in reference to many of them, than to ſignifie that they did not *diſſemble* in doing it, but that there was really the conſent of their Minds concurring with their verbal Engagement by Covenant and Oath. For no conſidering Man will think that this Covenanting by *all* the Men of *Juda*, without limitation or exception, could proceed from an inward Principle of Regeneration or Spiritual Life in reference to *all* of them; and yet they are *all* ſaid to do it, and with all their Heart. And if not, then the covenanting with all the Heart of ſuch of them as had no Principle of ſpiritual Life, muſt be underſtood of their doing it really, and without diſſembling the matter.

I alledge all this to ſhew, that Men may do things with all their Heart in Religion, when yet what they ſo do, does not proceed from any Principle of Regeneration, or a divine Life. And if they may, then we cannot conclude, that tho' *Philip* ſhould be underſtood to require a believing with all the Heart, as a conditional Qualification for Baptiſm, that therefore he required ſuch a Faith, as by which a Man muſt neceſſarily be regenerate before he may duly deſire Baptiſm.

And the Truth is, it is not to be imagined that ſuch raw Diſciples as were generally baptized, and of ſuch ſhort ſtanding as to be baptized the ſame day, and ſometimes near the ſame Hour, in which they were firſt inſtructed in the Chriſtian Doctrine, could be able to know before they were baptized, that they did indeed ſavingly believe; and if not, it could not be reaſonable to require the Knowledge of ſuch a thing concerning themſelves, as a condition of their deſiring or requiring Baptiſm.

Men may eaſily know their own minds, whether they do believe Jeſus Chriſt to be the Son of God or no, and ſo may be able to profeſs without Diſſimulation, that they do believe that he is, when they do indeed believe ſo. But becauſe many that did in thoſe times, and do in theſe believe in Jeſus Chriſt as ſent of God, and as the Son of God, who yet were not then, nor are now truly renew'd by it in Heart and Life, therefore no Man can ordinarily ſatisfie himſelf touching the Soundneſs and Savingneſs of his Faith, but by ſome competent time of Trial and Experience of the Life and Power of it, by its Effects in purifying the Heart and Life, and overcoming the World, and working by Love. We underſtand by St. *James* and other Writers of the Holy Scriptures, that there were many, who knowing that they did believe, yet unduly promiſed themſelves Juſtification and Salvation from ſuch their believing, when yet it was not accompanied with ſuch Works of a good and holy Life, as by which Faith is made perfect. And many ſuch there are, as is juſtly to be feared, now in our days. Theſe Men deceived themſelves, they *deceived their own hearts*, as St. *James* expreſſeth it: But not in thinking they did believe, for they knew they did, but in perſuading themſelves that their Faith was ſufficient to Salvation, when yet it was but a *dead and barren Faith*, not producing the Fruits of a truly Chriſtian Temper and Converſation.

Now it was upon the believing Jeſus Chriſt to be the Son of God, or the Meſſiah, or he by whom alone Salvation is to be had, and an undiſſembled Profeſſion of this Belief, that qualified Men for Baptiſm, however it proved afterwards as to the Efficacy of its Operation. And this real undiſſembled Belief, was that, I doubt not, which *Philip* required of the Eunuch, when he ſaid, *If thou believeſt with all thine heart, thou mayſt be baptized.* And the Eunuch's anſwer, upon which he was baptized by *Philip* does intimate ſo much, when he only ſaid, I believe that Jeſus Chriſt is the Son of God, And more than this, I conceive, cannot be duly inferred from thoſe words of *Philip* to the Eunuch, for the Reaſons I have already given.

Theſe are the principal Texts made uſe of to countenance the Opinion which I have in this Enquiry oppoſed. There are Objections or Pleas drawn from ſome other, which are well anſwered by Mr. *Thomas Lamb*, as ſome of theſe I have inſiſted on alſo are, in his *freſh ſuit againſt Independency*.

And thus upon our Enquiry we have found, as I conceive, that others are of the viſible Church in Scripture-account, and ſo in God's account, by whoſe Inſpiration the Scriptures were written, than thoſe which are of the Church as inviſible, or them that ſeem to be ſo. For Almighty God, as has been ſhown, accounteth and owneth ſuch to be his People in Diſtinction from the reſt of the World, that have entered into Covenant with him, tho' otherwiſe they or many of them, are far from ſeeming to be of the Church as inviſible. And if God eſteem of them as ſuch, then ſo muſt his Servants likewiſe: And if the Scripture account them ſuch, it will become us to do ſo too, who profeſs to make the Holy Scriptures the Rule of our Judgment.

After that upon our Enquiry we have found things thus; Let not any Man now ſay, that by this Doctrine we confound the Kingdom of the Devil with the Kingdom of God. For this would but reflect after an unſeemly manner upon the Wiſdom of God for thus numbering bad Men as well as good to be of his viſible Church, as externally related to him, and as Worſhippers of him. Secret Hypocrites belong to the Kingdom of the Devil, as well as thoſe that are more viſibly ſuch; and yet none deny but that many ſuch are in the viſible Church, nor do they count this a confounding God's Kingdom with the Devil's.

There is no doubt but that the Devil has his viſible and inviſible Kingdom as well as God has his. But thoſe Hypocrites, whether ſecret or more open, which are of the viſible Church, tho' they are in a Senſe of the Kingdom of the Devil, yet muſt be reckoned to be not of his viſible, but of his inviſible Kingdom. So that the Hypotheſis I ſeek to eſtabliſh, does not at all tend to confound God's viſible Kingdom, and the Devil's viſible Kingdom one with another, much leſs their inviſible Kingdoms.

For thoſe are not in Scripture reckoned to be of the viſible Kingdom of the Devil, who profeſſedly worſhip the true God, and him only, and Jeſus Chriſt as his Son and only Mediator, tho' otherwiſe bad: But ſuch as worſhip Idols, other Gods, and other Mediators, in doing of which, they do in effect worſhip the Devil, who is the Founder of ſuch Worſhip.

Thoſe Kingdoms or Nations are in Scripture counted of the Devils Kingdom or Dominion, in which his Worſhip and Ordinances (Idol-Worſhip, and the Rites of that Worſhip) are eſtabliſhed by publick Authority, as the Religion of thoſe Nations. As ~~on the~~ contrary, thoſe Nations or Kingdoms are counted God's Kingdoms, in which the Word and Worſhip of God are by publick Authority owned and eſtabliſhed as the Religion of thoſe Nations. Thus when Idol-Worſhip was put down, and caſt out of the ſeveral Territories of the Roman Empire by the firſt Chriſtian Emperors, and the Chriſtian Religion eſtabliſhed by publick Authority, as the Religion of thoſe Nations, then the Devil was ſaid to be *caſt down*, and *the Kingdom of God, and the Power of his Chriſt, to be come*, Rev. xii. 9, 10. And again, *The Kingdoms of this World* are ſaid to *become the Kingdoms of the Lord and of his Chriſt:* When Idol-Worſhip is Deviliſh-Worſhip, is rejected by the Authority of thoſe Kingdoms, *Rev.* xi. 15. Not that there ſhall be no Hypocrites or carnal Profeſſors of Chriſtianity in theſe Kingdoms, when they are thus become the Kingdoms of the Lord, and of his Chriſt: But tho' there be, yet ſo long as the true Chriſtian Doctrine and Worſhip is owned and eſtabliſhed by the Government or ruling Power of thoſe Kingdoms; and ſo long as the Generality of the Inhabitants are for the ſame Doctrine and Worſhip in Oppoſition to Idolatrous and Antichriſtian Doctrine and Worſhip, they are accounted to belong to God's viſible Kingdom in the World, and not the Devil's, however many of thoſe Inhabitants may belong to the inviſible Kingdom of the Devil. And thus thoſe are called the *Children of God's Kingdom* by our Saviour, who yet at laſt ſhall be *caſt out into outer Darkneſs*, Matth. viii. 12. But of this more afterwards.

QUERY IX.

Whether God hath granted any Right to Church-Privileges, to thoſe who are only of the Church as viſible, but not as inviſible?

THat ſuch have a Right to them *before Men*, unleſs they are juſtly deprived of them by Church-Cenſures, thoſe will grant who yet deny that they have any Right to them *by God's Allowance*. But our preſent Enquiry is, whether they have any Right by God's Allowance? And if that be true, which we now ſuppoſe we found to be ſo in our former Enquiry, *viz.* that God himſelf doth own very many ſuch to be of the Church as viſible, which yet are not at all of it as inviſible; then it will be but reaſonable to conclude from thence, that he does allow them a ſhare in the external and temporary Privileges of that Relation, except in thoſe caſes wherein he himſelf hath made an Exception. For otherwiſe God by conferring on them the Privilege of Relation to himſelf and his Church, has conferred upon them a Right to the Privileges of that Relation, ſo far as the Relation it ſelf extends. For the Relation and the Privileges of the Relation go together, except in caſe of forfeiture by Miſcarriage. The Union of parts does of it ſelf infer Right to Communion with them in things common to the whole.

The Right of thoſe in the viſible Church, to viſible Church-Privileges, does ariſe, I conceive, from that covenanting between God and them in Baptiſm, by which they engaged themſelves to be his People, as God on the other hand had engaged himſelf to be their God on that condition.

Now, for ought that appears in the Scripture to the contrary, ſo far as they perform Covenant with God, in being a People unto him, ſo far he owns them to be his People; and ſo far as he does ſo, he allows them the privilege of his People, which is a ſhare in his Houſhold-fare, and in the Proviſions for his Family, which are his Word and Ordinances. If they worſhip no other God, and *hold the Head* Chriſt Jeſus in point of Doctrine and Worſhip, and own his Doctrine and Precepts as the Rule of Faith and Life, and worſhip God in his Ordinances, and have the Form of Godlineſs, tho' otherwiſe deſtitute of the Power of it; yet as they are thus far a People unto God, ſo God ſo far owns them as a People unto him, ſeparated unto him from the Idolatrous and Infidel World, and accordingly allows them an intereſt and ſhare in the external Privileges of his People, of which Communion in his Word and Ordinances is the chief. Only where God himſelf hath put a *bar* to this Enjoyment, there the viſible Church ought to do ſo too, as in thoſe caſes wherein deprivation by Church-cenſures is enjoyned. Right to the Privileges of the Church comes in by Men's Relation to it, as parts or members of it: And ſo long as the Relation continues, ſo long a Right to the external Privileges continues, except in the caſe before excepted. Thoſe that are related to the Church, both as Viſible and Inviſible, have a Right from God to Church-privileges, both External, Internal, and Eternal: But thoſe who are related to the Church only externally, as it is viſible, have right only to the external Privileges of it.

Thus far we have argued from the Nature and Reaſon of the Subject under Conſideration. Come we now to enquire what the Uſage of the Church has been, as to point of fact, in this matter, as we have it recorded in Scripture. And as for the Old Teſtament-Church, the whole Nation of the Jews, that entred into Covenant with God to be his People, were allowed their part and ſhare in the Ordinances of publick Worſhip, and not only ſo, but were commanded to obſerve them, ſave in ſome exempt Caſes; as while they were under any legal Uncleanneſs, and in thoſe particular caſes of Guilt, for which they were to be deprived of their Lives, as well as Communion, and to be cut off from among the People. Three times in the Year were all their Males to appear before the Lord, to keep three ſolemn Feaſts appointed: And yet I think no Body will imagine them to be all without exception of the Church as inviſible.

And when any Strangers from among the Gentiles had a mind to turn Proſelytes to the Jews Religion, all that was required of them, to make them capable of Communion in the Paſſover, was but to circumciſe all their Males, by which they entred into Covenant with God, *Exod.* xii. 48.

And ſince it was thus in the Old-Teſtament-Church, it is not to be imagined that the terms of external Communion ſhould be more rigorous and ſevere in the New, ſince our Saviour's *Yoke is eaſie, and his Burthen light*, in compariſon of that among the Jews, which was a Yoke, as St. *Peter* ſpeaks, *which neither they nor their Fathers were able to bear.* All the ſame adult Perſons, which were received into the Church by Baptiſm, were admitted to Communion of the Church in the Ordinances of Worſhip. Thus it was in the firſt Chriſtian Church, which was a Pattern to all that followed, *Acts* ii. 41, 42. When the *three thouſand* were added to the Church by Baptiſm, *They continued in the Apoſtles Doctrine, and in breaking of Bread, and Prayer*, Acts ii. 42.

And St. *Paul* ſaith, *By one Spirit we are all baptized into one Body, whether Jews or Gentiles, Bond or Free, and have been all made to drink into one Spirit.* The ſame *all* we ſee were made to drink into one Spirit, which were baptized into one Body, 1 *Cor.* xii. 13. By *drinking into one Spirit*, is meant Communion in the Lord's Supper, according to the ſenſe of all Interpreters that I have met with. Again, he had ſaid thus, Chap. x. 17. *We being many, are one Bread and one Body, for we are all partakers of one Bread.* Here again, the ſame *all* that made one Body, were partakers of one Bread. So that the extent of the Communion of the parts, equalized the Union of the whole.

Nor indeed is there any one Inſtance in Scripture, that I can find, of any one Perſon that has been refuſed Communion with a Chriſtian Church when he has deſired it, who has been before received into the Church by Baptiſm, except ſuch as have been under Cenſure of the Church for ſome capital Offence. And ſuch indeed are to be excluded (until brought to Repentance) by the Eccleſiaſtical Government under which they live. And St. *Paul* has given direction in what manner of Caſes, and for what manner of Offences Men are to be proceeded againſt by Church-cenſure, greater or leſſer, after due admonition otherwiſe uſed. *But now* (ſaith he) *I have written unto you, not to keep company, if any Man that is called a Brother be a Fornicator, or Covetous, or an Idolater, or a Railer, or a Drunkard, or an Extortioner, with ſuch an one, no not to eat*, 1 Cor. v. 11. For theſe and ſuch-like Crimes, a Church may and ought, in her governing capacity, to deny her Communion with Perſons guilty of them, after due admonition. And accordingly our Church has ordered publick Admonition frequently to be made in theſe words with many other: *If any of you be a blaſphemer of God, a hinderer or ſlanderer of his Word, an Adulterer, or be in Malice, or Envy, or in any other grievous Crime; Repent you of your Sins, or elſe come not to that holy Table, leſt after the taking of that holy Sacrament, the Devil enter into you, as he did into* Judas, *and fill you full of all iniquities, and bring you to deſtruction both of Body and Soul.* And farther, *If any that deſire to communicate be an open and notorious evil Liver, or have done any wrong to his Neighbour, by word or deed, ſo that the Congregation be thereby offended; the Curate having knowledge thereof, ſhall call him and advertiſe him, that in any wiſe he preſume not to come to the Lord's Table until he hath openly declared himſelf to have truly repented and amended his former naughty Life, that the Congregation may thereby be ſatisfied, which before were offended. The ſame Order ſhall the Curate uſe with thoſe betwixt whom he perceiveth Malice and Hatred to reign, not ſuffering them to be partakers of the Lord's Table, until he know them to be reconciled.*

But we will come to conſider thoſe other things which have been ſuppoſed by many to incapacitate Men for a lawful participation of the Lord's Supper. The want of ſaving Grace has been ſuppoſed a ſufficient bar againſt Mens preſuming to come to the Table of the Lord. And one thing alleged as a reaſon of it, is that Precept of the Apoſtle, 1 Cor. xi. 28. *But let a Man examine himſelf, and ſo let him eat of that Bread, and drink of that Cup.* Now a Man's having, or not having a true ſaving Faith, being of greateſt Concernment to him, they ſuppoſe that this muſt be the principal thing about which the Apoſtle would have Men to examine themſelves, in order to their going or forbearing to go to the Supper of the Lord, according as they find themſelves to have or not to have ſuch a Faith.

But for anſwer to this, though it be of greateſt Concernment for Chriſtians often to examine themſelves (and eſpecially when they go to the Sacrament) about the nature of their Faith, and whether it produce thoſe fruits and effects in them which are proper only to a true ſaving Faith, yet it does not ſeem to be a queſtion of ſo eaſie a determination with weak Chriſtians, who yet may be fit to go to the Sacrament, as that it ſhould be fit and convenient to put them upon making this determination in reference to themſelves and their own Faith, before they preſume to go to it.

It is true indeed, that a real belief that Chriſt Jeſus is the Son of God, and Saviour of the World, and that he died for our Sins, and roſe again, is neceſſary to qualifie Men for Communion in the Lord's Supper; becauſe without that they are not capable of underſtanding the nature, end and uſe of it, nor conſequently of receiving any benefit by it, and therefore can be no ways fit to partake of it. And unleſs Men find ſuch a Faith as this in themſelves, they ſhould not, as I think, approach the holy Table of the Lord. But then Men may eaſily know certainly whether they have ſuch Faith, when yet they cannot certainly know whether the effects it has produced in them be ſuch as prove it to be ſaving.

Now ſuch a Faith as this, it's probable, the Apoſtle ſuppoſed to be in them who had been converted from Paganiſm to become a Church of Chriſt profeſſing Chriſtianity, and ſuch were theſe *Corinthians* to whom St. *Paul* wrote. And therefore it is not likely that this was the thing about which he would have them examine themſelves in order to their going to the Sacrament.

But if the buſineſs of their Faith were in any reſpect that about which St. *Paul* would have them examine themſelves, yet it ſhould ſeem it was not ſo much whether their Faith were ſaving, as whether by means of it they were likely to diſcern the Lord's Body in their Communion at the Lord's Table. Now that this was the thing in chief about which he perſuaded them to examine themſelves, in order to their worthy eating and drinking at the Lord's Table, appears from the Reaſon by which he enforceth his Direction and Exhortation in the next Verſe, and in theſe words; *For he that eateth and drinketh unworthily, eateth and drinketh damnation to himſelf, not diſcerning the Lord's Body.* By which words the Apoſtle ſeems to reſolve all unworthy eating and drinking at that Sacrament in the laſt iſſue, into the *not diſcerning of the Lord's Body.* For he, that is every He, that eateth and drinketh *unworthily*, does ſo, becauſe he diſcerneth not the Lord's Body.

And if that be the true and bottom Reaſon of all unworthy receiving the Lord's Supper, as the Apoſtle's words do more than ſeem to imply that it is; then it muſt needs follow, that thoſe who do diſcern the Lord's Body in celebrating his Supper, do not receive it unworthily. And therefore great reaſon we ſee the Apoſtle had to perſuade them to examine themſelves about the capacity and diſpoſition of their Minds, as to their diſcerning he Lord's Body in their communicating at the Lord's Table.

Now then the great Queſtion will be, Whether ſuch who have but common Grace, and a Faith in any degree ſhort of ſuch as is ſaving, can by means of ſuch Grace, diſcern the Lord's Body in their communicating at the Lord's Table. For if they can, then they may eat and drink there not altogether unworthily, according to our Apoſtles Doctrine. And therefore upon a right reſolving of this Queſtion depends the final Determination of this Point which hath been ſo much controverted.

And before we can well judge whether Men by virtue of common Grace can diſcern the Lord's Body in being Partakers of his Supper, we muſt underſtand what it is not to diſcern, and what it is to diſcern the Lord's Body in receiving that Sacrament. Now this not diſcerning the Lord's Body in the Sacrament, lies, I conceive, chiefly, if not only, in two things.

Firſt, in not at all underſtanding the nature of this Ordinance, nor the end for which it was inſtituted: As when Men do not underſtand that by breaking of Bread and pouring of Wine in the Lord's Supper, is repreſented and commemorated by our Lord's Appointment, the breaking of his Body and the ſhedding of his Blood upon the Croſs for us, to obtain Remiſſion of Sin and Salvation both of Body and Soul upon a moſt favourable Condition. Without this Knowledge, or diſcerning in them that communicate, the End and Deſign of this Sacrament is wholly defeated as to them; without this, ſo great and ſtupendous a thing as the ſuffering of the Son of God to redeem Sinners, is no more kept alive in their Memories by the Sacrament, than as if no ſuch thing had ever been: And therefore if ſuch communicate in this Sacrament, they muſt needs receive it *unworthily*.

But now, I think, no Body will deny but that Men of ſuch Illumination of Mind, as is common to ſuch who fall ſhort of ſaving Grace, as well as to thoſe that have it, may be able to diſcern the Lord's Body in this Senſe in receiving the Sacrament as truly, and many of them more clearly, than many of thoſe that have ſpecial and ſaving Grace can, and conſequently without being guilty of unworthy receiving in this reſpect.

But I muſt confeſs I cannot think a diſcerning of the Lord's Body in this Senſe barely, is enough to qualifie Men for a worthy receiving that Sacrament, tho' it is the moſt obvious Senſe of the Phraſe.

Secondly, the other thing therefore in which I conceive the not diſcerning the Lord's Body ſtands, is Mens not *conſidering* at the Sacrament what they otherwiſe know touching the Nature and Deſign of it, and their being little or no more affected with the wonderful Love of our Saviour in being crucified and ſhedding his Blood for us, than as if there never had been any ſuch thing ſuffered and done for us. For by ſuch a Behaviour they are *guilty of the Body and Blood of the Lord*; that is, they are guilty of prophaning of it by demeaning themſelves at the ſolemn Commemoration of it, as if it were but a common thing, or then as if the Death he died were no extraordinary thing, nor as if the Memory of it had any more reaſon to affect us than the Remembrance of the Death of ſome other Man; which is a Prophanation of the ſacred Body of our bleſſed Saviour little leſs than the counting the Blood of the Covenant a common thing, which Apoſtates were guilty of, *Heb.* x. When Men through groſs Ignorance of the Nature and End of that Ordinance; or for want of *actual Conſideration and Attention of Mind* to the thing repreſented and commemorated by the external Signs of it, are no more *affected* with Devotion of Soul to our bleſſed Saviour in *Love and Gratitude* for his dying for them, than as if they were at a common Banquet or Meal, they then uſe the ſacred Elements, and what is repreſented by them but as common things, and ſo as I ſay prophane both the ſacred Body of our Lord, and the Signs and Figures by which its Crucifixion is repreſented. And this is a not diſcerning the Lord's Body *practically*, as the other is a not diſcerning it *notionally* or ſpeculatively.

But now Men by means of that Faith in Chriſt which yet falls ſhort of renewing them ſavingly, may doubtleſs diſcern a great difference between his Death and the Death of any other Man whatſoever, both in reſpect of the Excellency of his Perſon, and the reaſon and end for which he ſuffered, and may thereupon alſo be affected with ſome degree of Love and Gratitude to him in Contemplation of his Love to them in dying for them, and with ſome comfortable and joyful Hope of being ſaved by his Death; and ſo may in ſome meaſure diſcern the Lord's Body in this Senſe alſo: And ſo far as they do ſo, ſo far they anſwer the end of this Ordinance, and the thing deſigned by it, which is an affectionate and grateful Remembrance of Chriſt, and Commemoration of his Death and Paſſion. Our Saviour in the Parable concerning the Stony-ground-hearers hath told us, that ſome *hear the Word, and receive and believe it with Joy*, who yet fall away in time of Temptation. Men who never believe home to the ſaving of the Soul, may be, and many times are affected with Comfort and joyful Hope of Salvation by Chriſt when they hear the comfortable Doctrine of his dying for Sinners preached to them, and of God's being in him reconciling the World to himſelf, not imputing their Treſpaſſes. And if ſuch Men may be thus affected with the Doctrine of the Croſs, when preached to them, I think there can be no doubt but that they may be in like manner affected when the ſame thing is livelily repreſented to them in the Sacrament, and *Chriſt crucified*, as it were, *before their Eyes*.

Many can be comfortably affected with thinking what Chriſt hath ſuffered and done for them, and have ſome grateful Thoughts towards him ſtirring in them, who yet are careleſs of performing what belongs to them to do, to become capable of the ſaving Benefits of his Death.

It is true indeed, we do not ſo affectionately diſcern the Lord's Body in receiving this Sacrament as is deſigned we ſhould by the Author of it, unleſs the grateful Senſe and Conſideration of his Love in dying for us riſe ſo high as to engage us out of Love to him to live to him who died for us, yea, and to die for him alſo if we ſhould be called to it: But yet that Senſe of Chriſt's Love in dying for us, which Men but of common Grace may have in commemorating that Death of his in the Sacrament, and the hope they have of being ſaved thereby, may doubtleſs work in them ſome degree of Love to him, and ſome purpoſes of living better to him: And this has a good Tendency in it, and is in a fair way of being improved and carried on to that degree of Love which is ſaving indeed, and doubtleſs is ſo improved in many a one. Which makes it but reaſonable to conceive that ſuch Communicants as theſe, may, and ſo far do diſcern the Lord's Body in receiving this Sacrament, as not to receive it altogether unworthily, or with an unſutable frame of Mind wholly, becauſe ſuch a diſcerning of the Lord's Body in receiving the Sacrament, does in ſome meaſure anſwer the end for which it was inſtituted.

And thus we ſee what reaſon we have to believe that ſome Men who have but common Grace, and a Faith ſhort of that which is ſaving, may upon Examination of themſelves according to the Apoſtles Direction, find themſelves ſo far capable of diſcerning the Lord's Body in coming to the Sacrament, and of receiving Benefit thereby, as not to be wholly unworthy Receivers of thoſe Sacramental Myſteries.

Another thing alledged againſt admitting ſuch to the Lord's Supper who have not ſaving Grace is this: Becauſe as they ſay, this Ordinance is appointed for the *Confirmation of the converted*, but not for the *Converſion of the unconverted*.

To which I anſwer: I grant indeed that this Sacrament is not appointed for Mens firſt Converſion to Chriſtianity; it is not for unbaptized Perſons, nor for them who are wholly ignorant of the firſt Principles or beginning-Doctrine of Chriſt, and who are in no preſent Capacity to diſcern the Lord's Body in that Ordinance. But it does not thence follow but that it may be of uſe in Conjunction with other means, to *carry on* the Work of Converſion from *common* to *ſpecial* Grace. And this is a Converſion *within* the viſible Church, whereas the other is a Converſion *without it*, as it was in thoſe Heathens whom the Apoſtles by the Work of Converſion brought into the Church. This kind of Converſion being wrought by extraordinary means, it is probable might not be ſo gradually effected in many of the converted, as the Converſion of thoſe is who never were of any other Religion than the Chriſtian Religion, as being educated in that. And yet when St. *Peter* ſays to thoſe who had been converted from another Religion to Chriſtianity, *add to your Faith Virtue, and to Virtue Knowledge, and to Knowledge Temperance*, &c. he ſeems to intimate that thoſe Chriſtians tho' extraordinarily converted to ſome Knowledge and Faith in ſome of the Doctrines of Chriſtianity, might yet be wanting in that *Temperance, Patience, Godlineſs, Brotherly Kindneſs, and Charity*, which were neceſſary to be added to their Faith, before their Converſion could be thorow, effectual, and ſaving. For he ſays preſently after, *He that wants theſe things is blind and cannot ſee far off*, 2 Pet. i. 5, 6, 7, 8. And St. *James* ſuppoſeth the ſame thing when he laboured to convince ſome Chriſtians who had been converted to ſome Belief of the Goſpel, that their Faith could not juſtifie or ſave them, unleſs they added Works thereto, *viz.* the Virtues of a Chriſtian Temper and Life, *Jam.* ii.

But however it was with thoſe Chriſtians whoſe Converſion was extraordinary, yet doubtleſs the Converſion of ſuch who have been educated in the Chriſtian Religion from their Childhood, muſt be ordinarily from *common* Grace to *ſpecial*; and this many times is very inſenſibly made alſo in ſuch, the *Seed ſpringing up, and growing one knows not how*, as our Saviour ſpeaks, *Mark* iv. 27.

Nor is it at all incredible but that the Uſe of the Lord's Supper may together with the

Chriſtian Doctrine, contribute very much towards this progreſſive change. *The preaching of the Croſs is to us who are ſaved, the Power of God*, ſaith St. *Paul*, 1 *Cor*. i. 18. And therefore when he firſt came among the People of *Corinth* to convert them, he *determined to preach nothing but Jeſus Chriſt and him crucified*, Chap. ii. 2. Now Chriſt as crucified, is by the Lord's Supper preached to the *ſeeing* of the Eye, as well as by the Word and Doctrine he is preached to the *hearing* of the Ear: And *the Eye affecteth the Heart*, as the Prophet ſpeaks, as well as the Ear: And therefore the one may help on the work of Converſion from common Grace to ſpecial, as well as the other. Yea, and in all likelihood it does ſo, as we have reaſon to think, when we conſider how uſual it is for ſome Men, who as it is to be feared have no more but common Grace at beſt, by their going to the Sacrament, to be made more ſerious for ſome time both before and after, than uſually they are at other times.

So that, tho' we deny not but that this Sacrament is for Men's growth and improvement in Chriſtianity, as Baptiſm is for their beginning and entrance; yet ſo long as the uſe of it tends to bring them on from a hiſtorical and common Faith, to that which is ſpecial and ſaving, it cannot be improper for the one ſort of Believers no more than it is for the other.

It is farther alledged, that the giving this Sacrament to ſuch as by ſaving Faith are not in Covenant with God, it being a Seal of the Covenant, is but like *ſetting a Seal to a Blank*. To which it is anſwered,

1. That this Sacrament is not a Seal of Man's Faith, but of God's Covenant; and the Seal that is ſet to that, is not ſet to a Blank. The Lord's Supper is not a Seal to aſſure ſuch as receive it that they have Faith, but to aſſure them of God's Faithfulneſs in his Covenant, and to work in them a belief and confidence of that. Circumciſion was a Seal of the Covenant, and yet generally applied to Children of eight days old, before they could have Faith: But no Body will therefore ſay that this Seal of God's Covenant was ſet to a Blank, tho' ordinarily applied to Perſons before they had Faith. God's Truth in what he covenanted was always ſealed to by Circumciſion, whether the Party circumciſed had Faith or no. And the ſame may be ſaid of the Lord's Supper, as it is a Seal of the Covenant when adminiſtred to ſuch as have but common Faith.

Beſides, there are other uſes of receiving the Lord's Supper than to ſeal God's Covenant, as indeed there was of Circumciſion, and is now of Baptiſm. For Men by receiving the Lord's Supper do recognize and renew their Covenant with God firſt entred into in Baptiſm; and this Men doubtleſs may do, whoſe Faith falls ſhort of ſaving. But,

2. Altho' this Sacrament be indeed a Seal of God's Covenant directly, yet it muſt be acknowledged that the end or deſign of its being made ſo, is to help Mens Faith in God's Faithfulneſs and Goodneſs in reference to what he has promiſed in his Covenant. But then, tho' this be ſo, yet the giving this Sacrament to ſuch as have but common Faith, cannot be ſaid to be like ſetting a Seal to a Blank, becauſe a common Faith is more than no Faith; and yet it is the having no Faith at all which can correſpond with the meaning of a Blank in this caſe. And that which is not, is not capable of any improvement indeed, and upon that account the Lord's Supper, ſo far as it is a Sacrament of improvement of Men in Chriſtianity, cannot belong to them who have no Faith at all. But then that Faith, which is common to ſuch as fall ſhort of ſaving Faith, is yet for all that capable of being improved to that which is ſaving: And upon that account this Sacrament, as being a proper means of ſuch improvement, may as well belong to ſuch as have but common Faith, as to thoſe who have that which is ſaving. And what indeed is more likely to make a Faith which is but unactive and dull, as a common Faith is, to become lively, vigorous and operative, than that which with great advantage to this end, is repreſented to the Mind in this Sacrament?

It is farther objected, That ſuch as have no ſaving Grace cannot for that reaſon but eat and drink unworthily, if they receive the Sacrament of the Lord's Supper, and ſo eat and drink their own damnation; for which cauſe ſuch ſhould not be ſuffered to have Communion in that Ordinance until they be in a better capacity for it, 1 *Cor*. xi.

This is a forcible Argument indeed, why Men ſhould examine and prepare themſelves for their coming to the Table of the Lord before they come. And far be it from me to give the leaſt encouragement to any to come upon any other terms, than upon a careful preparation for it.

But for our better ſatiſfaction, and more clear underſtanding the Apoſtles ſenſe in this matter, two things would be enquired into. The one is, what it is which, according to what the Apoſtle here lays down, makes Men guilty of ſuch *unworthy* receiving the Lord's Supper, as thereby to eat and drink to themſelves Damnation? The other is, Whether ſuch who have but common Grace, and while they have no more, may not for all that be ſo qualified and prepared for receiving that Sacrament, as not to be guilty of ſuch unworthineſs as that is, of which the Apoſtle here ſpeaks, and by reaſon of which Men eat and drink to themſelves damnation when they receive it?

For Brevity ſake I ſhall purſue both theſe Iniquiries together. I ſuppoſe no one will think it is any degree of unworthineſs in receiving the Lord's Supper that makes Men guilty of the Body and Blood of the Lord, and expoſes them to Damnation in ſuch eating and drinking. For there are many who receive it in ſome ſort worthily, who yet do ſo but in part; and ſuch receiving is an unworthy receiving comparatively, and in reſpect of thoſe who are better qualified and prepared for it; but yet not ſuch an Unworthineſs as that of which the Apoſtle here treats, which has Damnation entail'd to it, and a being guilty of the Body and Blood of the Lord. This Ordinance is received more or leſs worthily or unworthily, as ſuch receiving more or leſs anſwers the ends for which it was ordained. Now we ſhall find that thoſe Abuſes in receiving the Lord's Supper, which St. *Paul* taxeth the *Corinthians* with, and for which *many of them were ſick and weak, and many fallen aſleep*, were ſuch as by which the Ends and Purpoſes for which this Ordinance was inſtituted, were in very great part, if not totally defeated, and ſuch as which Men, who have but common Grace, may by vertue of that very well avoid and eſcape, in their frequenting that Ordinance.

We will begin with that firſt, which is firſt taken notice of, and that is the *Schiſmaticalneſs* of their Communion in the Lord's Supper. Both in their Love-Feaſts, and in receiving the Sacrament at the end of it, they behaved themſelves ſo *factiouſly*, and ſo contrary to Chriſtian Charity and Brotherly Love, as by which they quite defeated one great end of that Ordinance. In ver. 17. of this 11th Chapter, St. *Paul* charges their coming together in their Church-Aſſemblies to be *not for the better, but for the worſe*. And this he did upon this account, becauſe when they came together in the Church, *there were diviſions among them*, ver. 18. And in ver. 20. he told them, *This was not to eat the Lord's Supper*, to come thus dividedly to it, of which he ſpeaks more particularly in the next Verſe, ſaying, *For every one taketh before other his own Supper*, ver. 21. By which words, conſidering their relation to what goes before, ſome Authors of good account have underſtood the Schiſmatical Practice of the ſeveral Parties into which that Church was divided about their Teachers, in communicating apart one from another. For altho' they came together in one place to do it, yet ſo as that one Party made an end of their Communion before another had begun theirs. What inclines me to adhere to this ſenſe of the words, I ſhall give account of, after I have recited the words of ſome Expoſitors upon this Contexture of Scripture. And I will inſtance in ſuch Authors, againſt whom the *Diſſenters* can have leaſt exception. *Cartwright* upon the place, in his Confutation of the *Rhemiſts* Tranſlation of the New Teſtament, delivers his ſenſe thus: *There was a double abuſe among them; One in their Love-Feaſts, while that which ſhould have ſerved for the knitting of the Knot of Love, was uſed to cut the Cord thereof, in that every one, as himſelf beſt liked, made choice of ſuch as he would have to ſit at Table with him, the other either not tarried for, or thruſt out when they came, eſpecially the Poor. The other abuſe, pulled in by the former, was, for that thoſe which were Companions at one Table in the common Feaſt, communicated alſo in the Sacred with the ſame ſeparation and ſeveralty.* D. *Mayor* ſaith thus: *It ſeems this good Order was perverted among the Corinthians, one Company being of one Sect coming before another, and receiving the Lord's Supper and this their own Supper in a moſt ſcandalous manner departed, and then came another Company doing likewiſe.* Mr. *Sam. Cradock* in his Apoſtolical Hiſtory, pag. 72. delivers his ſenſe thus: *In thoſe their Feaſts of Charity, at the end whereof the Lord's Supper was celebrated, they did not now obſerve the true Church-Communion. But every one, that is, every Faction or Diviſion, being come to the place of the Aſſembly, did preſently ſit down to eat what they brought in company of their own Party, not minding or regarding others; whereupon this holy Feaſt was neither celebrated at the ſame time by all, nor in holy concord, contrary to the true Union of Chriſtians ſignified thereby.* Unto which I might add the *Dutch Annotators* upon the place. *Own Supper, that is, a Supper which is not held in common of the whole Church, as the Lord's Supper muſt be held, but which is held privately by ſome alone. Every one, that is, every one that held with them.*

The reaſon which doth induce me to adhere to the ſenſe aforeſaid, is taken from St. *Paul's* words in *ver.* 33, 34. of this *Chapter*, by which he winds up what he had been diſcourſing concerning thoſe abuſes which made the *Corinthians* guilty of receiving the Lord's Supper unworthily, and to the endangering of themſelves: His words are theſe, *Wherefore my Brethren, when ye come together to eat, tarry one for another, that ye come not together to* condemnation. Now unleſs one Party had feaſted and communicated together before another, there would have been no occaſion for this Admonition, to be as careful of tarrying one for another, as they would of not coming together to Condemnation: Unleſs we could ſuppoſe that the *Individuals* did *ſingly* and apart from all the reſt eat their own Supper and the Lord's Supper; which is no wiſe likely, ſo long as they had thoſe of their own Party to aſſociate themſelves with. Beſides, their coming *together to eat*, which St. *Paul* ſpeaks of, implies, that they did not eat ſingly by themſelves. Add to this that of St. *Paul*, upon his entrance upon this matter touching their abuſive way of celebrating the Lord's Supper, ſaith, *When ye come together in the Church, I hear there be Diviſions among you*, ver. 18. and it is probable he thereby meant actual Diviſions in receiving the Sacrament, rather than Verbal Diviſions by diſputing and contending, which were not ſo likely to take place in their ſolemn Aſſemblies for Worſhip. This feaſting and communicating thus dividedly Party from Party, was not then the leaſt, but rather one of the principal Abuſes here cenſured by the Apoſtle as that which made them guilty of unworthy receiving, and in danger of eating and drinking Judgment to themſelves; otherwiſe he would not have repeated this, and given a more particular Caution againſt it, rather than any other Abuſe, which yet we ſee he does.

And this Abuſe, as it was probably the occaſion of ſome other, ſo it was of that Nature as that it did defeat one ſpecial end for which this Ordinance was appointed, to wit, the holding the Members of the ſame Body together in Unity and Brotherly Love, and for the ſtrengthening and increaſing the ſame. This Sacrament by tending to awaken the Senſe of Chriſt's Love to all his Members in dying for them all, tends thereby to unite and knit them all one to another in Love, as Co-partners together in the ſame Benefits by his Death, and to render them dear to one another, becauſe they were ſo to him when he gave himſelf for them all, one as well as another.

But now, ſo to uſe this Sacrament as to make it an Inſtrument of Diviſion and Diſaffection among Members of the ſame Body, as theſe *Corinthians* ſeem to have done, is to pervert the end and uſe of it, and to act contradictitiouſly to the Good and Benefit which our Saviour deſigned his People by it. And therefore to receive this Sacrament in ſuch a way, and after ſuch a manner, as by which Men do thus, cannot but be a moſt unworthy receiving of it.

But then this is ſuch an unworthy communicating at the Lord's Table, as Chriſtians by virtue of common Grace, yea, by the Light of Nature it ſelf may eaſily avoid; nay, they can ſcarcely be guilty of it without offering ſome Violence to Principles of natural Light.

By the way then, if theſe Chriſtian *Corinthians* thus purpoſely ſhunning Communion one with another at the Lord's Table, and communicating dividedly in Parties, was an unworthy, and ſuch an unworthy receiving that Sacrament, as put them under the Danger of Condemnation, as it ſeems it did, *ver.* 33, 34. Then it very greatly concerns ſuch to lay this thing to Heart who ſhun Communion with our Parochial Congregations, and chuſe to communicate ſeparately, and in divided Parties. And ſo much the rather becauſe there appears a great Conſimilitude or Likeneſs between the Reaſons of the divided Communion of thoſe of the Church of *Corinth*, and that of our *Diſſenting* Brethren. For however great Endeavours have been uſed by ſome of the ſaid Diſſenters, to prove it unlawful to hold Communion with our Pariſh-Congregations in the Prayers and in the Lord's Supper as adminiſtred according to the Liturgy; yet the Reaſons by which they have endeavoured thus to perſuade themſelves, have been ſo plentifully and fully anſwered both by Conforming and Non-conforming Miniſters; and ſo much has been ſaid and done by many of the Diſſenters themſelves, as by which they have declared that upon emergent occaſion they can communicate according to the Order of the Church of *England*; ſo that there is great reaſon to believe that thoſe Reaſons which now prevail moſt with the greateſt part of them to continue in their divided Communion, are much what the ſame with thoſe upon which the *Corinthian* Chriſtians practiſed their divided Communion. The one of which is the greater Eſteem they have for thoſe Miniſters by whom holy things are miniſtred to them in their ſeparate Aſſemblies, than they have for thoſe by whom the ſame holy things are miniſtred to the Pariſh-Congregations. And the other is, becauſe the manner of Adminiſtration of thoſe holy things, as performed in the Pariſh Congregations, does not pleaſe them ſo well as that which is uſed in their divided Communions and ſeparate Aſſemblies, though the things adminiſtred in both for ſubſtance are the ſame.

And for the very ſame, or like reaſon and cauſe it was that the *Corinthian* Chriſtians made themſelves guilty of that divided Communion which was ſo ſcandalous, and for which they were ſo ſharply cenſured by St. *Paul.* Their diviſion in Communion was founded in the different eſteem they had of the ſeveral Teachers they had among them, one Party adhering to one in oppoſition to another, as appears by *Chap.* iii. 3, 4. and *Chap.* iv. 6. and by *Clement*'s Epiſtle written to them. And wherefore did they thus, but becauſe the Adminiſtration of holy things by one pleaſed them better than that which was done by another; that certainly muſt be the reaſon of preferring one in oppoſition to another, for no other ſo likely as this can, I ſuppoſe, be aſſigned.

Altho' it would have been no crime to have eſteemed ſuch Teachers more than others, who did really excel others in Gifts, in Worth, and in the manner of Adminiſtration of holy things; yet it was moſt ſcandalous and intolerable for this cauſe to divide themſelves in their Communion one from another: And if it were ſo in them, how can it be tolerable in others? But this only by way of digreſſion.

To proceed, another act of Uncharitableneſs added unto that of Schiſm in the uſe of the Lord's Supper, was their great diſreſpect to the poorer ſort of Chriſtians, and their unchriſtian neglect of them in their Feaſts of Love, to which communicating in the Lord's Supper was adjoyned; for they ſuffered them to hunger, when ſome others made themſelves guilty of intemperance and exceſs: *One is hungry, another is drunk,* ſaith the Apoſtle, *ver.* 21. One act of Uncharitableneſs betrayed them into another, to the ſhaming and diſcouraging of their poor Brethren: *Deſpiſe ye the Church of God, and ſhame them that have not?* This proceeded from ſuch an Unchriſtian Temper of Mind, as was very far from that Charitable Affection one to another, which was deſigned to be nouriſhed and quickned by commemorating in that Sacrament the Charity of our Lord to us, who made himſelf poor for us, that we might be made rich; and therefore muſt needs have rendred their communicating in it *unworthy:* For ſuch an outward Behaviour, and more eſpecially at ſuch a time, was a plain and viſible Contradiction to what our Saviour deſigned by that Ordinance.

But then this was ſuch a piece of unworthineſs in receiving this Sacrament, or upon their coming to receive it, as Men but of common Grace can hardly be guilty of.

And as for that Unworthineſs which ſtood in Mens coming *drunk* to the Lord's Table, of which ſome of theſe *Corinthians* it ſeems were guilty, Men but of common Grace cannot lightly but eſcape that.

The laſt thing mentioned by St. *Paul,* which would make Mens eating and drinking at the Lord's Table unworthy, was *their not diſcerning the Lord's Body* in doing it, *ver.* 29. But of this I have diſcourſed already. But in as much as the Apoſtle ſeems to reſolve all unworthy receiving the Lord's Supper, into Mens not diſcerning the Lord's Body, as I have obſerved before; I might here ſhew how the particular abuſes forementioned, wherewith he chargeth theſe Chriſtians as guilty, did either *proceed from* their not diſcerning the Lord's Body, or elſe did *contribute* and miniſter to it, or rather that it did both.

This uncharitable and factious communicating, in divided Parties, proceeded from their not duly and ſufficiently diſcerning that one end which our Lord deſigned by his Death, and in inſtituting this Ordinance for the Commemoration of it, was, to teach and engage his Diſciples and Followers to love one another, as he had loved them, in laying down his Life for them, not only to redeem them from Hell, but alſo from their uncharitable Diſtances and Differences, and to make them *one, Epheſ.* ii. 15, 16. For if they had had a due ſenſe of the nature, extent, and end of Chriſt's Love in laying down his Life, not only to reconcile us to God, but alſo to one another, that all that believe in him might be *one in him, as the Father and he are one,* and that whatever does not hinder or diſſolve their Union and Communion with the Father and the Son, ſhould by no means divide them in Communion one with another, they would never have divided themſelves from one another in commemorating the Love of the Lord in the Sacrament upon ſuch ſlight Reaſons and Grounds as they did.

Nor unleſs it had been for the ſame reaſon, could they have had ſo little love and kindneſs for their poor Brethren, for whom Chriſt had ſo much, as to give himſelf for their relief, as to ſuffer them to *hunger* at a pretended Feaſt of Love, when yet they fed themſelves to the full, and ſome of them to exceſs.

Nor could they poſſibly have ſuffered themſelves to have been guilty of ſuch intemperance and exceſs as to be *drunk,* and that at a time alſo when they were immediately to be engaged in ſo awful and ſacred a buſineſs as ſolemnly to commemorate ſo great and concerning a thing, as the Death was which was ſuffered by their Saviour for the Redemption of the World, if they had not been ſo careleſs, inconſiderate and ſtupid, as not to diſcern the Lord's Body.

And as theſe heinous abuſes proceeded from a want of a due diſcerning of the Lord's

Body, ſo they greatly tended to indiſpoſe and incapacitate them to diſcern it in receiving the Lord's Supper. Such Uncharitableneſs to Chriſtian Brethren, as they were guilty of, has ſuch an ill influence upon Mens Minds, as more or leſs to ſtupifie them, and to make the Heart groſs, and to make them become leſs affected with Chriſt's Love to themſelves, and leſs affected with love to him in the Sacramental Commemoration of his Death, than otherwiſe they might be: *For he that loveth not his Brother whom he hath ſeen, how can he love God whom he hath not ſeen?* ſaith St. *John.* And this may be one reaſon why being in Charity with all Men is always required and preſſed as a pre-requiſite to qualifie Men for Communion in the Sacrament; and why they are charged in ſpecial to examine themſelves in that more particularly in their preparation for it. *Therefore let us keep the Feaſt, not with the leaven of malice and wickedneſs,* &c.

As for thoſe the Apoſtle ſpeaks of, who came to the Sacrament diſtempered with drink, I need ſay nothing to ſhew how that miniſtred to their not diſcerning the Lord's Body therein. And what we ſay of the ill influence which theſe abuſes reproved by the Apoſtle had upon the Minds of the *Corinthians* to obſtruct and hinder the diſcerning the Lord's Body in the Sacrament, with that Senſation of Mind, and grateful Affection of Soul, which is moſt ſutable to the nature and deſign of that Ordinance, is true alſo of other Sins: For they harden the Heart, and enfeeble the Mind, and deprive Men of a ſpiritual guſt and reliſh of ſpiritual and divine things, as the prevalency of ill Humours in the Body, when they cauſe Sickneſs, do vitiate the Palate, and take away the true reliſh of that Food which ſhould nouriſh.

And this makes Self-examination ſo neceſſary to prepare and fit Men for their more worthy coming to the Table of the Lord. For by that, when well performed, they ſearch and examine the matter with themſelves, whether there be any Sin or Luſt harboured ſecretly in the Heart, and repent of it, and purge it out if there be, juſt as the Jews, againſt their keeping of the Paſſover, were wont to make a diligent ſearch to find out whether there were any leavened Bread left in the Houſe, in any hole or corner, to the end they might put it away and caſt it out. To this the Apoſtle alludes, when he ſays, *Purge out the old Leaven, that ye may be a new Lump; for Chriſt our Paſſover is ſacrificed for us,* 1 Cor. v. 7.

And farther we ſhould examine our ſelves whether we labour to put our Souls in the beſt poſture we poſſibly can to diſcern the Lord's Body, as crucified for us, with the moſt grateful, the moſt affecting and Soul-raviſhing Senſe of his Love, when we go to commemorate that Death of his for us in the bleſſed Sacrament of his Body and Blood. And the better to prepare for our ſo doing, we ſhould make our ſelves as ſenſible as we can of the miſerable and woful condition we and all the World had been in, had not ſo great and glorious a Perſon as the Son of God, the Prince of Life, abaſed and humbled himſelf ſo low, as to ſuffer Death for us, and this too when there was nothing in us but our Miſery that could invite him to it, we and all the World being in open enmity and rebellion againſt him.

And by how much the more by Self-examination, and a due preparation for Communion in the Lord's Supper, we come to be filled with a ſenſe of his ſuperabounding Love and Goodneſs to us, in giving himſelf a Ranſom, and ſuffering an ignominious and painful Death for us, by ſo much the more ſhall we find in our ſelves a return of Love to him for his marvellous Love to us: *We love him, becauſe he loved us firſt,* ſaith St. *John*; nothing being more natural, than a ſenſe of great Love to beget Love again: *The love of Chriſt conſtraineth us,* ſaith St. *Paul: We all with open face beholding as in a glaſs the glory of the Lord* (to wit, of his Grace and Love, which is his Glory) *are changed into the ſame Image* or likeneſs of Love to him and one another, 2 *Cor.* iii. 18. The nature of which Love of ours to him, is ſtrongly to incline us to do thoſe things which are pleaſing and grateful to him, and to decline and avoid whatever is offenſive or diſhonourable to him; which is the ſame thing with keeping his Commandments: *For this is the Love of God, that we keep his Commandments,* 1 John v. 3.

And by this Series of Cauſes and Effects we may perceive the wonderful Wiſdom and Goodneſs of our Saviour to us, in inſtituting this Ordinance of his to be celebrated in remembrance of him: *This do in remembrance of me.* For if it be done, not in a naked, dry, and dull Remembrance that he died upon the Croſs, but with a ſenſible and grateful Remembrance of his aſtoniſhing Love to us in doing ſo, and of all the invaluable Benefits he deſigned us thereby, it will work in us ſuch a love to him, as will be the ſpring of the moſt genuine and univerſal Obedience to him. And this, no doubt, was the true deſign of our Lord in ordaining this for a ſtanding Ordinance in his Church to the end of the World. And thoſe who are careleſs and negligent in making uſe of it, do bewray in themſelves either great ignorance of the nature and deſign of this Ordinance, or elſe that they are little affected with the Love of our bleſſed Saviour in dying for us, or rather both indeed.

QUERY X.

Why, and for what reaſon may it be conceived, does Almighty God own and allow others to be of the Church as viſible, than only ſuch as are of the Church as inviſible.

There are ſeveral things offer themſelves to our Conſideration which ſeem to render it fit, and reaſonable, and well-becoming the Wiſdom and Goodneſs of God that it ſhould be ſo, and ſuch as render it highly uſeful and beneficial unto Men. As,

1. Becauſe it tends more abundantly to increaſe the number of inviſible Church-Members, than it would if none ſhould be admitted into the viſible Church until they were of the inviſible, or worthily reputed to be ſo. That it has this Tendency, needs no better Proof than the Experience the Church of God has had of the happy Effect of this Way and Method of converting Men, above what has been produced in the other Way. Experience has made it manifeſt, that abundant more thorow and ſound Converſions in Men have been made *in* the viſible Church than *out* of it, and *after* they have been baptized, than *before*. More in the Church of God have been made good, and that by means of their being in it, than have been made ſo before they were admitted into it. How rarely has any thorow and ſound Converſions been wrought in Men while out of the Church ſince Miracles ceaſed? How ſeldom do we ſee or hear of any Jews, or profeſt Infidels becoming really holy and good Men, tho' they live among Chriſtians, and where they have the Opportunity of hearing the Goſpel if they had any mind to it? Whenas, thanks be to God, we have known or heard of Multitudes of Converſions of this Nature that have been wrought in Men after they have been in the Church.

If the Apoſtles in their time did by virtue of their Miniſtry convert many, ſo as of bad to make them really holy and good, before they were received into the Church: Yet as their Calling was *extraordinary*, ſo was their Miniſtry by which thoſe Converſions were wrought; their Miſſion and Doctrine being atteſted to come from Heaven by Multitudes of miraculous Operations, and marvelous Gifts. And therefore thoſe Converſions which were wrought by ſuch extraordinary means, muſt be looked upon as extraordinary Converſions. And to argue from things extraordinarily done, to a neceſſity of having the like done in ordinary caſes, and under ordinary means, is ſo abſurd, and ſuch a piece of Unreaſonableneſs, as thoſe we call *Seekers* are guilty of, who can find, as they think, no true Churches extant or viſible, becauſe not called by Men qualified with like extraordinary Gifts as thoſe, or many of thoſe in the Apoſtles Days were by whom Churches were then gathered. And indeed, had not the means by which the Apoſtles converted thoſe whom they did convert, been *extraordinary*, it would have been in a manner impoſſible for them to have ſucceeded in their undertaking as they did, conſidering that they were to convert them from other Religions in which they had been educated and brought up, and which they had received from their Fathers and Fore-fathers, unto a new Religion, the Chriſtian Religion, which was ſo greatly different from theirs as it was; eſpecially from that of *Paganiſm*, from which moſt of their Converſions probably were made.

But when the Apoſtles had in this extraordinary way gathered our Saviour a Church all over the known World, and ſettled particular Churches, it was not neceſſary, as the Event ſhews, that this extraordinary way of converting Men ſhould be continued. For when by this extraordinary means of converting Men way was made for converting them in an ordinary way, then that which was extraordinary ceaſed: Like as the giving the Iſraelites *Manna* from Heaven ceaſed when they came into *Canaan*, and had Opportunity of being ſupplied with Food in an ordinary way. And from that time forward there have been but few Converſions made in thoſe without the Church, but moſt of thoſe that have been made in bringing Men to the Power of Godlineſs, have been made upon thoſe within the viſible Church.

For tho' God is pleaſed, I doubt not, to plant true ſaving Grace in ſome in their early days by the Benefit of godly Education: Yet there are very many others, who having been received into the Church by Baptiſm in their Infancy, have little or nothing more than a Form of Godlineſs (if ſo much) found in them when grown up. But among theſe there are many who in time are brought on, or converted to the Power of Godlineſs by means of their being in the Church, and under thoſe Ordinances of God there adminiſtred, by which he is wont to work ſaving Grace in Men. This is God's ordinary way of Converſion, ſince that which was extraordinary ceaſed: And ever ſince that time, almoſt all the Converſions that have been made in Men to a ſaving Chriſtian Faith, and to a faithful Practice and the Power of Chriſtianity, have been made upon Perſons baptized and within the Church.

And altho' the Converſion of Men to Chriſtianity by the Miniſtry of the Apoſtles was extraordinary, becauſe wrought in an extraordinary way, and by extraordinary means, as I have ſhewed: Yet we have great reaſon to think that thoſe Converſions, or many of them that proved effectual at laſt, were but only Beginnings, and preparatory to a ſecond and thorow Converſion of them while they were yet without the viſible Church, and were carried quite through, and made effectual after they were brought into the Church by Baptiſm.

And the manner of the Apoſtles writing to the Chriſtians after they had been in the Church for ſome time, ſeems to intimate that the Apoſtles themſelves had no other Apprehenſions of thoſe Converſions, or many of them. For we find them earneſtly perſwading thoſe Chriſtians to put away ſuch Practices, the retaining of which could not well conſiſt with a thorow and ſound Converſion: Which argues, that at leaſt many of them had not yet put them off, tho' they had been for ſome time in the Church. Thus Col. iii. 8, 9. *But now ye alſo put off all theſe; Anger, Wrath, Malice, Blaſphemy, filthy Communication out of your Mouth. Lie not one to another, ſeeing ye have put off the old Man with his deeds:* That is, they had engaged to do ſo in Baptiſm. See the like again, *Epheſ.* v. 3. And 1 *Pet.* ii. 1. *Wherefore laying aſide all Malice, and all Guile, and Hypocriſies, and Envies, and all evil Speakings; as new-born Babes deſire the ſincere Milk of the Word, that ye may grow thereby*, 1 Cor. vi. 15. *Know ye not that your Bodies are the Members of Chriſt? Shall I then take the Members of Chriſt, and make them the Members of an Harlot? God forbid. What, know ye not that he that is joyned to an Harlot is one Body?* Chap. x. 21, 22. *Ye cannot drink of the Cup of the Lord, and the Cup of Devils: Ye cannot be Partakers of the Lord's Table, and of the Table of Devils? Do we provoke the Lord to Jealouſie? Are we ſtronger than he?* Chap. xv. 33, 34. *Be not deceived; evil Communications corrupt good Manners. Awake to Righteouſneſs and Sin not, for ſome have not the Knowledge of God: I ſpeak this to your ſhame.* 2 Cor. vi. 16, 17. *What Agreement hath the Temple of God with Idols? For ye are the Temple of the living God. Wherefore come out from among them, and be ye ſeparate, ſaith the Lord, and touch not the unclean thing, and I will receive you,* Chap. xii. 20, 21. *For I fear leſt when I come, I ſhall not find you ſuch as I would, and that I ſhall be found unto you ſuch as ye would not: leſt there be Debates, Envyings, Wraths, Strifes, Backbitings, Whiſperings, Swellings, Tumults: And leſt when I come again, my God will humble me among you, and that I ſhall bewail many which have ſinned already, and have not repented of the Uncleanneſs, and Fornication, and Laſciviouſneſs which they have committed.* Phil. ii. 22. *All ſeek their own, and not the things of Jeſus Chriſt.*

So by the general Epiſtle which St. *James* wrote, not to any particular Church, but to the twelve Tribes ſcattered abroad, it appears that he was very jealous and ſuſpicious that the Faith which very many of the Chriſtians had, was but *a dead and unavailable Faith*, and ſuch as would neither juſtifie nor ſave them: Becauſe it was but a barren and unfruitful Faith, ſuch as did neither purifie the Heart, nor reform the Life, *being hearers of the Word, and not Doers.* For all their Knowledge and their Faith, it ſeems by the Tenour of his Writing, that their Luſts remained ſtill luſty and ſtrong, that warred in their Members: The Love of Pleaſure, their unworthy Compliances to keep Friendſhip with the World, Pride, Envy, and grudging one againſt another, Strife, and Contention, and uncharitable judging and condemning one another, and provoking one another with their unruly Tongues, and curſing and ſwearing, and ſuch like Diſtempers it ſeems did abound among them. And St. *James* by this Epiſtle to them endeavours their thorow Converſion; and encourageth the ſincere among them to endeavour it likewiſe, ſaying, *If any ſee his Brother err, and one convert him: Let him know that he which converteth a Sinner from the Error of his way, ſhall ſave a Soul from Death, and cover a multitude of Sins.* And when we likewiſe find that there were but a few Names in *Sardis* but what had defiled their Garments, having indeed a Name to live, but were dead; and nothing which our Saviour could commend in all the Church of *Laodicea*; I ſay, when we find this, and conſider all theſe things, and more of like Nature in the Apoſtles Writings, we have great reaſon to think that many of thoſe whom the Apoſtles baptized, were not thorowly converted till after they were brought into the Church, and yet many ſuch were ſo after.

And indeed I do not know what other Reaſon can be given why the Apoſtles made ſuch haſte as they did to baptize Perſons, after they had once gained their conſent to turn Chriſtians, without ſtaying for any farther tryal, but that they thought their thorow Converſion was more likely to be effected within the Church than without. It is one thing to be converted from a falſe Religion to a bare or notional Belief of the true, and another thing to be converted from that to a right practical Belief of it. There were ſome who did believe in the former ſenſe, through the power of Conviction, and could do no otherwiſe, who yet had no mind to become obedient to the Rules and Precepts of the Goſpel in all things. Such were thoſe *John* ii. 23. and thoſe *John* xii. 42, 43. and ſuch was *Simon Magus*, and ſuch were thoſe, of whom St. *James* ſpeaks, that had but a dead Faith: And thus it is with many that are of the viſible Church in theſe days, who have no other Faith for ſome time, and yet afterward are converted to a lively practical Belief of the Chriſtian Religion. And it is probable, that the Faith of moſt of the Apoſtles Converts went little or nothing farther than to a general Belief of the truth of the Apoſtles Doctrine until after they were baptized; they having ſo little time of learning before as generally they had, but were carried on farther to a more particular, diſtinct, and practical Belief by after-teaching when they were in the Church. And this is not diſagreeable to what I have formerly noted from the words of our Saviour's Commiſſion to his Apoſtles touching a double Teaching; the one to make Men become Diſciples, which went before Baptiſm, the other to direct them how to live as Chriſtians, which follow'd after it, *Mat.* xxviii 19, 20.

But however, whatever thorow and effectual Converſions the Apoſtles might in an extraordinary way effect in Men, while they were without the Church for the firſt founding of the Chriſtian Church; yet we are ſure, that ſince that extraordinary way of Converſion has been diſcontinued, abundantly more have been converted by their being in the Church, and by advantage of the means of Converſion which they have there enjoyed, than have been among thoſe without the Church. And this is the firſt Reaſon aſſigned why others ſhould be admitted into the Viſible Church, than ſuch as are of the Inviſible, or than are reputed to be ſo before ſuch admiſſion.

2. Another Reaſon why we may conceive Almighty God allows many others to be of the Viſible Church than are of the Inviſible, is, becauſe ſo to do is more uſeful for the propagating and ſpreading of the Chriſtian Religion in the World, than the limiting and reſtraining the Viſible Church only to thoſe who are of the Inviſible alſo, can be. For it cannot be denied, but that ſuch Gifts, and ſuch common Grace, as will not be ſufficient unto a Man's own Salvation, may yet be very uſeful for the maintaining and defending the Chriſtian Doctrine againſt Adverſaries, and for the inſtructing others in it, and for the perſuading them to believe it, and to live according to it. Which was the reaſon, I ſuppoſe, why St. *Paul* ſaid, that *he rejoyced, and would rejoyce that Chriſt was preached*, tho' it were but *inſincerely by ſome*, as well as for being preached *in truth by others*, Phil. i. 18. For the more Men of Parts and Learning, and of Intereſt among Men, the Chriſtian Religion and ſound Doctrine has to aſſert and defend it, and the more there are of others to abet and encourage them in it, (tho' many of them ſhall be ſuppoſed to be mainly influenced therein by motives of ſecular Honour and Intereſt) the more Credit in general, and the more Reputation it will have in the World, and the farther it will ſpread. As we ſee on the contrary, the more Popery has had Men of Parts and Learning, and of Intereſt otherwiſe to promote and propagate it, the more and the farther it hath ſpread and prevailed in the World: And the ſame is true of other Errors and Hereſies, as that of *Arianiſm* when time was. There is no queſtion, but the more good Men are back'd in their promulging ſound and ſaving Doctrine by Men of great Intereſt in the World, that agree with them in Doctrine and ſubſtance of Worſhip, (tho' they ſhould not in all reſpects be ſo hearty and ſincere as the other are) the more Chriſtian Religion gains among Men.

And if all ſuch as theſe ſhould be made Enemies to the Church, by being denied to be of it, the Church's Power of propagating the Chriſtian Religion would quickly be thereby exceedingly weaken'd, and the propagation thereof greatly obſtructed. We have not now Miracles, the extraordinary means by which Chriſtianity was at firſt propagated; without which it is not probable the unbelieving and blind World would have been reconciled to it upon account of its own intrinſick Excellency and Goodneſs. And therefore there is now the more need of the help of all Chriſtians to propagate the Chriſtian Religion: Not only of ſuch as are of the Inviſible Church, and Viſible likewiſe, but alſo of thoſe who are but only of the Viſible. The ſucceſs in propagating of the Chriſtian Religion does not wholly depend upon the moral Goodneſs of the Inſtruments by whom it is done, but ſo much upon its own Goodneſs, that if that be but ſufficienly diſcovered, tho' but by Men defective in their Morals, it is yet able to commend it ſelf very much unto the choice of

Men. *If they had ſtood in my counſel, and had cauſed my people to hear my words, then they ſhould have turned them from their evil ways*, ſaith God concerning the falſe Prophets, *Jer.* xxiii. 22.

It is no ſmall matter upon this account to be born within the Pale of the viſible Church of Chriſtian Parents, and to be educated in the Chriſtian Religion, tho' by Parents too much ſtrangers to the Power of it: *And of Zion it ſhall be ſaid, this and that Man was born in her, The Lord ſhall count when he writeth up the people, that this Man was born there*, Pſal. lxxxvii. 5, 6. How many worthy Children has the Church had, and of great uſe in it, who yet have been born of Parents of but ſmall account for Religion. So that ſuch Mens being of the Church, is of great uſe for the propagating of truly Religious Men, and by them the Chriſtian Religion. But if ſuch Men as theſe had been deprived of Church-Education, by their Parents being deprived of Memberſhip in the viſible Church, the Church in all probability would have been deprived of ſuch uſeful Members as theſe prove to be for the propagating of the true Chriſtian Religion.

3. Another Reaſon may be, becauſe to take others into the viſible Church, than ſuch as are, or are credibly reputed to be of the inviſible, tends much more to the ſecurity of the inviſible Church in the World than the excluding all ſuch would do. For were it not for thoſe of the Church as viſible, over and beſides ſuch as are of it as inviſible, thoſe which are of the Church as inviſible would be in much more danger than now they are, of being devoured by thoſe numerous Enemies which they have in the World. *Chriſt's Flock is but a little Flock*, comparatively; and there is but *few that find the narrow way that leads to Life*, as he hath told us. And ſo he hath told us alſo in the Parable of the Sower, that of *four* ſorts of Hearers of the Goſpel, there is but *one* that brings forth fruit: And in another place, that among the *many* that are *called*, there are but *few choſen*.

Now then, if when with the help of thoſe of the Viſible Church, which are not of the Inviſible, (which yet according to the Scriptures ſeem to be the far greater number) thoſe of the inviſible Church have enough to do to ſubſiſt in the World, without being rooted out of it by the Enemies of Chriſtianity, as we ſee they have, what can we think would become of them but ruine, without a ſtanding Miracle to ſecure them, if thoſe who are but only of the viſible Church were made Enemies alſo to thoſe of the inviſible, as doubtleſs they would, if they ſhould all be rejected by them as none of Chriſt's Church on Earth? How unable would they be to defend themſelves againſt the Popiſh Party in the World, if they were not aſſiſted by thoſe who are but of the Church as viſible? Or how unable would they be to defend themſelves againſt all thoſe that are Enemies to Chriſtianity, both Name and Thing, if the Bulk and Body of Men, which are Chriſtians only in outward Form and Profeſſion did not ſtand as a Screen between them and thoſe Enemies?

Our Saviour hath declared, that the Wheat would be in great danger of being rooted up, if the Tares ſhould for the preſent be gather'd out of it; and for that reaſon *would have both to grow together till the harveſt*, Matth. xiii. Our Saviour did not intend hereby (no more do I by what I have ſaid) to put a bar againſt purging the Church of capital Offenders by Diſcipline, and therefore by *Tares* it's probable he meant carnal Goſpellers, that yet are not obnoxious to Excommunication, ſuch as the Thorny-Ground-Hearers, in whom the Cares of this World, and the Deceitfulneſs of Riches, and Pleaſures of this Life, choak the Word which they have received, and which they profeſs, ſo that it brings forth in them no fruit to perfection.

But before I proceed any farther, I muſt remove an Objection, which otherwiſe lies againſt the uſe which I here make of this Parable of our Saviour. And the Objection is this: That this Parable makes nothing againſt gathering the bad from among the good in the *Church*, but from among the good in the *World*; not that they ſhould both grow together in the Church till Harveſt, but in the World. And to ſtrengthen this they allege our Saviour's Interpretation of this Parable, where he ſays, that the *Field* where the Tares and the Wheat grow together, is the *World*, *Matth.* xiii. 38.

And this indeed at firſt ſight ſeems to be a very conſiderable Objection. But if we conſider the matter well, I think it may appear otherwiſe. The *Field* indeed, in which the Seed was ſown, and the Goſpel firſt preached, was the *World*, according to our Saviour's Commiſſion to his Apoſtles, *Go ye into all the World and preach the Goſpel*, Mark xvi. 15. But then thoſe that received this Seed of the Goſpel, ſo as to make profeſſion of adhering to it, were preſently baptized and received into the Church. Now it was among theſe that the Tares ſprang up, many of them proving bad Chriſtians. So that the Seed was firſt ſown in the World as in a common Field: But yet the Tares ſprang up in that part of the World, which was now become the viſible Church, and an encloſed Garden. And therefore when the time of the Harveſt ſhall come, when theſe Tares muſt be ſeparated from the Wheat, our Saviour ſays, *They ſhall be gathered out of the Kingdom of the Son of Man*, ver. 41. where they were permitted to grow till this Harveſt. And what is this Kingdom of the Son of Man, but his viſible Church? The Hiſtory of the Event of the Apoſtles preaching, does plainly lay open the meaning of this Parable, and that of the Draw-net, and other like Parables, in that the viſible Church, which they gathered out of the World conſiſted of bad as well as good.

And this Parable in particular ſhews farther, that theſe Tares were not to be gathered out of the Church, for this very reaſon, *Leſt while ye gather up the Tares*, ſaith he, *ye root up alſo the Wheat with them.* So that it ſeems that the Tares growing with the Wheat is in ſome reſpect matter of ſecurity to the Wheat, and that the Wheat would be in more danger by the Tares being gathered from among it, than by their growing together with it: In more danger of being rooted up, or rooted out. And this ſeems fully to juſtifie and make good that Reaſon I am now upon, why all unregenerate Chriſtians ſhould not be denied a place and being in the viſible Church.

If it ſhall be here ſaid, that the Church in the Primitive Times, when but few in number, did yet ſubſiſt, yea, and abundantly increaſe too, tho' they had no Humane or Worldly Power to defend them, and when almoſt the whole World both of Jews and Gentiles were againſt them: And why may it not as well do ſo now, tho' none that are not of the inviſible Church ſhould be any defence unto it.

I anſwer, That there is no doubt but that they might ſubſiſt in the World, continue and increaſe as well as they did, provided they had but the ſame extraordinary means to back and abet them, and to increaſe their numbers, as thoſe Primitive Chriſtians had: I mean thoſe miraculous Powers which then procured the Chriſtians great Reputation among the People, and which did ſtill attract and draw in more to their Party, than were diminiſhed by the Perſecution which was raiſed againſt them by the higher Powers which were then Infidel. For by reaſon of thoſe miraculous Wonders which were done by the Apoſtles and others in thoſe times, the multitude of People were ſo aſtoniſhed and affected, that they favoured them ſo far, as that the Rulers were put under ſome awe. For we read that, for the Reaſon aforeſaid, *great grace or favour was upon them all*, to wit, all the Chriſtians, *Acts* iv. 33. And *Chap.* v. 13. it is ſaid, *that the people magnified them.* So that the Rulers, when they had otherwiſe a mind to it, *found not how to puniſh them, becauſe of the People, for all Men glorified God for that which was done*, Chap. iv. 21. And in *Chap.* v. 26. it's ſaid of the Captain and Officers that were ſent to bring the Apoſtles before the Council, *that they brought them without violence, becauſe they feared the People, leſt they ſhould have been ſtoned.* And by reaſon of the Credit they obtained among the People, both to themſelves and their way, by the numerous Miracles they wrought; *Believers were the more added to the Lord, multitudes both of Men and Women*, notwithſtanding all the oppoſition which was made againſt them by the Rulers, *Chap.* v. 14. and that wonderful increaſe of Believers which was made from among the Heathen alſo, was attributed by St. *Paul* unto thoſe Signs and Wonders that were wrought for the proof and confirmation of the Chriſtian Way, *I will not dare*, ſaith he, *to ſpeak of any of thoſe things which Chriſt hath not wrought by me to make the Gentiles obedient by word and deed, through mighty Signs and Wonders by the Spirit of God*, Rom. xv. 18, 19.

But if the ſmall number of ſincere Chriſtians that are in the World, had no other means to preſerve themſelves, and to increaſe their number, but the goodneſs of their Cauſe, and their own Innocency, and were not countenanced and protected by Chriſtian States and Governours, and by a multitude more of the ſame Profeſſion with themſelves, than are of like ſincerity in that Profeſſion; they would be in great danger of being in a manner extirpated out of the World by the Infidel and Antichriſtian Parties in it. When the Papal defection beſel the Church within the *Roman* Empire, the greateſt part perhaps of the then viſible Church in that part of the World, fell off from the orthodox and ſincere, and became their Enemies in time. The conſequence of which was the exterminating and rooting out of that part of the World, in a great meaſure, the orthodox and ſincere Chriſtians. Which is a great Inſtance to ſhew how it would fare with thoſe of the inviſible Church, if they were deſerted by thoſe Chriſtians which are not of it, or if thoſe were rejected as no fellow-members of the viſible Church, and thereby made their Enemies.

4. Another Reaſon is taken from the danger in another reſpect of reckoning none of the Church as viſible, but upon their Reputation of their being of the Church as inviſible: For to admit Men upon no other terms into the viſible Church, nor to its Communion, but upon the Reputation, and under the Notion of their being already of the Church as inviſible, tends greatly to betray many Souls into a dangerous Snare of Self-deceiving. For, if this Rule of Admiſſion ſhould be obſerved, many miſtakes would be committed,

either through Fallibility or Partiality of Judgment in them that admit them; and ſo, many would be received into the viſible Church, or to the Communion of it as Members of the inviſible, which yet are not of it. And if ſo, then all thoſe which are thus received under the Approbation of the viſible Church as Members of the inviſible, will be thereby *ſtrengthened* in their *Self-flattery* and good Opinion they have of themſelves touching their good and ſafe Condition, when there is no ſuch matter. And when they find the good Opinion they have of themſelves thus ſtrengthened by the publick Judgment of the Church concurring with them therein, they will be under the greater Temptation, and in ſo much the greater danger of reſting ſecurely in that unſafe condition, to the great hazard of their Souls. We know, or have abundant reaſon to ſuſpect, that many that have but a Form of Godlineſs, are *Laodicean* like, leſs apt to ſuſpect the Goodneſs of their own condition before God, than they that are truly ſincere: How much leſs will they ſuſpect it, and how much more will they be confirmed in the good Opinion of themſelves, tho' falſe, when they have the publick Judgment of the Church to back them in it, and that after Inſpection has been made into their Lives, and ſigns of their Converſion approved of? As the manner is of thoſe that go that way.

Of this Danger, and of this great Inconvenience, ſome of the *New England* Divines grew ſenſible after they had made trial of that way a great while. For in their Anſwer to Mr. *Davenport*'s *Apologetical Preface*, pag. 43, 44. they expreſs themſelves in theſe words: *Indeed, when Men confound theſe two, and do tie Viſible Church Intereſt into ſuch Conditions and Qualifications as are reputed enough to Salvation, this may tend to harden Men, and to make them conceit, that if once they be but got into the Church they are ſure of Heaven, whenas alas it may be they are far from it.*

But now there is no ſuch danger does ariſe from Mens being owned viſible Church Members from their profeſſing to believe the Chriſtian Religion, and from their covenanting to endeavour to live according to it. Such Profeſſion and ſuch Covenanting does indeed give ground of Hope to the Church, that ſuch will not be ſo regardleſs of their own Salvation as not to be willing to learn their Duty, and to endeavour to do it that they may be ſaved. But yet ſuch hope of the Church concerning their good Performance for the future, does not miniſter any occaſion of Confidence in ſuch Men that have *already* performed what is neceſſary to their Salvation, as a receiving them into the Church, and unto Communion, as having in the publick Judgment of the Church already performed it, would do. This act of the Church in receiving them into Communion in her external Privileges in hope of their improving them to the ſaving of their Souls, gives them no ground of Confidence of the Safety and Goodneſs of their Condition thereby, farther than they are careful *to make their Calling and Election ſure by uſing all diligence* in improving the opportunity and means of doing ſo by their being in the Church.

Men are too prone to lay too great a ſtreſs upon their being received into the viſible Church and Communion, tho' the Church hath paſt no Judgment thereby of their being of the inviſible Church: How much more would they do ſo in caſe it had. St *Paul* was ſenſible, I doubt not, how prone many Chriſtians are to lay too much ſtreſs meerly upon their being of the Church, and Partakers in the external Communion thereof; for which cauſe he cautioned the Chriſtians againſt flattering themſelves with an Opinion of their ſafe Condition upon that account, and laboured to poſſeſs them with a Senſe of the danger they were in for all that, if they ſhould reſt therein without growing better and better thereby, 1 *Cor.* x. *I would not*, ſaith he, *that ye ſhould be ignorant, Brethren, how that all our Fathers were baptized unto* Moſes *in the Cloud, and in the Sea, and did all eat the ſame Spiritual Meat, and drink the ſame ſpiritual Drink*; and yet *with many of them God was not well pleaſed, but overthrew them in the Wilderneſs.* And he told them that theſe things were *our Examples*, to the intent that we ſhould not luſt after evil things as they luſted. Then enumerated their Miſcarriages, and what befel them thereupon: And farther told them, that theſe things happened to them for Examples or Types to us, and were written for our Admonition upon whom the ends of the World are come. Thereby giving them to underſtand, that tho' they were baptized and received into the Church, and did participate of the ſame ſpiritual Meat and Drink in the Sacrament with the beſt in the Church; yet if they did not take warning by the Miſcarriages of thoſe that had been of the Church, and of the Communion of it as well as they, to avoid the like, they might periſh as well as the other did, for all their Communion in the Church.

5. Another reaſon againſt refuſing all ſuch Communion in the viſible Church who are not judged to be of the Church as inviſible, is taken from the danger of ſuch a Practice in another reſpect, and that is the danger of miſtaking the good for bad, and of refuſing the ſincere Chriſtians under the Notion of carnal and unregenerate. There is ſo little

viſible difference between what many of the ſame Perſons were a little before they had ſaving Grace, and what they are when they have it only in the loweſt degree; that Men would be in great danger of miſtaking if they ſhould make a Judgment of their ſpiritual State under ſuch Circumſtances. And the difficulty of not miſtaking in this caſe will be ſtill increaſed, when that very little of true Grace which is in ſome Men, is greatly obſcured by the Coarſeneſs of their natural Temper and Diſpoſition. Beſides the Prejudice which ſome good Men have againſt others upon account of ſome difference in Opinion, will not ſuffer them to diſcern true Grace in ſome of them in whom it is, and perhaps in ſome good degree too. This Age hath furniſhed us with too many Inſtances of this nature. The like may be ſaid in reſpect of the *narrowneſs of ſpirit, and ſeverity* of many, by reaſon of which many of thoſe in whom God himſelf finds ſaving Grace, would be refuſed Communion with the Church for want of it, if that Opinion ſhould generally obtain, that none ſhould be admitted into the viſible Church, as to its Communion, but upon the Reputation of their being of the Church as inviſible.

Some do underſtand the danger of rooting up the Wheat if the Tares ſhould be gathered from among it to lie in the danger of miſtaking the Wheat for the Tares, if the one ſhould be attempted to be gathered from the other. And if this ſhould be the reaſon why our Saviour would have them both to grow together till the Harveſt, it would be pat to what I have ſaid on this reaſon. But if it be not (as I am apt to think it is not) yet then it ſo much the more confirms that to be our Saviour's meaning which I have ſuggeſted elſewhere; for I do not know any third Senſe pretended to among Interpreters. But indeed there is danger in both reſpects: And therefore I know no Inconvenience if we underſtand the Parable in reference to both.

Now it is not hard to conceive how bad a thing it would be if ſuch as have true Grace, ſhould be refuſed Admittance into the viſible Church, or to its Communion, only becauſe it is ſo little that Men cannot diſcern it to be ſo. For ſuch a Diſcouragement may be enough to ſet them back again, to *quench the ſmoaking Flax*, and to expoſe them to the loſs of that very little Grace in its beginning which they have: A thing point blank againſt that Admonition and Caution of our Saviour, *Matth.* xviii. 10. *Take heed that ye deſpiſe not one of theſe little ones.*

QUERY XI.

What is it that makes the difference between the Univerſal Church as viſible, and particular Churches? And what makes the difference between one particular Church and another?

THE Query being double, I ſhall anſwer to that firſt which is firſt, and do ſay, the Univerſal Church differs from a particular Church in two reſpects.

1. The Univerſal Church differs from a particular, as the whole differs from a part, and a particular Church differs from the Univerſal, as a part differs from the whole. For otherwiſe they are materially the ſame, only with this difference, the one contains all viſible Church-Matter, and the other but a part of it. There is nothing neceſſary to qualifie the Matter of which a particular Church doth conſiſt, than what made all the Members of it Members of the Univerſal Church, unleſs it be what belongs to the Officers of it as ſuch.

2. If by a particular Church we underſtand one ſingle Congregation, then a particular Church differs from the Univerſal as thoſe of which it does conſiſt do aſſemble together in one place for publick Worſhip, which the Univerſal Church cannot do now, tho' in the beginning of its Exiſtence poſſibly it might. But if by a particular Church we underſtand ſo many ſingle worſhipping Congregations as are united under one and the ſame Church-Government and Governours in a City, Province, or Kingdom; then a particular Church in this Senſe is differenced from the Church Univerſal by this Eccleſiaſtical *Polity* under which it is otherwiſe united than the Univerſal Church, as ſuch, is or can be. And ſuch a particular Church we ſuppoſe the Church in *Jeruſalem*, in *Corinth*, and in other great Cities to have been, the Scripture ſo accounting them, when yet each of them conſiſted of more ſingle worſhipping Aſſemblies than one, as may well be preſumed on ſeveral accounts, not here to be mentioned.

There is another thing which the Congregationaliſts make eſſential to the being of a particular Church (for they make it the Form or formal cauſe of it) which would be another difference between the Univerſal Church and a particular, if their Opinion and Aſſertion were admitted concerning it, and that is their *Church Covenant or mutual Engagement to walk together in the way and order of the Goſpel.* And by this each one of their ſingle Congregations diſtinguiſheth it ſelf from all other. And they account this ſo neceſſary, and to make it a condition of Communion without which they will not admit Perſons otherwiſe well approved of by themſelves to Sacramental Communion, that is, unleſs they are under this Engagement to them or ſome other Siſter Church of the ſame kind.

But this is ſo much the worſe, becauſe it is done and required under the Notion of Divine Appointment, when God has appointed no ſuch thing. Which is ſuch a piece of Superſtition as the enjoying the Uſe of the Ceremonies of the Church of *England* is free from, ſo long as they are not enjoyned as things of divine Appointment, but only as of an indifferent Nature, and therefore there is no ſuch reaſon to ſcruple them as there is to ſcruple this Practice upon thoſe Terms.

There are two Texts of Scripture upon which more eſpecially and principally they ground this Opinion and Practice of theirs; which I ſhall a little enquire into. The one is 2 *Cor.* viii. 5. which Dr. *O.* to this end quotes more than once in his late Book; the words are theſe: *And this they did, not as we hoped, but firſt gave their own ſelves to the Lord, and unto us by the Will of God.* The *Us*, here in the Text, are St. *Paul* and *Timotheus*, from whom this Epiſtle came, *Chap.* i. 1. And if ſo, how could the Churches of *Macedonia*'s giving themſelves to St. *Paul* and *Timothy*, poſſibly ſignifie their mutual covenanting one with another among themſelves? And is it not as ſtrange alſo that they ſhould give themſelves to *Paul* and *Timothy* in order to the conſtituting themſelves Churches, whenas that giving themſelves to *Paul* and *Timothy*, here ſpoken of, was done then when they were already Churches, as the whole Context from *ver.* 1. doth ſhew. And if their giving themſelves to *Paul* and *Timothy* was one of thoſe things which they did, more than *Paul* and *Timothy* hoped for; then ſuch a Confederation is not likely to be meant by it as was eſſentially neceſſary to their Exiſtence as Churches; this certainly would not have been more than they hoped for, if it had been their Duty, and of ſo great a neceſſity. This is enough to ſhew how impertinently this Scripture is alledged. But the whole Context ſhews that the things St. *Paul* here ſpeaks of, were quite of another Nature, and that is the Liberality of the Churches of *Macedonia* towards the relief of the Chriſtians of *Jeruſalem*, and their Zeal in being otherwiſe ſerviceable to ſo good a Work, wherein they did indeed exceed the Expectation of *Paul* and *Timothy*. For their Poverty to which they were brought by ſuffering for the Goſpel was ſo deep, that St. *Paul* it ſeems ſcarce thought it fit to receive any thing of them, and it was upon their earneſt Intreaty that he did; and yet they did not only thus give above their Ability, but beſides their giving up themſelves to God as ready to ſuffer farther for him if called to it, they gave up themſelves to St. *Paul* and *Timothy* alſo to aſſiſt them in that charitable Work they had in hand, by their farther Endeavours to promote it among others. For they *intreated* Paul *and* Timothy *earneſtly, to take upon them the Fellowſhip of miniſtring to the Saints*, the managing of that Affair, and procured them to ſend *Titus* to *Corinth* to promote the ſame Buſineſs, as appears by *ver.* 6.

This Scripture, though ſo great a Stranger to this Opinion as you ſee, yet is that which ſo far as ever I could perceive, is chiefly depended upon in this cauſe. They bring in alſo, as favouring their Notion and Practice, the ſaying of St. *Peter* to the Chriſtians; *ye alſo as lively Stones are built up a ſpiritual Houſe an holy Prieſthood*, &c. 1 *Pet.* ii. 5. And they do, it ſeems, ſuppoſe that theſe living Stones being ſo laid together as to make a Spiritual Houſe, is done by their Confederation and Covenant, as the *Cement* by which the Chriſtians were united and combined in one particular Church, *fitly framed together*, as the Phraſe is, *Eph.* ii.

But St. *Peter* is not here ſpeaking to any one particular Church as ſuch, when he ſays ye are built up a ſpiritual Houſe, but to *the ſtrangers ſcattered abroad throughout Pontus, Galatia, Cappadocia, Aſia, and Bithynia*, as appears, *Chap.* i. 1. And no one ſurely can think that theſe Chriſtians thus ſcattered, and at this diſtance, could become one particular Church by ſuch a mutual Confederation as theſe hold neceſſary for the forming a particular Church. And if not, it muſt be by virtue of ſomewhat elſe than ſuch a particular Church-Covenant as theſe diſſenting Brethren thought to find here, by which Chriſtians in ſo many diſtant parts of the World, as aforeſaid, were built up one ſpiritual Houſe. And that doubtleſs muſt be the ſame thing by which all Chriſtians in the World become one ſpiritual Houſe of God; for ſo they are. For when Chriſt is ſaid to be *High Prieſt over the Houſe of God*, Heb. x. 21. *And to be faithful as a Son over his own Houſe*, Heb. iii. 6. Houſe in theſe places cannot ſignifie leſs than the Univerſal Chriſtian

ſtian Church, who are called *the Houſhold of Faith*. And how do all theſe Chriſtians become the Houſe of God, but by being joyned and devoted to him by the Baptiſmal-Covenant, and thereby to one another, among whom he dwells and is worſhipped as in his holy Temple: For by this they all become one Body, which is but another Metaphor under which to expreſs the ſame thing, *Eph.* ii. 21, 22. 1 *Cor.* xii 13.

It is the ſame thing which makes Perſons Members of the Church-Univerſal that qualifies them for particular Church-Memberſhip; and that is the Baptiſmal-Covenant. And to make any other Covenant beſides this ſo neceſſary to qualifie Men for particular Church-Memberſhip and Communion, as to make this of God's own Appointment inſufficient for that end, is a great Impeachment of it, and contains in it ſuch Conſequences as the Abetters of it would be aſhamed to countenance if they were aware of it. For ſo long as it is aſſerted to be of divine Appointment; the *formal cauſe* of a particular Church, and *eſſential* to its being, and is made the *Condition* of Communion when God has no where appointed or required it; ſo long it may be charged with theſe Evils.

1. With a *teaching for Doctrine the Commandments of Men*, a piece of vain Worſhip condemned by our Saviour, *Matth.* xv. 9. which is the ſame thing with *adding* to God's Word, or a *ſaying he ſaith*, when he *hath not ſaid it*.

2. It is in ſome ſort and in part a making void the Command or Inſtitution of God, that Men might eſtabliſh their own Tradition. For whereas the Baptiſmal Covenant qualifies Men for particular Church-Memberſhip by bringing them into the Univerſal Church, this Opinion denies the Baptiſmal Covenant to be ſufficient to this end, and ſets up this other confederating in its room.

3. It contains in it the Unchurching of all thoſe Goſpel-Churches that are, or ever have been in the World, that have not been thus united by Church-covenanting. For to ſay this is the Form of a particular Church, or the formal cauſe of it, is in effect to ſay, that none are really Churches without it; for Matter and Form are eſſential to the being of Churches as well as they are of other things. Now to Unchurch all Churches that have not been thus confederate, is *a great thing indeed*, if we conſider how few Years it is ſince ſuch covenanting was heard of in any Chriſtian Church in the World, and by how inconſiderable a number of Congregations it has been uſed ſince it has been heard of. Theſe things conſidered, it is Matter of a very venturous and daring nature.

As for the other part of our Enquiry, touching that which makes the difference between one particular Church and another, we may conceive of it thus.

1. It conſiſts partly in that which does diſtinguiſh one Town from another, or one great Neighbourhood from another, and that is the Bounds of Habitation. And this Diſtinction is as well convenient, yea, neceſſary for *Eccleſiaſtical* Order, and peaceable Government, as it is for *Civil*, and does as well accommodate the ends of the one as of the other. And without this, a peaceable and orderly Government in the whole Church would be impracticable, even as it would be in an Univerſal Empire: And thus the Churches planted by the Apoſtles, are differenced and diſtinguiſhed one from another; that at *Rome* from that at *Corinth*, and that at *Epheſus* from that at *Philippi*; yea, that at *Cenchrea* from that at *Corinth*, which yet border'd upon *Corinth*, and ſo of the reſt. And indeed that difference which is made between Church and Church by Vicinity of Neighbourhood and Cohabitation, does beſt anſwer the ends of particular Church-Aſſociation, ſuch as is aſſembling together for publick Worſhip, and mutual Aſſiſtances in all Chriſtian Offices of Brotherly Love and Friendſhip. But this alone does not conſtitute Chriſtians dwelling together in the ſame place, a particular Chriſtian Church, tho' by their being of the Church Univerſal, they are as fit Matter qualified for it. But

2. That which does conſtitute ſuch to be a particular Church, as that ſignifies a Company of Chriſtians in Local Communion in Divine Worſhip, conſiſting in the Participation of Goſpel-Ordinances, is the placing over them one or more Church-Officers, to miniſter to them therein. By which Officers, as well as by the place where they dwell, and where they aſſemble for Worſhip, they are diſtinguiſhed from other like Churches under the Conduct of other Church-Officers of the ſame kind. For by ſuch their joynt Local Communion in the Worſhip adminiſtred by their Spiritual Guide or Paſtor, they are united with him and among themſelves, as one worſhipping Congregation; by which Union alſo they are diſtinguiſhed from other particular Churches, as other particular Churches in like manner are from them.

Thoſe of the Independent Church way do indeed hold particular Churches, as ſuch, to be antecedent to any Church-Officers over them. Which is the reaſon which Dr. *Owen* in his *Inquiry concerning Churches*, does alledge to prove the Power of the Keys to be given to the Church. And to prove particular Churches to be antecedent to Church-

Officers, he quotes *Acts* xiv. 23. where it is ſaid of *Paul* and *Barnabas*, *And when they had ordained them Elders in every Church*, &c. As for this proof of his Aſſertion, I ſhall conſider it by and by; but ſhall firſt examine and try what is in the Aſſertion it ſelf, which I am inclined to think will be found full of miſtake, and that the contrary will be found true, *viz.* that the Evangelical Miniſtry is, and always has been antecedent to the exiſtence of Chriſtian Churches, and indeed an inſtrumental cauſe of their being. And this is true, not only of particular Churches, but alſo of the univerſal Church as Chriſtian, which yet in order of nature is antecedent to particular Churches. The gathering of Chriſt a Chriſtian Church in the World at firſt, was the effect of the Apoſtolical Miniſtry, and the Miniſtry of their Aſſiſtants. The Church *is built upon the foundation of the Apoſtles and Prophets, Chriſt being the chief corner ſtone*, Eph. ii. 20. and the Foundation is antecedent to the Superſtructure. All the additions that have been ſince made to the viſible Church, have been by the Miniſterial Office, by letting all the particular Members of that addition into it by Baptiſm.

And when Men are ordained Miniſters of the Goſpel, they are not ordained Miniſters of this or that particular Church, but Miniſters of Chriſt to the Church in general. *Let no Man glory in Men, for all things are yours; whether Paul, or Apollos, or Cephas, all are yours, and ye are Chriſt's*, 1 Cor. iii. 21, 22. *Paul*, *Apollos*, and *Cephas* were theirs in common with others, not theirs appropriately. And their being ſent or called to be Miniſters to this or that particular Church, is but the application of their general capacity to particular uſe and exerciſe, to wit, that of Miniſtration to ſuch a People in particular. And this Miniſterial Power they bring with them to the Church or People among whom they are placed, but do not receive it from them: And it is by virtue of their Miniſtry and Miniſtration that a particular Body of People can act or perform any publick Acts of Communion peculiar to a Church as ſuch. And therefore as they cannot act as a Church without ſuch a Miniſtry, ſo neither can they properly be a Church without it. The firſt thing St. *Paul* mentions, *Epheſ.* iv. 11, 12. for which our Saviour Chriſt gave Apoſtles, Prophets, Evangeliſts, Paſtors and Teachers, was for the *perfecting of the Saints*, or for the *joyning them together*, or for the *making them up*, or for the *compacting or knitting them together:* For thus variouſly is that word rendred by Expoſitors, but all to the ſame ſenſe. For it is for the knitting them and holding them together as one Body in their ſeveral publick Aſſemblies for Worſhip and Edification. And indeed a Church is ſo called from ſeveral Chriſtians aſſembling together for publick Worſhip, their Union wherein is made by their joynt Concurrence with their Spiritual Paſtor in his Miniſtration; for which end and purpoſe ſuch Officers are given and appointed by Chriſt, as the words of St. *Paul* now alledged ſhew.

And now as for the Text alledged by the Doctor, in which *Paul* and *Barnabas* are ſaid to have *ordained Elders in every Church*, Acts xiv. 23. this does not prove the Churches there ſpoken of to be ſuch antecedently to any Miniſterial Act or Power by which they became ſuch. For they had been made Churches in ſome ſort by the planting of *Paul* and *Barnabas*, who alſo as Church-Officers miniſtred to them while they were among them: For this ordaining Elders in every Church by *Paul* and *Barnabas*, was done in their return to the places where they had preached the Goſpel, and made Diſciples before; and they returned to them to confirm them, and to ordain Elders among them, as appears by the two precedent Verſes compared with the Text it ſelf. Beſides, St. *Luke* did not write this Hiſtory till after the Apoſtles had thus ordained Elders in the Churches mentioned by him; ſo that they were indeed Churches then, when he wrote thoſe words, and it was proper for him to ſtile them ſo, tho' it ſhould be ſuppoſed they had been none before they had Elders ordained in them. So that this Text can be no proof of that for which the Doctor doth alledge it.

QUERY. XII.

Whether from the reaſon of the Extent *and* Latitude *of Viſible Church-Memberſhip and Communion which has been diſcourſed of, the great uſefulneſs of a National Settlement or Conſtitution for the publick Exerciſe of the Worſhip of God in all parts of a Nation profeſſing Chriſtianity, may not fairly be inferred and concluded?*

NOw the reaſon why viſible Church-memberſhip and Communion are better in reſpect of their due Extenſiveneſs, than they would be if the Terms and Conditions of enjoying thoſe Privileges were limited and reſtrained to the ſame Terms which the Enjoyment of inviſible Church-memberſhip and Communion are, is this, *viz.* becauſe theſe Privileges under ſuch an *extent* and *latitude*, tend more to the propagation of the Chriſtian Religion, and the increaſe of the number of thoſe who ſhall be ſaved, than they would or could do if they were limited and reſtrained to the ſame Terms and Conditions of Enjoyment as inviſible Church-memberſhip and Communion are. This hath been ſhew'd in our Tenth Enquiry.

And it is for the ſame Reaſon that it is better that the exerciſe of God's publick Worſhip ſhould be ſet up in all parts of a Nation profeſſing Chriſtianity by a *National Authority*; and that all ſuch Profeſſors ſhould be thereby obliged to frequent it, than it is to leave all ſuch to their own liberty to promote and frequent it, or to forbear and neglect to do ſo, as the way called *Independency* does. For the National Way tends more to propagate and promote the Knowledge and Practice of Chriſtian Religion, and the Salvation of Souls, than the Congregational Way does, and therefore muſt needs be abundantly better. That it does ſo, is too apparent to be denied by any that have but common Reaſon when theſe things following are but duly conſidered.

1. Better Proviſion is made by a publick Eſtabliſhment for the Inſtruction of ſuch a Nation in the way of Salvation, than can reaſonably be expected without it. Unleſs Proviſion were made by publick Authority for the maintenance of a Goſpel-Miniſtry in all parts of a Nation, there would certainly be a greater want of a publick Miniſtry in many places of it, than by reaſon of ſuch a publick Proviſion there is. Would People, think we, of themſelves in all places of a Nation provide a better maintenance for the Miniſtry of the Goſpel among them, if left wholly to themſelves, than there is made by publick Authority? If they would, how comes it to paſs that thoſe places are generally worſt ſupplied with Miniſters where the Publick has made leaſt proviſion for their maintenance? And generally where there is the greateſt failure in this, there is the leaſt face of Religion, and greateſt hazard of Mens Souls. *Where there is no Viſion the People periſh*, ſaith *Solomon*, Prov. xxix. 18. *And the People are deſtroyed for lack of Knowledge*, ſaith the Prophet, *Hoſea* iv. 6.

2 If the People ſhould be all left to themſelves to chuſe what Miniſters they pleaſe, without any publick Approbation and Allowance of ſome appointed by publick Authority to judge of their fitneſs, many would be in danger of chuſing Men of erroneous Principles, and ſuch as would corrupt the Minds of Men. The conſequence of which would be great Oppoſition and Contention between the Orthodox and the Erroneous, and making of Parties, and endleſs Strife, to the deſtruction of Peace and Charity, and to the hurt of Mens Souls thereby, and to the great diſhonour of our Religion, and to the hinderance of its good effects upon the Minds and Lives of Men.

3. Altho' the publick Worſhip ſhould be ſet up in all places of a Chriſtian Nation, yet if Men ſhould be under no Obligation by Law to attend it, it would doubtleſs be much more neglected by many, than when there is. But the more Men are brought to attend the means by which God works Grace in them, tho' it be but by virtue of the Law they are brought to it, yet the more hope and probability there is of their being ſavingly wrought upon.

4. If whoſoever ſhall pretend himſelf qualified for it, ſhould have liberty to gather a Congregation, it would be the leaving open a door of opportunity to Seducers to ſubvert Mens Souls, and to fill a Nation with variety of Sects, and the miſchievous effects of them. And yet ſo it would be, if there were no publick Government in the Church to reſtrain Men: And to this day we feel the very ſad effects of ſo great a liberty ſometime indulged.

Thus we ſee for what reaſon true Religion ſhould be promoted by National Authority. And as to matter of Fact, it is ſufficiently known, that thoſe who have had the Supreme Power in all Nations have been wont always to promote by their Authority that which they have thought to be the true Religion, whether it hath been true or falſe: And whence comes this but from the Light and Law of Nature, which directs Men to uſe the Power and Intereſt they have to farther the Worſhiping of the God whom they ſerve. And indeed Chriſtians of all Perſuaſions are willing enough to have the Civil Power to exert it ſelf in farthering their own way of worſhiping God: The People of *New England*, who once were as much for Liberty of Conſcience as any, yet ſoon found it convenient to incorporate the Civil Power with the Eccleſiaſtick for the defence and propagation of their Religion.

Now as the great uſefulneſs of a National Eſtabliſhment for the purpoſes aforeſaid, does ſufficiently appear from the Reaſon and Nature of the thing it ſelf, and has the Light and Law of Nature on its ſide; ſo it is not deſtitute of countenance from ſupernatural Revelation.

1. When Almighty God ſaid to *Abraham*, *Thou ſhalt be a Father of many Nations*, *a Father of many Nations have I made thee*, Gen. xvii. He declared his Intention of reforming the World by degrees from Idolatry and falſe Worſhip in a *National Way*, if we may judge what he intended to do afterwards, by the firſt inſtance he gave of his Performance herein; and if we may judge of the true meaning of this as of other Divine Predictions, by the after-Events which anſwer them in point of Fact; which yet is the beſt and moſt approved way of underſtanding Predictions, when ſuch Events take place.

Almighty God made *Abraham* firſt a Father of a Nation which iſſued out of his own Loyns. For when his Poſterity, who by Circumciſion covenanted to take *Abraham*'s God only for their God, grew very numerous in *Egypt*, God brought them out thence that they might worſhip him openly and publickly in a National Way. And by this means, and by his viſible owning them for his People by extraordinary favours ſhew'd them, he deſigned to make himſelf more known to the reſt of the World, to be the only true God, and to be ſo acknowledged.

Now in that *Abraham* was promiſed to be the Father of many Nations, it was not ſo much for that God intended that many Nations ſhould deſcend out of his Loyns by natural Generation, as that many Nations in time ſhould, after his Example, come to acknowledge and worſhip him only for their God as the only true God. For ſo St. *Paul* underſtood this Promiſe of God to *Abraham*, when he makes *Abraham*, in reſpect of his believing in the true God, to be the Father of all Nations that ſhould be of the ſame Belief, as well thoſe of the *Uncircumciſion* as that which was of the *Circumciſion*, *as it is written*, ſaith he, *I have made thee a Father of many Nations*, Rom. iv. 16, 17. And it was in this ſpiritual or religious Reſpect and Senſe that St. *Paul* had before in this Chapter aſſerted *Abraham* to be the Father of all that ſhall believe in the true God as he did, in all Nations, as well thoſe who were never circumciſed, as thoſe that were, *ver.* 11, 12. And thus God made *Abraham* a *Bleſſing* to the World as he promiſed he would, and a Father of Nations, not only for that the Meſſias was to be born of one deſcended from him; for ſo he was born of one that deſcended from *Abraham*'s Predeceſſors and Succeſſors, as well as from *Abraham*: But he was a *Bleſſing* to the World, and the *Father of Nations* by being made by God the Head, the beginning and great Example of reforming the World from Miſbelief and Idolatry, and other conſequent Evils, ſo as his Progenitors were not. To encourage which Work in the World, God inveſted *Abraham*, that led the way herein, with the Honour of being counted the Father of Nations, and a publick Bleſſing to the World, both in himſelf and in his Seed.

2. That God did deſign farther to carry on the Reformation of the World from Miſbelief and Idolatry in a National way, and in that way to bring the World by degrees to the Worſhip of the true God only, appears by other Predictions of the Prophets, ſuch as that, *Iſa.* lv. 5. *Behold thou ſhalt call a Nation that thou knoweſt not, and Nations that knew not thee ſhall run unto thee.* Chap. lii. 15. *He ſhall ſprinkle many Nations, the Kings ſhall ſhut their Mouths at him.* Chap. xlix. 23. *Kings ſhall be thy nurſing Fathers, and their Queens thy nurſing Mothers.* Zech. viii. 22. *Many People and ſtrong Nations ſhall come to ſeek the Lord of Hoſts.* Chap. ii. 11. *Many Nations ſhall be joyned to the Lord in that day, and ſhall be my People.* The formal Nature of Mens viſible Church-Memberſhip conſiſts in their being *viſibly joyned to the Lord*, as I have ſhewed; and therefore when many Nations are *Nationally joyned* to the Lord, they may well be counted Nationally his People, or Churches.

And Nations are then Nationally joyned to the Lord, when Nations do incorporate the Chriſtian Religion with their Civil Government, and make it part of the National Government, as the Eccleſiaſtical Polity of the Jews, together with the Judicial Law of that Commonwealth was. And by this means the Chriſtian Religion becomes commodiouſly and with more Certainty to be tranſmitted to future Generations in a Nation, as well as practiſed for the time being by that which is exiſtent; juſt as the Jews Religion was. *For he eſtabliſhed a Teſtimpny in Jacob, and appointed a Law in Iſrael, which he commanded our Fathers that they ſhould make them known to their Children: That the Generation to come might know them, even the Children which ſhould be born: Who ſhould ariſe and declare them to their Children*, Pſal. lxxviii. 5, 6.

Thoſe Propheſies fore-mentioned concerning Nations being joyned to the Lord, referring to times under the New Teſtament, the Event of them, as we ſhall ſee, will ſhew that they foretold Chriſtian Nations their being joyned to the Lord *Nationally*, or in the courſe of National Government. And the nature of Events which anſwer to divine Predictions, are, I think, the beſt and moſt approved Expoſitions of thoſe Propheſies when they are fulfilled, and the beſt meaſure which can be taken for the underſtanding of them.

Two things then would be enquired into touching the Events we ſpeak of.

1. What, and which they are which we may reaſonably pitch upon for thoſe Events.

2. How we may be aſſured from ſome Scriptures of the New Teſtament, that thoſe Events of Providence which we ſhall pitch upon, are indeed of that ſort and kind which the Propheſies we ſpeak of point us to.

I. For the firſt of theſe, we have very great reaſon to believe that thoſe National Reformations from Paganiſm and Judaiſm, and thoſe National Reformations from Popery which have been made in the World ſince the Chriſtian Religion was firſt ſet on foot, and which ſhall yet farther be made, are thoſe very *Events*, or the chiefeſt part of them, which the Propheſies, before ſpecified, point us to. We cannot ſay that any Reformation of either kind has been National, until it has been back'd by National Authority. It's true, there have been great Multitudes of Men during the ſtanding of the Roman Empire as Pagan, that were recovered from Judaiſm and Paganiſm to Chriſtianity; and there were many famous Churches of ſuch: But I think no one Nation, as ſuch, could be ſaid to be joyned to the Lord in all that time, tho' out of many Kindreds, Tongues, and Nations, there were many, very many both Men and Women that were. But Nations then became Nationally the Lord's when the Chriſtians in them were owned as ſuch, and required to behave themſelves as ſuch by the Supreme Authority and ruling Powers of thoſe Nations; tho' there might poſſibly be many in thoſe Nations at the ſame time, which yet did not ſo much as pretend themſelves to be Chriſtians.

2. But let us enquire in the ſecond place what Aſſurance we have from any of the holy Writings of the New Teſtament, that thoſe National Reformations from Paganiſm and Popery that have been made in New Teſtament-times, and which ſhall farther be made in other Nations, are thoſe Events of Providence which the Propheſies, touching National Converſions, point at. And to this end let us obſerve,

Firſt, That at what time the Supreme Power of the Roman Empire fell into Chriſtian hands, and was employed for the Deſtruction and rooting out Pagan Idolatry, and for the ſetting up and eſtabliſhing the publick Worſhip of Almighty God and his Son Jeſus Chriſt, throughout its Dominions: Then it was that this Kingdom or Dominion became God's Kingdom in Scripture account. For to this great turn of Affairs in the Judgment of the moſt approved Interpreters of the *Revelations* does that joyful Acclamation refer which we have ſet down in *Chap.* xii. 10. *Now is come Salvation, and Strength, and the Kingdom of our God, and the Power of his Chriſt.* At which time alſo, *the great Dragon, called the Devil and Satan, was caſt out, and his Angels with him*, ver. 9. that is, thoſe Rulers ſupreme and ſubordinate, who had till then done his Work in promoting the Intereſt of the Kingdom of Darkneſs by ſupporting Idolatry, and perſecuting Chriſtians; as it was ſaid, *The Devil ſhall caſt ſome of you into Priſon*, Rev. ii. 10.

But was not God's Kingdom come into the Empire till now that the Government was made Chriſtian by the Emperor being a Chriſtian? Were there not many great and famous Chriſtian Churches within the Empire while the Government of it was Pagan in reſpect of Worſhip? Why, yes there was. Why then was not the Kingdom of God and the Power of his Chriſt ſaid to be come till the Government in the hands of *Conſtantine* the Emperor became Chriſtian? Why ſhould this Song, *Now is come Salvation, and Strength, and the Kingdom of our God, and the Power of his Chriſt*, be applied to this great turn of Affairs in the Empire, rather than to that when the Preaching of the Goſpel was firſt ſet on foot in it, and many Chriſtian Congregations erected? There can no other reaſon hereof be given, I conceive, but that all the while the Government of the Empire, in reference to Religion, was engaged for the upholding of the viſible Kingdom of the Devil, ſo far, and in this reſpect it might be ſaid to be his Kingdom, to be ſure it could not be ſaid to be God's, ſo far as it was employed againſt him. But when the Government of it became Chriſtian, and engaged it ſelf in throwing down the Kingdom of Darkneſs, the Worſhip of falſe Gods, and in ſetting up and eſtabliſhing the publick Worſhip of the true God, and the Chriſtian Religion; then and from that time in this Scripture account, that Kingdom or Empire became the Kingdom of God and of his Chriſt, tho' many of the Inhabitants of it continued ſtill for a time at leaſt, Idolaters as to their Profeſſion and private Practice.

So that when, and ſo long as the Government of the Empire in its Conſtitution in reference to Religion continued idolatrous, ſo long the Empire it ſelf was not owned for God's Kingdom, tho' there were many *Chriſtian Churches* in it: But when once the Government of it became Chriſtian, it was then owned for God's Kingdom, tho' many of the Inhabitants of it were no Chriſtians. From whence it follows, and may naturally be inferred, that in Scripture-notion Kingdoms are ſaid to be God's Kingdoms upon the account of a National Reformation from Idolatry and falſe Worſhip, when-ever it is made by the publick Government and Authority of ſuch Nations.

But now after this Reformation from Paganiſm by the Imperial Authority and Power, in proceſs of time there came a *falling away* in the Empire from the purity of Chriſtian Worſhip, unto a Worſhip of a mix'd nature, made up partly of a Worſhip given to the true God, and partly of a Worſhip given unto Creatures, which is due only unto God; which was done by the prevailing of the *Papal* Apoſtacy. And the *ten Kings*, mentioned *Rev.* xvii. into whoſe hands the Empire became divided, *gave their power and ſtrength unto the Beaſt*, for the ſupport of his impure Worſhip and Pagan-like Superſtition.

But after this had been done and continued in for ſeveral hundreds of Years, ſeveral of thoſe Kingdoms and Principalities, which had before given their power and ſtrength unto the Beaſt, fell off, and re-aſſumed that power and ſtrength, and then devoted it to the ſervice of God in reforming their Dominions from Popery, and in reſtoring the publick Worſhip of God throughout their Dominions, without any Idolatrous mixture. Upon which great turn of Affairs, thoſe *great Voices in Heaven* followed, ſaying, *The Kingdoms of this World are become the Kingdoms of our Lord, and of his Chriſt*, Rev. xi. 15. For this joyful Acclamation is here brought in upon occaſion of the Reſurrection and Exaltation of the Witneſſes in this Chapter ſpoken of, and of the fall of a tenth part of the City ſpiritually called *Sodom* and *Egypt*. By which we underſtand that the fall of part of the Papal Power and Juriſdiction, and the riſe and exaltation of the Witneſſes, were *contemporary*; and that this great alteration and change in ſeveral Nations, made thoſe Nations, which were but Kingdoms of *this World* before, to become the Kingdoms *of our Lord, and of his Chriſt*.

Now there are theſe two Reaſons to induce us to believe, that this Reſurrection of the Witneſſes, and the fall of a tenth part of the City, refer unto the great Reformation from Popery, which was made many Years ſince in ſeveral Kingdoms and Principalities in Chriſtendom, and conſequently that the Acclamation aforeſaid (the Kingdoms of this World are become the Kingdoms of the Lord and of his Chriſt) refer unto the ſame time and thing.

1. Becauſe we have no where ſo great, ſo notable and remarkable an Alteration as that Reformation made in *Chriſtendom*, foretold and particularly pointed at in this Book of Propheſies, if it were not in this. And yet it ſeems incredible that ſo great and famous an Alteration of Affairs in the Popiſh State, and in the Condition of the Church, as that Reformation made, ſhould not in ſpecial be pointed at ſomewhere in this Book of Propheſies. This Reaſon the Reverend Dr. *More* hath furniſhed me with in his Appendage annexed to his Expoſition of *Daniel*'s Propheſies, p. 291. With whoſe Expoſition, of what I here alledge out of *Rev.* xi. I am abundantly ſatisfied, as I find it in the foreſaid *Appendage*, and in his Book entituled, *The Revelation of St.* John *unveiled*.

2. The matters which fell out, and were tranſacted in and by that Reformation, did exactly anſwer to that which was foretold by that Prophecy, touching the Reſurrection of the Witneſſes, and the fall of the Popiſh Power and Intereſt in a conſiderable part of the Pope's Juriſdiction. For then there was a *Political* Reſurrection of that ſort of Men who had been *politically* ſlain, and a long time dead, for crying down *Popery*. And this was done when ſuch were put into publick Employment in all Reformed Nations. And at the ſame time, on the other hand, there was a *political* ſlaughter of *thouſands of Men*, when all thoſe that had been in Office and holy Orders in their Church, were put down in all thoſe Nations that then became reformed. And this Reaſon methinks ſhould convince any unprejudiced Man, that our firſt happy National Reformation from Popery in ſeveral Nations, was the fulfilling of that Prophecy touching the Reſurrection of the Witneſſes we ſpeak of.

And if it were, then I cannot ſee how any can deny but that thoſe Voices in Heaven, which preſently followed thereupon, did declare, that thoſe Nations which, while Popiſh, were but Kingdoms of this World, yet by their National Reformation from Popery they became the Kingdoms of our Lord and of his Chriſt.

But if the Prophecy concerning the Reſurrection of the Witneſſes ſhould refer unto another time, and turn, and not to that of the firſt National Reformation from Popery; yet that ſaying, *The Kingdoms of this World are become the Kingdoms of our Lord, and of his Chriſt*; upon the occaſion there foregoing, will no leſs ſerve to prove, that Nations by their National Reformation from Popery, became the Kingdoms of God, than it would in caſe that Prophecy had referred unto the firſt National Reformation from Popery. For the Reſurrection of the Witneſſes, the Earthquake, the fall of a tenth part of the

City, and *political* ſlaughter of *ſeven thouſand of Names of Men*, muſt needs import a great alteration of Affairs and National Reformation, whereſoever and whenſoever they fall out, be it ſooner or later; becauſe upon it we ſee ſome of thoſe Nations, which were but Kingdoms of the World before, do then become the Kingdoms of God. And if Nations of the World *indefinitely*, become the Kingdoms of God, by being reformed from Popery or Paganiſm, ſo as to make the right Chriſtian Doctrine and Worſhip the Religion of thoſe Nations by National Authority; then the ſame is true of *all Nations* which are ſo reformed at any time, and conſequently of thoſe which led the way, and have been firſt in ſuch Reformation. And thus our proof appears every way pregnant.

To conclude this matter then; when we find that in all times and places, in point of Fact, that as faſt as the Sovereign and Supreme Power in each Nation has fallen into Orthodox Chriſtian hands, ſo faſt thoſe Nations have become reformed from Paganiſm or Popery by the Governing Power of thoſe Nations: And when we find again, that by ſuch Reformations thoſe Nations have become God's Kingdoms, as contra-diſtinguiſhed from the Kingdoms of this World; great reaſon we have to believe theſe to be the very and true Events, and the fulfilling of ſuch ancient Predictions of the Prophets, as thoſe which foretold that many Nations ſhould be joyned to the Lord, and be his People.

It is true, it was a great while after Chriſtianity began, before it became National by National Authority; as it was long after *Abraham* and his Poſterity became the People of God by the Covenant of Circumciſion, before they and their Religion became National: And as the one was in bondage four hundred Years under the *Egyptian* Tyranny, ſo were the Chriſtians three hundred Years under the Tyranny of the Pagan *Roman* Emperors, before they and their Religion became National by National Authority. But as the Chriſtian Religion and Worſhip, as reformed, has ſince the Reformation been carried on principally in a National way, ſo I doubt not but that it will be carried on farther, and more Nations come to be reformed from Popery, Infidelity and Paganiſm, until at laſt that ancient Prophecy of the Angel by *Daniel* comes to be fulfilled, which tells us, *That the Kingdom, and Dominion, and the greatneſs of the Kingdom under the whole Heaven ſhall be given to the People of the Saints of the moſt High, whoſe Kingdom is an everlaſting Kingdom, and all Dominions* (or *Rulers*, as it is in the Margin) *ſhall ſerve and obey him*, Dan. vii. 27. And that alſo in *Pſal.* lxxii. 11. *All Kings ſhall fall down before him; all Nations ſhall ſerve him.*

And now from what hath been repreſented to us in the foreſaid Prophecy of St. *John*, *Rev.* xi. we may briefly obſerve theſe two or three things.

1. That notwithſtanding any *leſſer defects* in Doctrine, Worſhip, or Government Eccleſiaſtical, in any of the National Reformations from Popery which have been made, yet after and becauſe ſuch Reformation has been made, thoſe Nations are in Scripture-account eſteemed the Kingdoms of our Lord and of his Chriſt, as oppoſed to the Kingdoms of this World. Which ſeems to me to fall ſomewhat hard upon ſuch as *ſeparate* from the publick Worſhip of God eſtabliſhed in ſuch Nations by National Authority, in a way of National Reformation; and on thoſe more eſpecially who ſeparate from that Worſhip for that very reaſon, becauſe enjoyned by National Authority. It likewiſe falls hard upon them alſo, who diſeſteem, or leſs eſteem a *National Miniſtry*, becauſe it is National, or made ſuch according to a National Eſtabliſhment. Theſe ſeem to be of one mind, and Almighty God of another, when he eſteems Nations to be joyned to him, and to be his People by that, for which they ſeparate.

Their pretence that in the Apoſtles times, and for three hundred Years after, the Affairs of the Church were carried on only in a free Congregational way in greater or leſſer voluntary Aſſociations, and therefore they ought to be ſo now, ſeems very inconſiderable. Becauſe what was done in that kind then, was done by way of neceſſity, becauſe they had not opportunity of a better. Not but that they long'd for, and pray'd for ſuch Kings as would uſe their Authority and Power for the propagation and furtherance of the Chriſtian Religion, as well as for the defence of it, and the Profeſſors of it. And they eſteemed it no ſmall favour from God, when at laſt they obtained it in *Conſtantine*, a Chriſtian *Cæſar*, who uſed that Power of his for the eſtabliſhing the Chriſtian Religion and Worſhip of the only true God, and for the ordering and regulating many things relating to the more commodious and orderly carrying on the Miniſtration of the Goſpel, and the Worſhip of God. And therefore the People of God, then exiſtent in the Empire, are brought in by the Spirit of Prophecy, expreſſing themſelves thus upon that occaſion: *Now is come Salvation and Strength, and the Kingdom of our God, and the Power of his Chriſt*, as I ſhew'd before, *Rev.* xii. 10.

2. It may be juſtly queſtioned, whether it be worth the while for Men to diſpute againſt the being of a National Church in New-Teſtament-times, conſidering that in the New

Teſtament, Nations reformed from Paganiſm and Popery, are ſtiled God's Kingdoms: And conſidering likewiſe, that the Scripture ſtiles the ſame People, and in the ſame reſpect, ſometimes the *Kingdom* of God, and ſometimes his *Church*. And therefore it ſhould ſeem no more improper to call a Chriſtian Nation a Church of God, than it is to call it a Kingdom of God, which yet the Scriptures ſtile ſo.

3. It may be obſerved yet farther, That the Kingdoms or Nations which have been reformed from Popery, were before ſuch Reformation was made, *but Kingdoms of this World*, notwithſtanding much of what pertains to the Chriſtian Religion, was then owned and profeſſed in them. The Spirit of God by whom the Book of *Revelations* was indited, we ſee ſtiles them ſo in their *unreformed* State: *The Kingdoms of this World are become*, &c. Yet they then in their unreformed State, worſhipped the true God, and his Son Chriſt Jeſus: They owned the holy Scriptures for the Word of God, and uſed the ſame Creeds which the Reformed Churches themſelves uſe; and yet we ſee they are in that State ſtiled by the Spirit of God, but Kingdoms of this World, whenas under their reformed State, they are ſaid to be the Kingdoms of God and of his Chriſt.

Like as Almighty God for the like reaſon eſteemed the Nation of the Jews, who had been his own Church and People, but as *Ethiopians unto him*, Amos ix. 7. and told them by another Prophet, *Ye are not my People, and I will not be your God*, Hoſ. i. 10. For tho' they had his Ordinances among them, and boaſted of their Temple-Worſhip, crying, *The Temple of the Lord, the Temple of the Lord, the Temple of the Lord are theſe*; yet at the ſame time *they burnt Incenſe unto Baal, and walked after other Gods*, Jer. vii. they divided their Worſhip between the true God and *Baal*, and did *ſwear by the Lord and by Malcham*, Zep. i. 5. And upon this account it was that God ſaid of them by his Prophet, *they are unto me as a ſpeckled Bird*, of a Religion of ſeveral Colours, *Jer.* xii. 9. For this ſpiritual Whoredom eſpecially it was, that Almighty God who had once eſpouſed that People to himſelf, gave them a Bill of Divorce at laſt, brake up Houſe, turned them out of doors, and ſent them out of his Land, until they ſhould repent and reform. And if we compare theſe things with the ſpiritual Whoredom wherewith Myſtical *Babylon* is charged, and for which, with other heinous Crimes, ſhe is threatned in this Book of *Revelations*, it will not be at all hard to conceive why Nations while Popiſh, are ſtiled and eſteemed but Kingdoms of this World.

And this, if there were no other, is Argument enough to prevail with all ſuch as would not be diſowned by God, to be none, or to become none of their Communion, who are thus diſowned by him.

And thus we have ſeen how both from the Light and Law of Nature, the reaſon of the thing, and from Divine Revelation alſo, the great Expediency at leaſt of the publick Exerciſe of God's Worſhip in the way of National Eſtabliſhment, is warranted, and approved of.

This then may be a caution to Men, who live in any ſuch reformed Nation as we have diſcourſed of, and as ours is, to take heed of acting in Matters Eccleſiaſtical, or pertaining to Church-Communion, as if they lived in a Popiſh or Pagan Nation, by diſowning and by ſeparating from the National way of Worſhip, leſt thereby they diſcountenance and diſparage what God approves of, and diſown that for which God owns ſuch a Nation for his Kingdom. It is true, the Primitive Chriſtians, who lived in Pagan Countries, and thoſe ſince which have lived in Popiſh, have been neceſſitated in Duty to be ſeparate in their Chriſtian Communion from their National Worſhip, as much as they were obliged not to be Idolaters. But there is a great difference between falſe Worſhip, and Defects in that which is true. The beſt Church Conſtitution, and the beſt Church-Adminiſtration, which have Men not divinely inſpired for the ordering of them, are liable to humane Defects. And if humane Defects even in God's Worſhip, were not to be endured for the ſake of Communion in the Worſhip it ſelf, there could no ſuch thing as Church-Communion be enjoyed among Chriſtians, becauſe we cannot ſay there is any in this imperfect State in which we are, without Defects.

But then the Queſtion will be what Defects are to be endured in God's Worſhip, rather than Communion in it ſhould be forſaken? And what are intolerable, and for the ſake of which Communion in the Worſhip is to be declined?

And here it ſeems to me impoſſible warrantably to determine any Defects intolerable which do not alter the nature of the Worſhip, and make it become falſe Worſhip; that do not deſtroy or defeat the ends for which true Worſhip ſerves. Who is he that will undertake to determine for what Defects, which are conſiſtent with God's true Worſhip, Communion in that Worſhip is to be declined?

But then the next Queſtion will be, How we ſhall know what Worſhip is true, and what is falſe? And ſo what Worſhip it is that Communion in it is to be declined, and what not?

Now that's falſe Worſhip which is given to a wrong Object, or to that which is not God. And that again is falſe Worſhip, tho' given to God the right Object, when that which is not true Matter of Worſhip, is given to him as Matter of Worſhip.

But how ſhall we know when Worſhip is falſe in reſpect of the Matter? Worſhip is then falſe in reſpect of the Matter, when that is performed to God as required by him, which is not ſo. For ſo we are taught, *Matth.* xv. 9. *In vain do they worſhip me, teaching for Doctrines the Commandments of Men.* That's a vain or falſe Worſhip, when humane Ordinances are impoſed, and obſerved *as* the Commands of God; and this is the *adding to his Word* alſo, which is forbidden, *Deut.* iv. 2.

But then there is a great difference between theſe and the uſe of things in or about God's Worſhip which are not of the Eſſence of it, nor uſed under the Notion of being commanded by God, but profeſſedly uſed as things indifferent in their own nature, and only as matters of Humane Prudence; and for this reaſon cannot juſtly be charged to be falſe Worſhip.

There is a great difference likewiſe between the Eſſence of Worſhip, and the Accidents of it, between the Matter and the Subſtance of it, and the Circumſtances of external Adminiſtration. There is not the liberty of varying in the one as there is in the other. As for inſtance, we are not left at like liberty in the choice of the Object, and matter of Prayer and Thankſgiving, as we are in the external manner of Addreſs, not limited by Expreſſneſs of Rule in the one, as we are in the other. We are expreſly commanded to pray to God in the Name of Chriſt, and have expreſs Direction for all the ſubſtantial parts or matter of Prayer, as Confeſſion, Supplication, Petition, Thankſgiving, and Interceſſion; but whether in a ſet Form, or without, whether with the uſe of a Book, or without, whether in one or more Prayers at a time, or whether kneeling or ſtanding, is not determined; but in theſe we are left at liberty to uſe or chuſe as Circumſtances ſhall direct or require. And the like may be ſaid concerning other parts of God's Worſhip, Baptiſm, and the Lord's Supper. The Ordinances themſelves are particularly commanded, but ſo are not ſeveral Circumſtances relating to the external Adminiſtration of them, but are left to the Prudence of Church-Guides and Governours under general Rules. And altho' one way of external Adminiſtration of Worſhip may be better than another, and that may be choſen as beſt by ſuch as have Power of chuſing, which yet is not beſt in it ſelf; yet ſo long as it does not alter the nature of the Worſhip it ſelf, nor defeat the ends and uſes to which an external Adminiſtration ſerves, it can by no means be duly eſteemed to be falſe Worſhip. The worſt that can be ſaid of ſuch an Adminiſtration of Worſhip which is not ſimply unlawful in it ſelf, but only inferiour in Goodneſs unto the beſt, is only this, That it is inexpedient, when a better might have been had, if they had thought ſo by whom the choice was made.

Now ſuppoſe then, that when the happy Work of National Reformation from Popery was laid and begun by the great Inſtruments of it, (whoſe Memory is bleſſed, and Name precious to good Men.) Suppoſe, I ſay, they may poſſibly have been miſtaken in the Betterneſs of ſome things in the external manner and form of Adminiſtration of publick Worſhip; yet ſo long as ſuch things do not amount unto any falſe Worſhip, but are only Imperfections in the true, the Queſtion will be, Whether it be prudent and becoming good Men in this caſe to ſeek Amendment of thoſe ſuppoſed Defects, in any other way than in the ſame National courſe of proceeding by which the Reformation was firſt wrought. And the reaſon is,

1. Becauſe God hath owned this way of Reformation by declaring Nations upon account of it to be his Kingdoms, which we cannot ſay he hath done upon account of any Reformation wrought in them any other way without this.

2. Becauſe when ſuch a Reformation is attempted in a Nation already reformed, in oppoſition to the Reformation eſtabliſhed by Law, it cannot reaſonably be expected, but that more hurt will be done thereby, than good obtained, as we have found by ſad Experience in this Nation. For by this means a Nation comes to be divided againſt it ſelf, Party againſt Party, to the engendering *Diſaffection, Envying, and Strife*, and where theſe are, there is (as St. *James* hath told us) *Confuſion, and every evil Work.* And by this means there is a very ſenſible decay and loſs of that wherein the very Life and Spirit of Religion in Men lies. But the Reformation in the external part of Worſhip, which is ſought after in this extraordinary way, is in things but of ſuch a nature, as wherein the Life and Spirit of Religion in Men is little concerned one way or other, either as to Loſs or Gain. And therefore to chuſe to ſeek this ſort of Reformation in ſuch a

way, as by which the Loſs was likely to be far greater than the Gain, and has ſince proved to be ſo, is a thing doubtleſs which cannot become the Wiſdom of good Men.

Now that the Reformation in the external part of Worſhip, which is purſued in the extraordinary and undue way we ſpeak of, is in things but of ſuch a nature as wherein the Spirit and Life of Religion in Men is little concerned one way or other, as to Loſs or Gain, appears by this, *viz.* Becauſe there have been and are very many, who have lived under the uſe of that external Mode of Worſhip, without any ſuch Reformation of it as is contended for, in whom the Spirit and Life of Religion has been found as much (as may well be preſumed) as in any other who have uſed any other Mode of Worſhip different from it. Not that I am againſt Mens ſeeking that which they apprehend to be beſt in theſe matters, provided it be in the National way, and in ſuch a manner as that more hurt be not done by the way and manner of ſeeking it, than good can be acquired in their way of obtaining it by Separation.

3. It is becoming the Wiſdom of good Men to ſeek the amendment they deſire, by complying as far as they can with what is already eſtabliſhed; becauſe by ſo doing, and by ſeaſonable and humble application to the *Legiſlative* Powers of the Nation, they may in all reaſon ſooner obtain what is reaſonable and meet to be granted, than by ſeparating from it, and ſetting up another way in oppoſition to it. And the reaſon is, becauſe the one is apt to beget a good opinion of them, and of the innocency and goodneſs of their intention in what they deſire and ſeek: Whereas the other tends to exaſperate and provoke, and to beget an ill opinion of them, and a jealouſie of their deſigns, in the minds of thoſe from whom they expect eaſe and relief in what is matter of grievance to them: And that which does that, is no good way of obtaining from them. *Solomon*'s wiſe advice is, *If the Spirit of the Ruler riſe up againſt thee, leave not thy place; for yielding pacifieth great Offences*, Eccleſ. x. 4.

QUERY XIII.

Wherein may Catholick Church-Communion conſiſt? And how, and by what means is it beſt preſerved?

TO clear our way in this Enquiry, it will be convenient to take notice of the difference that is between the *Union* of the Catholick Church, and the *Communion* of it. The Union of the Catholick Church conſiſts in the ſame *Relation* which all the Members of that one Body bear to Chriſt the Head of it, and to one another as fellow-Members: But the Communion of this ſpiritual Corporation conſiſts in a mutual performance of thoſe Chriſtian Duties and Offices to which they are engaged by virtue of that Relation. By that Relation, in which their Union conſiſts, they come to have a greater Intereſt in one another than they had before their Incorporation into that Body; and by it they come under new Duties to one another, to which they were not obliged before: But their Communion conſiſts much in a mutual diſcharge of thoſe Duties towards one another, and in an improvement of that Intereſt for the benefit of one another, and the good of the whole by their mutual intercourſe in ſpiritual Affairs. The Union of the whole, which is made by one Baptiſm, or the Baptiſmal-Covenant, reſpects the *being* of the Church: But Catholick Communion reſpects its *well-being* by its increaſe in Wiſdom, Goodneſs, and Comfort.

There is indeed a Catholick Church-*Unity* by Communion, as well as there is another which comes by Relation; but this Unity of Communion flows from that which is made by a Relation common to the whole.

Having thus briefly conſidered how Catholick Communion differs from Catholick Union, I ſhall now proceed to ſhew a little more particularly wherein or in what Catholick Communion doth conſiſt. And we may beſt know what it is and wherein it doth conſiſt, by the account we have of it as practiſed in the Catholick Church, when it firſt became Chriſtian. And this account we have in theſe words, *Acts* ii 42. *And they continued ſtedfaſtly in the Apoſtles Doctrine and Fellowſhip, and in breaking of Bread, and in Prayers.* By which Deſcription we ſee it conſiſted in their conſent and agreement in three things, *Faith*, *Worſhip*, *Fellowſhip*.

1. In their agreeing in the ſame Faith, they continued ſtedfaſtly in the Apoſtles *Doctrine*; that is, in the belief of it, in attendance to it, and practice of it. From the ſame Faith, being common to all Chriſtians, it is called the *common Faith*, Tit. i. 4. the *one Faith*, Eph. iv. 5. and their agreement in it is ſtiled, *Unity in the Faith*, Eph. iv. 13.

2. In their agreement in the ſame Worſhip; *breaking of Bread and Prayers.* This Catholick Church in its beginning is ſaid to have continued *with one accord* in Prayer and Supplication, *Acts* i. 14. And on the Day of *Pentecoſt* they were all *with one accord in one place*, when the Holy Ghoſt was poured out upon them. And when their number ſo increaſed, that they could not all perform this publick Worſhip together in one place, but in ſeveral diſtinct Aſſemblies, called particular Churches, yet their *agreement* in the ſame Worſhip, made their Communion in it but *one Communion*, tho' perform'd in ſeveral Aſſemblies. For altho' theſe Aſſemblies be never ſo far diſtant from one another, yet ſo long as they all agree in the ſame Worſhip, the diſtance of place can no more hinder their Communion from being *one*, than their being baptized in ſeveral diſtant places can hinder the Relation to one another contracted thereby, from being *one*, when it is common to all the Members. We account all thoſe to be of the Communion of the Church of *Rome*, at the ſame time, and in the ſame acts in which they hold their local Communion in ſeveral diſtant Nations, ſo long as they all agree in the ſame corrupt Worſhip. And there is the ſame reaſon for the Unity of the Communion in Worſhip of all Orthodox Aſſemblies in all Nations. So that I take this for an unqueſtionable Truth, That it is Mens agreement in the ſame Principles of Communion, be they good or bad, that makes their Communion but one, tho' the particular acts of it are performed by them in many thouſand diſtant places.

And now it is by the Union of Relation by the Baptiſmal Covenant, and the Unity of Communion by agreement in the Principles of the Worſhip wherein they have Communion, that all Orthodox Chriſtians make one great Houſe or Temple of God in the World, in which he is openly worſhip'd, and publickly acknowledged to be what he is, the one only true God, Father, Son, and Holy Ghoſt, in oppoſition to all falſe Gods, *Epheſ.* ii. 21. *In whom all the building fitly framed together, groweth unto an holy Temple in the Lord.* This is that Houſe which is called *Chriſt's own Houſe*, Heb. iii. 6. and that *Houſe of God over which Chriſt is ſaid to be High Prieſt*, Heb. x. 21. And particular Churches in reference to this one Houſe, are but as ſeveral Apartments in it, which all together make up one great Houſe of God.

And in this Houſe of His God dwells, and therein manifeſteth himſelf to his People after a more ſpecial manner than he does to the World; 2 *Cor.* vi. 16. *Ye are the Temple of the living God, as God hath ſaid, I will dwell in them, and walk in them, and will be their God, and they ſhall be my People.* Here Almighty God meets with them, and communes with them, and receives their Addreſſes; and here he entertains them with the *fatneſs of his Houſe*, the Ordinances of the Goſpel, and the benign Influences and comfortable Preſence of his Spirit in the uſe of them. In this way the whole Church in their ſeveral Aſſemblies have Communion with their Head Chriſt Jeſus, and one with another, by partaking in common of the ſpiritual Benefits communicated by the Lord, and in aſſiſting in common in the Worſhip, Adoration, and Thankſgiving, which the Church renders him for the Glory and tranſcendent Perfections of his Nature and Being, and returns him for all the Bleſſings and Benefits they receive from him.

And the more all Chriſtians are agreed in their worſhiping of God, and in their Communion with him, the more they honour him, and the more they pleaſe him, and make themſelves the more capable of receiving all good things from him in the greater abundance. If the *agreement but of two of them touching any thing they ſhall ask*, hath his promiſe of granting it, (*Math.* xviii. 19.) what might not be expected from him if the whole Church were of one Heart and one Soul, as they were at the firſt in Matters of their Communion.

3. Catholick Communion conſiſteth alſo in the mutual Aſſiſtances which Chriſtians give to, and receive one from another, couched in that one word *Fellowſhip*, in the deſcription of Catholick Communion; *Acts* ii. 42. *And they continued ſtedfaſtly in the Apoſtles Doctrine, and Fellowſhip*, &c. The ſame word, which in our Verſion is here tranſlated *Fellowſhip*, is by the *Dutch* in their Verſion tranſlated *Communion.* And according to Dr. *Hammond*, it ſignifies both to *communicate* and to *participate*, to *diſtribute* and to *receive.*

So that according to the Nature of Chriſtian Communion, every Member of the whole Church is or ought to be uſeful and ſerviceable to the whole Community of Chriſtians in general, and to every Chriſtian in particular, ſo far as they can, in the Place and Rank in which the Providence of God hath ſet them: The which, if duly obſerved by all as it ought to be, the ſame Perſons that thus communicate and contribute Aſſiſtance to others, would be receiving back again from the whole, and from every Member in particular, the like Succour, Service and Aſſiſtance, as opportunity ſerves, as they themſelves had contributed to them; As a Chriſtian is to ſerve every fellow-Chriſtian, ſo according to the ſame Law every one is to ſerve him. This is that the Apoſtle means when he ſays, *By love ſerve one another*, Gal. v. 13. And this *giving and receiving* Aſſiſtance, the ſame Apoſtle calls *communicating with him*, Phil. iv. 15.

If this Catholick Communion were but duly maintained among all Chriſtians, how like a Heaven upon Earth would the Catholick Church be? And how happy would they be even now for the preſent that are of it? And how would the Inhabitants of the World that are not of it, then flow into it? And yet for Chriſtians thus to exchange Offices of Love with one another, is nothing more than what we are all obliged to by the Royal Law of Love: *Thou ſhalt love thy Neighbour as thy ſelf.* For if I am hereby bound to love every Neighbour as my ſelf, ſo is every Neighbour obliged by it to love me as they love themſelves. And how delightful a Commerce would this be, if the Chriſtian Church were but ſo happy as to hit on it!

The particular Duties and Offices of Love in which this part of Chriſtian-Communion does conſiſt, are ſuch as theſe; the inſtructing and exhorting one another, the watching over and admoniſhing one another, the ſtrengthening the feeble-minded, the viſiting and comforting the afflicted, the relieving one another's Wants, the bearing one another's Burthens, the having the ſame care one for another, and the like. Together with theſe we may reckon the yielding and allowing to every one the liberty of ſharing in the common Privilege of enjoying Communion in Goſpel-Ordinances and Worſhip, ſo long as they have not made themſelves uncapable of it by drawing on themſelves deſervedly the Cenſures of the Church, nor are otherwiſe naturally uncapable of the end and uſe for which thoſe Ordinances, or any of them were ordained, as little Children ſeem to be in reference to the Lord's Supper.

THus much briefly touching the nature of Catholick Communion: Come we now to enquire how, and by what means it may beſt be preſerved. There are two Bonds which the Scripture mentions, by which Chriſtians are bound and knit together in one Communion, the Bond of *Charity*, and the Bond of *Peace*.

1. The Bond of Charity: *Above all theſe things put on Charity, which is the Bond of Perfectneſs*, Col. iii. 14. Charity is a Bond which knits and unites Mens Hearts together, and makes them *one in affection*, (*knit together in love*, as it is expreſs'd, *Col.* ii. 2.) and while they be ſo, it can hardly be but that they will be *one in Communion*. This was that which made the Catholick Church in its beginning to be *all of one Heart and one Soul*, as it is ſaid the Multitude of them that believed were, *Acts* iv. 32. And that was the reaſon doubtleſs why they continued ſtedfaſtly in their Communion in the Apoſtles Doctrine and Fellowſhip, and in breaking of Bread and Prayer.

Charity, we ſee, is called the Bond of Perfectneſs: For the Church is in a kind of perfect State in her Communion, ſo long as the Parts and Members of it are knit together in one Communion by *Love*; *made perfect in one*, as our Saviour expreſſeth it, *John* xvii. 23. And the Union in Communion which is made by Love, is Union in its Perfection, nothing unites Chriſtians ſo entirely and firmly as Love does. If Chriſtians love one another *in the Truth, and for the Truth ſake which dwelleth in them*, as St. *John* ſpeaks, this Love and Union by Love will laſt; there will be no failure in the Oneneſs of Communion, until there be firſt a failure in Love.

Charity muſt needs unite and knit Chriſtians together in one Communion, becauſe it is the Principle from which the particular Acts of Chriſtian Fellowſhip, fore-mentioned, do ſpring: A great part of the Acts of Chriſtian Communion, are nothing elſe but Offices of Brotherly Love, and by theſe Chriſtians take faſt hold one of another. Charity in its own nature is communicative of the good it has, and the good it can do, and by that it does attract and draw others to a nearer Conjunction with thoſe in whom it dwells. Charity is the *Arms* of the Chriſtian's *inner* Man, by which they embrace one another, though abſent.

Love is of a winning nature, it gains upon others that ſtand at a diſtance: If a Principle of Love be in the Heart, it will ſeaſon a Man's Speech, and enable him to *ſpeak the Truth in Love*, according to St. *Paul*'s Direction. And the Truth ſpoken in Love will ſooner reconcile, than the ſtrongeſt Arguments when mixt with Bitterneſs of Spirit. A Tongue of Love is *Solomon*'s Tongue of Health, it will heal Wounds, when another Tongue does but make them. And therefore with great Reaſon did St. *Paul* call upon the Church of *Corinth* to do all their things with Charity, and ſpent a whole Chapter upon them to perſuade them to it, as an effectual means to cure the Diviſions into which they were unhappily fallen.

Again, *Charity covereth a multitude of ſins*, (1 Pet. iv. 8.) and by that means among other it keeps Chriſtians from flying aſunder, and dividing in their Communion, which many times takes its firſt riſe from very ſmall Matters, when they meet with an evil Mind that will aggravate and make the worſt of things, and ſeek out Matter to make the Breach wider. But Charity is not apt to ſpy Faults, or to pick Quarrels, nor to aggravate and make the worſt of things, nor to harbour Jealouſies or evil Surmiſes, out of which Breaches are wont to grow: But it will over-look Mens Weakneſs, Miſtakes, and Inadvertencies, as believing they do not proceed from an evil Mind. And if any thing be amiſs, Love will take notice of all the extenuating Circumſtances in the caſe much rather than thoſe which tend to aggravate a matter. *Charity thinketh not evil, is not eaſily provoked, beareth all things, believeth all things, hopeth all things, endureth all things*; and by theſe means charitable Men have hold of others, and keep them from flying out, unleſs of very bad Minds and ill Tempers.

The Truth is, Charity is that to Catholick Communion, which the Soul is to the natural Body, the Life and Spirit of it that preſerves it in a healthful condition; but ſo far as Charity is wanting in Communion, ſo far that Communion is ſickly and languiſhing, and void of its true Spirit and Life.

2. The other Bond by which Chriſtians are bound up together in one Catholick Communion, is the *Bond of Peace*, Eph. iv. 3. *Endeavouring to keep the Unity of the Spirit in the Bond of Peace.* So that we ſee Peace is the Bond by which the Unity of the Spirit is kept. Now this *Unity* of the Spirit is that Oneneſs of Mind and Oneneſs of Practice which holy Men inſpired by the Spirit have taught all Chriſtians to obſerve, in reference to *Faith*, *Worſhip*, and *Love*: That is, that they ſhould be all of one and the ſame Faith, uſe the ſame Worſhip, and have the ſame Love to one another; which are the ſame things in which the Communion of the Catholick Church from the beginning of it did conſiſt, as I have already ſhewed. When St. *Paul* beſeecheth the Chriſtians in the Name of the Lord Jeſus Chriſt that they would *all ſpeak the ſame thing, and that there might be no Diviſions among them, but that they would be perfectly joyned together in the ſame Mind, and in the ſame Judgment*, he doth not ſay in reference to what, 1 *Cor.* i. 10. But it is to be ſuppoſed that they readily underſtood his Exhortation to refer to theſe great Articles of Chriſtianity. The like we have in *Phil.* ii. 1, 2. ſave that Love is there particularly inſtanced in: *If there be therefore any Conſolation in Chriſt, if any Comfort of Love, if any Fellowſhip of the Spirit, if any Bowels and Mercies; fulfil ye my Joy, that ye be like-minded, having the ſame Love, being of one accord, of one mind.*

The Unity of the Spirit then is the Unity of Chriſtians in thoſe things in which they have Communion, or their Unity in Communion; and this is, we ſee, to be kept or preſerved by the Bond of Peace. Now this Peace conſiſteth chiefly in Chriſtians avoiding Differences among themſelves as much as in them lies. But if Differences do ariſe, then this Peace conſiſteth in ſuch Gentleneſs, Moderation, and Calmneſs of Behaviour in Chriſtians one towards another, as by reaſon whereof their Chriſtian Converſe is not interrupted, nor their Communion diſturbed, their Differences notwithſtanding. It is true indeed, in this imperfect State, it cannot be but that there will be difference of Opinion among Chriſtians about leſſer things not eſſential to Communion, eſpecially concerning ſuch circumſtantial Matters as are left undetermined in Scripture, except only by general Rule. For conſidering that more Chriſtians are weak than thoſe that are ſtrong, and leſs ſpiritual both in point of Knowledge, and in the Graces of Humility, Meekneſs, and Charity, and more unmortified in Self-will, and Self-conceit, it cannot be otherwiſe but that there will be differences among Chriſtians. But yet if the greater, the wiſer and the better ſort of Chriſtians do not ſlight and deſpiſe thoſe that differ from them through Weakneſs of Judgment, or Prejudice of Education, nor violently oppoſe them, but patiently bear with them, and wiſely inſinuate to them by degrees thoſe things which may help them, and by Condeſcenſion become all things to them for their good ſo far as innocently they can, Peace may very well be preſerved among them which otherwiſe differ in many things. Not but that Offences will come when the beſt Men have done the beſt they can to prevent it; for this will fall out ſo long as there are thoſe among Chriſtians whoſe Luſts and Paſſions are unmortified. But I am ſhewing how the Unity of the Spirit may be kept in the Bond of Peace among them that differ in Mind and Opinion about circumſtantial Matters, and that they may converſe very lovingly together, where unmortified Luſts and Paſſions do not prevail, notwithſtanding ſuch difference. The wiſe and good Carriage of good Men towards thoſe that differ, will have a great Influence upon them, if not preſently to reconcile them in Opinion, yet to charm them into a peaceable Demeanour, if they be not Men of ill Temper.

God himſelf makes allowances unto Men that differ conſcientiouſly about leſſer things, and not out of Affectation, tho' they err in Judgment, ſo long as their Error proceeds not from a corrupt Will or Pride of Mind, *Rom.* xiv. And good Men, ſo far as they are Partakers of a Divine Nature, will do ſo too. And ſuch Differences are very conſiſtent with Catholick Communion in Peace and Love. So that it is not ſo much Mens differing in Opinion about Circumſtantial Matters in Religion that breaks Peace, deſtroys Charity, and diſturbs the Communion of the Church; as Mens unruly Luſts and Paſſions of Pride, Envy, and Ill-will, which take the advantage thence to vent themſelves againſt one another in irregular Practices. *From whence comes Wars and Brawlings among you? Come they not hence, even of your Luſts that war in your Members?* Jam. iv. 1.

Tho' Chriſtians then may differ in Opinion in ſome leſſer things, yet ſo long as they agree in the ſubſtance of Faith and Worſhip, and ſo long as they manage themſelves in their Differences, ſo as that Peace is not broken by any irregular or troubleſome Behaviour, their Communion in Faith, Worſhip, and Fellowſhip, or mutual Love, cannot ſuffer much by ſuch Differences. For Peace and Charity ſupport each other, and propagate each other. And the Apoſtle does very well therefore couple them together in his Exhortation, *Col.* iii. 14, 15 *Above all theſe things put on Charity, which is the bond of perfectneſs; and let the peace of God rule in your hearts, to which ye are called in one body.* The Peace here meant, to which Chriſtians are called by being united in one Body, is peaceably living one with another.

3. Beſides the Bond of Charity, and the Bond of Peace, there is a third thing very neceſſary to the Unity and peaceable Communion in the Church, and that is *prudent and moderate Government.* The *Peace* and *Purity* of the Church are two great ends of the Government in it, both which conduce very much to the comfortable Communion of the Church, and to the Chriſtians Unanimity in it. In reference to which, *Moderation* is very neceſſary in reſpect of the external Manner and Circumſtances of Worſhip; as, namely, that the Terms of Communion therein be made as eaſie as will well conſiſt with publick Edification and comely Order. For when they are ſo, Men will have no tolerable pretence, upon account of Conſcience, to refuſe Communion with the Church therein. But otherwiſe, ſome out of ſcruple of Conſcience, and others from a worſe Principle, will be apt to take occaſion to diſturb the Peace of the Church with Diſputes, and by deſerting the Communion of it.

And then Moderation and Prudence are neceſſary to the ſame end in the exerciſe of Diſcipline in the Church, by making a difference in correcting open and notorious Scandals, and leſſer Diſorders. For elſe if both be puniſhed alike, when they are not alike criminal, or if leſſer Diſorders ſhall be ſtrictly look'd after, and ſeverely puniſh'd, and greater conniv'd at, it will tend to leſſen the Government in Mens Reverence and Eſteem, and ſo weaken the ſenſe of the Church's Peace, and render Communion with her leſs deſirable by ſuch as will take themſelves to be unequally dealt with by her.

But as good Government in the Church is neceſſary to its Peace, and to Unity in its Communion, ſo is Obedience to ſuch Government, without which Government loſeth its end.

But when the Government and Exerciſe of it is equal, and as eaſie as will conſiſt with the due ends of it; then if, yet for all that, Men will be troubleſome and diſobedient under it, they will be left without Excuſe in the Eyes of ſober Men, if fitting courſe be taken to reſtrain them from diſturbing the Peace of the Church; for otherwiſe, if this be not granted, Government in the Church would ſignifie little.

THus much concerning our Enquiry touching the Nature of Catholick Communion, and the means of preſerving it. But before I proceed to an Enquiry into the Nature of Schiſm, I think it not amiſs to enquire for what reaſon the Unity of Catholick Communion is neceſſary, and why we ſhould endeavour that as much as may be it ſhould be kept entire, and all of a piece, and without Fracture. And the only Reaſon which I ſhall inſiſt on is this; Becauſe its being ſuch, and ſo kept and maintained, tends greatly to the growth and increaſe of the Church, both in reſpect of the Number of its Members, and Bigneſs of its Body, and alſo in reſpect of its healthful State, and its growing up to a greater Stature in all Virtue and Goodneſs.

1. It tends to the increaſe of the Body of Chriſtians in the number of its Members. For next to the miraculous Operations of the Holy Ghoſt in the Apoſtles and Primitive Believers, the peaceable and charitable Demeanour among Chriſtians, and a good Agreement among themſelves, if it were generally found in them, would attract and draw Men to the liking and love of the Religion which they profeſs, for the ſake of the lovely Effects it produceth in them. Men can hardly think otherwiſe than well of that Religion by which they find Men are made more peaceable and loving, and more ready to

all good offices, to one another, and to all Men, than others are, or than they themſeves were before they engaged heartily and ſeriouſly in it.

And that the Concord and good Agreement of all Chriſtians in one Catholick Communion has ſo happy a tendency, as I have ſaid, to draw others to the Belief and Love of that ſame Religion, appears by the Reaſon why, and for which our bleſſed Saviour ſo earneſtly deſired and prayed for the Union and Agreement of all Chriſtians in the things their Religion taught them, to wit, becauſe the World would thereby be brought to believe that He the Author of it had been ſent of God, *John* xvii. 20, 21. *Neither pray I for theſe alone, but for them alſo which ſhall believe on me through their word; that they all may be one, as thou Father art in me, and I in thee; that they alſo may be one in us, that the world may believe that thou haſt ſent me.* And it's moſt apparent that the contrary to this has had its contrary effect. For where have any ſuch numerous additions to the Catholick Church been found from among the Pagan World, ſince the great Diviſions which have riſen and been kept on foot in the Chriſtian World, as thoſe which were made for ſome hundreds of Years together in the Primitive Times while Catholick Communion was preſerved in the Church without any conſiderable Interruption? Nay, have not the unreaſonable Diviſions and fierce Contentions which have broken out in the Reformed Churches ſince the Reformation, and in our own Nation eſpecially, been a Temptation to many to turn Atheiſts or Scepticks?

The holy Scriptures in many places ſeem to foretel a more general flowing of the Nations of the World into the Church, than ever yet has been accompliſhed: But we cannot reaſonably expect this ſhould be brought to paſs by means of the Chriſtian Churches in being, until by Humility, Peaceableneſs and Charity, and good Agreement among themſelves, and other Virtues, they make a better Repreſentation of the Excellency of the Religion which they profeſs, than they do at this day. When God Almighty *turns to the People a pure Language*, then it may be expected they will *call upon him, and ſerve him with one conſent*, as the Prophet ſpeaks, *Zeph.* iii. 9. Not while they treat one another with *impure and corrupt Language*, which ſmells of Wrath and Diſdain, of Envy, Spight and Contempt; not while by words they do all they can to diſgrace one another, but by *ſpeaking the truth in love*, and with *meekneſs of wiſdom*.

2. The good Agreement of Chriſtians in one Catholick Communion, tends greatly to the increaſe of the Church in reſpect of its ſpiritual healthful State, and its growing up to a greater Stature in all Virtue and Goodneſs. For where Peace and good Agreement is in the ſeveral Offices of Chriſtian Brotherood, there Love is, which is the Bond of Perfectneſs, which holds them faſt together. And Love is a *radical* Grace, out of which other Graces grow, inſomuch that Love is made the Summary of all Chriſtian Duties towards one another: *Love is* ſaid to be *the fulfilling of the Law*, Rom. xiii. 8, 10. *Charity edifieth*, ſaith St. *Paul*, 1 *Cor.* viii. 1. It tends to edifie and build up the Subject in which it dwells, and to make him more like God, who is Love; and it tends to edifie the Object on which it is ſet, and on which it exerciſeth it ſelf; it tends to build up both the one and the other in Grace and Goodneſs.

And there is this farther Reaſon why a Peaceable Agreement in one Catholick Communion tends to increaſe the Church in her Spiritual Riches, *viz.* Becauſe the Holy Spirit of God delights to dwell where Peace and Love dwell, and there to diſpence and communicate his Treaſures, by which the Souls of Men are enriched; but without his Supplies, Influences and Operations, there is no thriving in Grace and real Goodneſs. *He that dwells in Love, God dwells in him*, 1 John iv. 16. And where God takes up his ſpecial Reſidence, he will adorn thoſe living Temples with plenty of Spiritual Ornaments, and thoſe ſhall be ſure to be made Partakers of his beſt ſort of Gifts, ſuch as the World cannot receive. *Be of one mind, live in peace, and the God of Love and Peace ſhall be with you*, ſaith St. *Paul*, 2 Cor. xiii. 11. While the Catholick Church is of one mind in the great things of Chriſtian Religion, and being ſo, do live in Peace, and not unpeaceably contend, fall out and divide about leſſer things, ſuch as for which God perhaps doth neither eſteem or diſeſteem Men, He who is the God of Love and Peace will be with them to bleſs them with his Preſence, with Spiritual Bleſſings eſpecially. And as the Preſence of the Soul in the Body enlivens it with Natural Life, by virtue whereof the ſeveral Members perform their ſeveral Functions, proper to each of them reſpectively; even ſo the Preſence of the Holy Spirit in the Body of Chriſt the Church does animate it with Spiritual Life, and does ſo influence and actuate the ſeveral Members of it, as that by virtue thereof they all perform their ſeveral Chriſtian Offices proper to each for the common good of the whole.

But then this vital Power of acting ſpiritually, is conveyed by the Spirit to each of the Members *as they are in Union* and *Communion with the whole*, and ſo as one Member is made a Channel of this Conveyance to another, and each enabled to contribute its part to the common good of the whole. Thus *Col.* ii. 19. where St. *Paul*, mentioning the Head of the Church, ſaith, *from which all the body by joynts and bonds having Nouriſhment miniſtred and knit together, increaſeth with the increaſe of God.* This ſpiritual Nouriſhment of the Body, flows from Chriſt the Head we ſee, as having obtained it by his Mediation; but then it is the great Office-work of the holy Spirit to apply the Benefits obtained by Chriſt, to the ſeveral Members of his Body by working and increaſing Grace and Comfort in them. *He ſhall glorifie me, for he ſhall receive of mine, and ſhew it unto you*, ſaith our Saviour, ſpeaking of the Holy Ghoſt, *John* xvi. 14. And this Conveyance of Nouriſhment from the Head to the Members by the Holy Spirit, is made by the Union of the parts as knit together by Joynts and Bands, by which Union one Member is made a Channel of Conveyance of Nouriſhment to another: And in this way the whole Body increaſeth with the Increaſe of God. This being ſo, Diſunion of the Parts or Members muſt needs obſtruct this ſpiritual Nouriſhment, and hinder the growth of the Body. To the ſame effect is that parallel place, *Eph.* iv. 15, 16. *Speaking the truth in love may grow up into him in all things, which is the Head, even Chriſt: From whom the whole Body, fitly joyned together, and compacted by that which every joynt ſupplieth, according to the effectual working of the meaſure of every part, maketh increaſe of the Body, unto the edifying of it ſelf in Love.* This increaſe of the Body to the edifying it ſelf in Love, is made we ſee both by the parts of the Body being joyned together, and alſo by that which every Joynt ſupplieth being ſo compacted.

Thus we ſee how the Increaſe of the Church in ſpiritual Strength depends upon God's ſpecial Preſence and Aſſiſtance, and how the Enjoyment of that Preſence depends upon the peaceable Agreement and mutual Love of the parts of which the Church doth conſiſt. And if ſo, then Unpeaceableneſs, Diſcord and Strife, Contention and dividing into Parties in the Church, muſt neceſſarily tend to deprive her of that ſpecial Preſence and Divine Aſſiſtance of the Holy Spirit, without which Chriſtians cannot thrive and increaſe in true Goodneſs, and for want of which they will rather decline and go backward. Tho' the God of Peace and of Love will be with his People while they are ſo of one Mind in the Eſſentials of Chriſtianity, as upon that account to live in Peace and Chriſtian Communion one with another, notwithſtanding their differing in ſome leſſer things, which will always be found in the beſt Eſtate of the Church which can be expected here on Earth; yet there is no reaſon to expect he will be ſo with them when they do not ſo live in Peace, tho' they ſhould otherwiſe be of one mind in the fundamental Doctrines of Chriſtianity, and all the ſubſtantial parts of Worſhip.

The Holy Spirit may indeed diſpenſe Gifts of Knowledge, and Utterance, and the like, which are common to bad Men as well as good; ſuch as theſe he may beſtow upon Chriſtians even while they are in diſorder and unpeaceable Diviſion: But as for thoſe *Fruits of the Spirit* which conſtitute Men truly good, ſuch as *Love, Joy, Peace, Long-ſuffering, Gentleneſs, Goodneſs, and Meekneſs*, (Gal. v. 22.) the having of theſe and Mens being of an unpeaceable Temper, and in a State of Diſcord and Diviſion, are, I fear, inconſiſtent; for theſe are contrary one to another. Tho' St. *Paul* acknowledged thoſe of the Church of *Corinth* to be *enriched with all Utterance and all Knowledge*, Chap. i. 5. yet in *Chap.* iii. 1. he tells them that he *could not ſpeak unto them as unto ſpiritual, but as unto carnal, even as to Babes in Chriſt*; and for this reaſon, as it follows in *ver.* 3. becauſe there *was among them envying, ſtrife, and Diviſion. Ye are yet carnal*, ſaith he, *for whereas there is among you envying, and ſtrife, and diviſions, are ye not carnal, and walk as Men*; that is, as other Men which were no Chriſtians. They might indeed know and believe, and talk otherwiſe and better than thoſe that were out of the Church, but their walking and living was but as theirs, while envying, ſtrife, and diviſion was found with them. For theſe are of thoſe *Works of the Fleſh*, of which St. *Paul* ſaith, *that thoſe which do ſuch things, ſhall not inherit the Kingdom of God*, Gal. v. 20, 21.

And if Chriſtians would but examine and judge of themſelves by theſe Scripture-meaſures, it would make them on all hands, one ſide as well as another, to be as much afraid to do any thing to diſturb the Peace of the Church, or to be guilty of envying, ſtriſe, and diviſion in it, as they would be to find themſelves but in a carnal State, and of being ſhut out of the Kingdom of Heaven.

And as for thoſe who are guilty of theſe things in theſe ſad times, wherein envying, ſtriſe and diviſion do abound, it is hugely neceſſary that as they love their own Souls, they would without delay repent, and get out of ſuch a State, and not flatter and deceive themſelves with an Opinion of their good and ſaſe condition upon account of their being otherwiſe Orthodox and Religious, ſo long as they indulge themſelves in ſuch a State.

QUERY XIV.

What is the Nature of Schiſm?

FROM what hath been diſcourſed touching the nature of Catholick Communion, and the means of preſerving it, we may be able to make a Judgment of the nature of *Schiſm*, what it is, and who are guilty of it. For if Catholick Communion ſtands in the Unity of the Spirit, or Chriſtians Unity in their Communion in the Doctrine of Faith in things neceſſary to Salvation, and in the Subſtance of Worſhip; and in their Fellowſhip or mutual Love, as I have ſhew'd it does; then their being *divided* in theſe, or any one of theſe, or in any leſſer things, if the *Unity* of their Communion be thereby deſtroyed, that undoubtedly is *Schiſm*. When any thing which before was but one, comes to be divided, it ceaſeth to be one any longer, unleſs there be a Re-union; and thus it is in reference to Church-Communion.

Altho' Chriſtians do agree in the Chriſtian Faith, and in the Subſtance of Worſhip alſo, yet if upon account of any leſſer things they be ſo divided as that Chriſtian Fellowſhip or Brotherly Love be thereby deſtroyed, their *Unity* of Communion is thereby deſtroyed alſo. I do not ſay that all their Communion in thoſe things wherein they are agreed is deſtroyed by uncharitable Diviſion; but this I ſay, that the *Unity* of their Communion is thereby deſtroyed. For Brotherly Love is an eſſential part of Catholick Communion, ſo that if that be deſtroyed by any Diviſion, tho' but about leſſer Matters, the *Unity* of the Communion is deſtroyed, and the Guilt of Schiſm contracted, yea, and their Communion it ſelf in Faith and Worſhip, wherein they are agreed, is greatly damnified alſo.

For their Communion in Faith and Worſhip is rendred unacceptable to God, and unprofitable to themſelves for want of Communion in Brotherly Love: *Though I had all Faith and have not Charity, I am nothing.* And for Worſhip: *If thou bringeſt thy Gift to the Altar, and remembreſt that thy Brother hath ought againſt thee; leave there thy Gift before the Altar, and go thy way, firſt be reconciled to thy Brother, and then come and offer thy Gift*; ſhewing how little God regardeth Devotional Communion in Worſhip when void of true Charity.

The *Schiſm* we enquire after then, lies in *Diviſion in the Church*, as that is oppoſite to, and deſtructive of Chriſtian *Unity* in *Faith*, or in *Worſhip*, or in *Love*. And all Church Diviſion tends more or leſs to the Deſtruction of Chriſtian Unity in theſe in whole or in part. That it lies in *Diviſion*, appears in that it receives its Name from that; for the word *Schiſm* ſignifies *Diviſion* or a Rent. And the Tranſlators of our Engliſh Bible, when they have put the word *Diviſion* in the Line-reading they put *Schiſm* in the Margin, 1 *Cor*. x. 10. and xi. 18. and when *Schiſm* in the Line, *Diviſion* in the Margin, 1 *Cor*. xii. 25. and this they have done to explain the one by the other.

Since then Schiſm conſiſts in Church-Diviſion, it follows, that by how much the greater the Diviſion is at any time, by ſo much the greater is the Schiſm; and the leſs the one is, the leſs is the other alſo. We muſt therefore diſtinguiſh of Schiſm: There are ſeveral ſorts or degrees of Diviſion, and ſo of Schiſm, which are ſometimes found among Chriſtians.

I. A *different Perſuaſion* in Chriſtians touching ſome things *indifferent* in their own nature, ſome holding them unlawful, others lawful; ſome accounting them neceſſary, when others are otherwiſe perſuaded. This Difference fell out between the believing Jews and the believing Gentiles touching ſome Meats, the Obſervation of Days, and the Uſe of Circumciſion. And a Difference much like to this, in ſome reſpects, has fallen out among ſome Chriſtians in our Days, and in our Nation. Now a *Difference* of this nature, tho' it be in ſome ſort a *Diviſion*, yet it is capable of being ſo managed, as that the Effects of ſinful Schiſm ſhall ſcarcely at all follow upon it. As thus;

Firſt, if thoſe who are ſcrupulous, and yet under a miſtake, ſhall be modeſt and humble in their diſſenting, and deſirous to be as little troubleſome and offenſive to their Brethren, from whom they differ, as poſſibly they can, and as tender of diſturbing the Peace of the Church as their caſe will permit, and ready to hear and impartially to conſider any thing offered by their Brethren to remove their Scruples, and reconcile them in Judgment.

Secondly, If they be not averſe to comply with their Brethren in all things *ſo far as they can*, and to hold Communion with them ſo far as they have *attained* and are agreed, according to the Apoſtle's Exhortation in that caſe, when he ſays, *Nevertheleſs whereto* *we have already attained, let us walk by the ſame Rule, let us mind the ſame thing*, Phil. iii. 16. For theſe words were uſed in reference to thoſe Chriſtians mentioned in the Verſe before, of whom he had ſaid, *If in any thing ye be otherwiſe minded, God ſhall reveal even this unto you.* And indeed this Compliance is neceſſary in all like caſes to prevent Schiſm, upon a double account.

1. Otherwiſe, ſuch *do not what they can* to preſerve Peace, and prevent Schiſm, and ſo muſt be guilty of it if it follow for want of ſuch compliance. That to do thus is their undoubted Duty, is clear from that of the Apoſtle, *Rom.* xii. 18. *If it be poſſible, as much as lieth in you, live peaceably with all Men*; how much more with Fellow-Chriſtians. If Chriſtian Compliance then be the way to live peaceably with Chriſtian Brethren, then it follows, that if they do not comply *as much as in them lies*, and as far as they can when the preſerving of Peace requires it, they do not what they ought to do, and if Schiſm or a Breach of Peace follows, they muſt needs be acceſſary to it, and guilty of it.

2. Becauſe if they do not comply ſo far as they can, they give occaſion of Suſpicion that their Non-compliance in that wherein their differing from their Brethren profeſſedly lies, proceeds not ſo much from ſcruple of Conſcience as from ſome worſe Principle, ſuch as Humour, Self-will, a Spirit of Oppoſition and Contradiction, or a perſonal Prejudice againſt the Men from whom they differ, or the like. For it will be thought that if Conſcience to God were the only reaſon why they differ with their Brethren in any thing, that then Conſcience would engage them to go along with their Brethren in that wherein they do not differ, and to be tender and ſcrupulous of making the difference or breach between them wider than needs muſt, and of multiplying occaſion of Offence cauſeleſly. Men cannot be confident when they ſee ſuch Men are not tender of Conſcience in the one, that they are ſo in the other, but will be apt to ſuſpect that their differing proceeds chiefly from ſome worſe cauſe, tho' the Parties themſelves perhaps are not aware of it, but think it proceeds from the Goodneſs of their Conſcience, when there is no ſuch matter. And when this occaſion of Suſpicion is given, by not complying in what they can, the natural effect of it will be to weaken Mens eſteem of them, and Affection to them, and to prepare the way to farther difference. Whereas a Compliance, as far as poſſibly they can, would maintain a good Opinion of them in Mens minds, procure them fair quarter from them that differ from them, prevent the difference from growing up into a direct Schiſm, and prepare the way to Reconciliation.

For when it does indeed appear by complying as far as they can, and by other truly Chriſtian Behaviour of Perſons that through Error of Judgment differ from their Brethren in other things, that that difference proceeds purely from Conſcience tho' erroneous, and not from a worſe Principle, their caſe is truly *pitiable*, and calls for Tenderneſs towards them from them that differ from them; and to treat them accordingly, is certainly the way to gain upon them, and to make them the more capable of receiving Information and Satisfaction in their Scruples. Whereas when they are otherwiſe treated with Severity, it tends to ſpoil their good Temper, and to exaſperate them, and to make them out of diſguſt to them who have ſo dealt with them, to unite into Parties, and make head againſt them, to the embroiling the Church in grievous Schiſm

2. There is another and worſe Diviſion or Schiſm than meer difference in Judgment and Practice in ſome leſſer things, and that Diviſion lies more in Chriſtians Unchriſtian managing their differences than in the difference that is in their Opinion and Practice, when it is but about ſome things wherein the good or hurt of Men would be little concerned, if they could be ſeparated from their effects. And this Diviſion lies in the *immoderate* manner of contending for that wherein Chriſtians differ. As thus; when they do not content themſelves with offering their Arguments fairly and peaceably for that wherein they differ, but fall out with their Brethren for not ſubmitting to, but oppoſing them both in their Arguments and Practice, as when they ſet them at naught, and cenſure them as inſincere, as not truly Lovers of Truth, but that they are byaſſed by ſome undue Intereſt, of Honour, Reputation, or Gain, or Humour, or Self-will, and that theſe prevail with them more than Truth. Now ſuch things as theſe are of a provoking Nature, and lay a Temptation upon their Brethrens Paſſions, and tend directly to alienate Affections, and miniſter to unpeaceable Contendings, and are a direct Breach of Peace. Tho' Men have Truth on their ſide, yet they may be Schiſmatical in labouring to propagate, or to defend that Truth, when they go farther in doing ſo than *ſpeaking the Truth in Love*, I mean in way of Controverſie. Tho' thoſe that differ from them may poſſibly be moved with undue Motives to oppoſe them, and the reaſons for what they hold; yet becauſe whether they be ſo or no, is a matter of which they are not competent Judges, it lying out of their reach, and belonging only to the Judgment of

God, who only is the Searcher of Hearts, therefore whatever they may fear or ſuſpect, yet they ſhould forbear either to pronounce or inſinuate any ſuch hard things againſt their Brethren, by which they *become Judges of evil Thoughts*. Which if they do not, they ſtir up Strife, and violate Peace, by cauſing Unquietneſs and Diſorder in the Church, and deſtroy Charity; weaken, yea, wound the very Spirit of the Church's Communion, which without doubt is Schiſm, tho' it ſhould never proceed to actual Separation.

This mingling of Mens Paſſions and unchriſtian Cenſures and Inſinuations with their Arguments, hinders the due Operation of their Arguments upon their Antagoniſts Minds, tho' they ſhould have Truth on their ſide: *For the Wrath of Man worketh not the Righteouſneſs of God*, but hinders it, *Jam*. i. 20. Whereas, tho' Men do differ, yet ſo long as they propoſe and reply one to another no otherwiſe than as ſuppoſing both ſides to be only in the ſearch of Truth, they may live lovingly and peaceably together, and enjoy edifying and comfortable Communion one with another, their difference in Judgment notwithſtanding.

3. There is a Diviſion, and conſequently a Schiſm in the Church, of a higher nature than the former, and that is, when the Perſons that divide, or cauſe Diviſion in the Church, unneceſſarily gather into a Party, and do after a ſort unite and combine themſelves together, the more publickly and avowedly to maintain and carry on the Cauſe they have eſpouſed in oppoſition to their Brethren, and induſtriouſly labour to increaſe their Number, as hoping thereby in time to be able to bring their Oppoſites to ſubmit to them, and to give up their Cauſe. Now if the thing or things they after this manner contend for, ſhould be unprofitable for the Church, in caſe they ſhould obtain, or of ſo little uſe or benefit, as that it could never reaſonably be expected that it ſhould countervail the hurt that is or will be done to the Church, to the Communion of the Church, to the Cauſe of Religion in the World, and to the Souls of Men in general, by being obtained in ſuch a way, it would be a moſt grievous Schiſm thus to divide and imbroil the Church upon ſo mean an account.

A Diviſion or Schiſm of this nature is termed *Faction*, which is a ſiding or making of Parties in the Church. And of this nature in ſome ſort was the Schiſm in the Church of *Corinth*: For their Diviſions were factious Diviſions, for they proceeded to making of Parties. Their Crime in this, charged upon them by St. *Paul*, is termed *Diviſions* in our Bibles, but the word is *Faction* in the Margin, 1 *Cor*. iii. 3. And part of the Works of the Fleſh rendred *Seditions* in our Tranſlation, is *Diviſions* or *Factions* in the Margin, *Gal*. v. 20. This ſort of Diviſion, which is accompanied with Faction, or making of Parties, is more than is found in ſome Diviſions which yet are ſinful.

Now when a Schiſm grows up to this height, to a combined Strength, it is much worſe than while it was acted only by a few apart, and in a more private way, and leſs taken notice of; becauſe then there is more of contempt in it, and more are corrupted by it, and the Peace of the Community more diſturbed; and becauſe uſually by endeavours of increaſing the Party, much more Evil is perpetrated by Slanders, naughty Inſinuations and Suggeſtions againſt thoſe they divide from, and combine againſt, than was found in the nature of the Diviſion at firſt, or in the nature of the Error on which the Diviſion firſt began.

This factious Diviſion is likewiſe aggravated farther when it partakes of the nature of *Sedition*: And we ſee in the fore-cited place, (*Gal*. v.) the ſame word ſignifies *Diviſion*, *Faction*, and *Sedition*. Now *Sedition*, I conceive, is a Diviſion accompanied with a Combination of Men againſt the *Government*, either of Church or State, under which the Providence of God hath ſet them: It is their acting things contrary to that Government, farther than the neceſſity of not ſinning againſt God does oblige them, to the diſturbing of the publick Peace thereby: Or it may be ſo perhaps by ſeeking to alter any thing amiſs or inconvenient in the Government, in an undue way; that is, by acting out of their Sphere, or the Place or Rank in which the Providence of God hath ſet them; their going beyond their bounds in it, or their doing more to accompliſh it, than the Law or Government under which they are allows them. For otherwiſe it is not ſeditious (I conceive) for Men to endeavour to get any thing amiſs in the Government to be altered in a regular way; that is, in ſuch a way as the Government or publick Conſtitution allows.

I need not ſay how much the two Bonds, the one of Peace, the other of Charity, is broken by this ſort of Diviſion, which is accompanied either with Faction or Sedition, nor how great the Schiſm is that is made thereby: But this is certain, that a Diviſion of this kind cannot be without much *envying and ſtrife*; and where theſe are, *there is confuſion, and every evil work*, as St. *James* hath told us, *Chap*. iii. 16.

4. Another ſort of Diviſion in the Church, is that which is made by an *unjuſt Separation* of one part of the Catholick Church from another in the buſineſs of their Commu-

nion in their ſolemn Worſhip: And this is a Diviſion of a very high Nature indeed, eſpecially when it is accompanied with the third ſort of Diviſion, before inſiſted on. For if ſuch a Diviſion be unjuſtly made, it is point-blank contrary to the Unity of the Spirit; that is, contrary to the Unity of Communion among Chriſtians, which was taught and practiſed by Men inſpired by the Spirit, in reference both to ſolemn Worſhip and Chriſtian Fellowſhip, as has been formerly explained. By ſuch a Diviſion the Church's Peace is broken with a high hand, great Offence being thereby taken at others, and cauſe of Offence given to them, and a wide Gap opened for Debate, Strife, Contention and Confuſion to enter in, to a dreadful deſtruction of Charity, the Spirit and Life of Chriſtianity, without which Faith it ſelf is dead, and all other Religious Performances little available.

It concerns us greatly therefore, and ſome Men more eſpecially, very diligently to enquire how far the Diviſions and Separations that do abound in our Days, and in this Nation, are unjuſtly or juſtly made. To do which I do not know a more compendious way than to enquire into the Nature of our National Conſtitution about God's publick Worſhip, and the Power of giving Being to it, and how far we are obliged to obſerve it.

That ſuch National Conſtitutions as have been made in ſeveral Nations for Reformation from Popery, and for the eſtabliſhing of the Reformed Religion and Worſhip in the room of it, ſince the beginning of the Reformation, has been ſo far approved of by God, as that he does reckon and eſteem thoſe Nations his Kingdoms upon that account, I have ſound, as I conceive, in our twelfth Enquiry. Which, with what elſe is there produced and argued for the uſefulneſs of ſuch National Conſtitutions, I take to be ground ſufficient to authorize a National Authority in ſuch an Undertaking.

Now when-ever the forming of ſuch National Conſtitution is undertaken by them to whom it does belong, they muſt needs find, that tho' the Eſſentials and Subſtance of all Divine Worſhip is expreſly and particularly ſet down in Scripture, yet there are ſeveral Circumſtances and Accidents of Worſhip, which pertain to the external Adminiſtration of the Subſtance, which are not otherwiſe determined in Scripture than by general Rules; as that *Edification*, *Order* and *Decency* be always obſerved in the choice of ſuch things as are not particularly determined and ſet down in Scripture. Such are thoſe I inſtanced in another of our Enquiries concerning *Prayer:* Tho' all the ſubſtantial parts of it are determined in Scripture, yet we are no where limited to pray with a ſet Form, nor without one, to uſe or not to uſe Book-Prayer, to Kneel or to Stand in Praying, nor directed whether in the publick Worſhip there ſhall be ſeveral diſtinct and ſhort Prayers uſed for ſeveral things, or whether all Prayer, Matter fit for a publick Aſſembly, ſhall be compriſed in one or more longer Prayers. And the like may be ſaid touching ſeveral external Circumſtances that are to be uſed in all other parts of publick Worſhip.

This being the caſe, it will neceſſarily fall under the Conſideration of thoſe who are employed in the forming a publick Conſtitution for Worſhip, which of theſe will tend moſt to the Peace, Unity and Edification of the Church, and to Decency and Order; whether to leave all undetermined Circumſtances of Worſhip to every one's choice, who are to adminiſter the holy things, or in theſe things to chuſe for them, and to determine by an Eccleſiaſtical Conſtitution what ſhall be obſerved.

Suppoſe we then, that upon ſerious Conſideration and Conſultation they come to be fully perſuaded in their own Minds, that to leave all, both Miniſters and People, to their own choice in ſuch undetermined Circumſtances in God's publick Worſhip, would tend to great Diviſion, Diſorder and Confuſion, as it did in the late times of general Liberty, and that then we ſhould have one oppoſing another in their different ways, and making of Parties one againſt another, to endleſs Branglements, and to the eating out the Heart and Life of true Religion: And ſuppoſe alſo that upon ſuch Conſiderations as theſe they come to a Reſolution to determine all undetermined Circumſtances of publick Worſhip by the uſe of a Liturgy, except only what is to be performed in the Pulpit, as that which tends moſt in their Judgment to Peace, Unity, Edification, Order and Decency.

And when they have gone thus far in general, they will neceſſarily be led to proceed in the next place to the choice of particular Circumſtances of Adminiſtration of the ſeveral parts of publick Worſhip. In which it is to be preſumed they govern themſelves according to the beſt of their Underſtanding by thoſe general Rules which direct all things to be done for Edification, Order and Decency.

And when they have done ſo, and brought things to the beſt iſſue they could, yet conſidering that all Men, and the beſt of Men are fallible, it is not unlikely but that they may be miſtaken in ſome things, and that ſuch and ſuch a Circumſtance or Mode of Adminiſtration of Worſhip would have better and more fully agreed with the general Rules, than thoſe they have made choice of. But yet if their Failings and Miſtakes therein do not extend to the corrupting of God's Worſhip in the Eſſence or Subſtance of it, but only to the ordering of ſome *leſs uſeful* Circumſtances to be obſerved in the external manner of Performance of that Worſhip, there will be no juſt cauſe of ſeparating from Communion in it upon that account.

For thoſe who *ſeparate* from Communion in the Worſhip, which is every Lord's Day performed in our Parochial Aſſemblies according to our Liturgy, are obliged to prove one of theſe two things againſt it, if they would juſtifie their Separation from it. Either firſt, that the Worſhip is *corrupt in the Eſſence* or Subſtance of it; or ſecondly, that the faults or defects in the *external manner* of performance of it are ſuch as do fall ſhort of, and *defeat the end* for which an external way and manner of performing publick Worſhip ſhould ſerve and is appointed.

If they would prove ſuch Worſhip corrupt in the Eſſence or Subſtance of it, they muſt prove that it is ſo either in the Object of Worſhip, or in the Subject-Matter of it, for in thoſe two the Eſſence or Subſtance of Worſhip doth conſiſt. To prove it corrupt in reference to the Object of Worſhip, they muſt prove that the Worſhip is directed to ſome Creature as well as to the only true God, or by ſome Mediator other than Chriſt Jeſus. But this they will not pretend to do.

If they would prove it corrupt in reſpect of the Subject-matter of it, they muſt prove that the Prayers which are made, or the Matter for which Praiſe is given to Almighty God, are not Prayer-matter, or Thankſgiving-matter, or that ſome other part of Worſhip is uſed as of Divine Inſtitution, which is not ſuch. But now none of theſe things can be proved againſt the Liturgy. For no other things are therein Prayed for, or Thanks given to God for, but ſuch as the *Diſſenters* themſelves do, may or ought to pray for, or praiſe God for, nor any thing elſe obſerved as an Ordinance of God, but what they themſelves do own to be of Divine Inſtitution, ſuch as Baptiſm and the Lord's Supper. So that the whole of the Worſhip *is pure and uncorrupt* in reſpect of the *Eſſence* of it.

2. If then they will prove any thing to purpoſe, they muſt prove that the Faults and Defects in the external manner of performing the ſaid Worſhip, are ſuch as cauſe it to fall ſhort of, and do defeat the end and uſe for which an external Adminſtration of publick Worſhip ſerves and is appointed.

Now the end and uſe of the beſt external Mode of Worſhip, is *Edification*; that is, it ſerves to convey the Object and Subject-matter of Worſhip to the Mind of the Worſhippers, to the end they may be ſuitably affected.

And this end of Worſhip is defeated, when the Worſhip is performed in a Language which the People do not underſtand, or in ſuch Words and Phraſes as are inſignificant of, or unſuitable to the parts of Worſhip to which they are applied. But neither of theſe things can be charged upon the Worſhip performed according to the Liturgy. For the Worſhip is performed in a Language underſtood by all the People, and in Words and Phraſes competently ſignificant and expreſſive of, and ſuitable to the Nature of the Subject-matter of the Worſhip in its ſeveral parts, and ſo is agreeable to the general Rule for the Adminiſtration of publick Worſhip, which the Apoſtle terms to be *uttering by the Tongue*, *Words eaſie to be underſtood*, 1 Cor. xiv. By it the Minds of Men may be guided and conducted from one part of Worſhip to another, and be affected according to the different Nature of the ſeveral Parts of which the whole Worſhip doth conſiſt; which is the proper end and uſe of an external Form of Adminiſtration of publick Worſhip.

Object. But perhaps it will be ſaid, That the Worſhip performed according to the Liturgy does not ſo adequately and fully agree with the Rule and End of the external Adminiſtration of Worſhip in ſome reſpects, as it might have been made to do, or as ſome other does.

To which I anſwer, That the Queſtion is not whether the external manner of Worſhip, according to the Liturgy, be the beſt or no in all reſpects: But ſuppoſe it ſhould not, and ſuppoſe that ſome external Circumſtances ordered by it ſhould be, or make it to be leſs uſeful than it might have been, or than ſome others are; yet ſo long as they do but make it *leſs uſeful* to the *End* for which it ſerves, but do not *defeat it*, nor are deſtructive of it, nor of the Worſhip it ſelf, but that it remains competently uſeful to its proper End, tho' comparatively but in an inferiour degree: Suppoſe, I ſay, that all this ſhould be granted for Argument ſake, and we ſhould proceed with them upon their own terms, yet this would be no ſufficient Cauſe of refuſing Communion with the Church in the Ordinances of God thus adminiſtred.

1. For firſt, if it were, it could ſcarcely be lawful to hold Communion with any particular Church in the whole World: Becauſe it is not likely but that more or leſs of ſuch Circumſtances of Worſhip as are leſs uſeful, are uſed in all Churches in the World.

For conſidering the Fallibility of all Men, and their knowing but in part at beſt, I think it would be no Breach of Charity to ſuppoſe, that there is no Church-Conſtitution for Worſhip in all the World, nor perhaps any one way of external Adminiſtration of holy things humanely performed, but what is accompanied with circumſtantial Defects more or leſs, ſuch, I mean, as are leſs uſeful than others that might be made uſe of, were it not for Mens Imperfection that have the making or managing of them. So that the Notion or Opinion that circumſtantial Defects in the external manner of Worſhip is a juſt ground of Separation from it, is deſtructive of Catholick Communion it ſelf.

2. None account themſelves guilty of, or defiled by the Defects that are in the manner of a Miniſter's praying in the Pulpit, ſo long as the Matter is good: And there is the ſame reaſon in reference to circumſtantial Defects in Prayers made by the Liturgy. We can hardly ſay that any publick Prayer is ſo free from all Defects, but either in reſpect of the Method, or manner of expreſſing the Matter, it might poſſibly be better done than uſually it is done even by good Men. And therefore it is a very unreaſonable thing to make circumſtantial Defects in the manner of praying, a ground of Separation from Communion in Prayer.

3. If it were lawful to ſeparate from Communion in Worſhip, only becauſe leſs uſefully adminiſtred; then tho' there ſhould be no Liturgy in the caſe, where one Miniſter does but excel another in his Miniſtration, it would be lawful to ſeparate from that Congregation where the Worſhip or other Miniſtration is leſs uſefully performed, and in a manner inferiour to what is done by another in another place. But no Man will be ſo abſurd as to ſay this may be practiſed, for if it might, there would be no end of Separation, but a Door would be opened to all Confuſion, and People muſt be ſeparating as often as they conceive they have found one Miniſter of a Congregation to excel another in the manner of his Miniſtration. And if Separation may not be practiſed upon this account, then it cannot be duly practiſed for that reaſon, that the manner of Worſhip, performed according to the Liturgy, is leſs uſeful and leſs edifying than that which is or may be done after another manner.

4. It is not the *external manner* of Worſhip, but the *eſſential Matter* that is the *Rule* of Chriſtians Agreement in one Catholick Communion in Worſhip throughout the World. In the one they are ſtrictly bound up by particular Determination; in the other they are left more at large to govern themſelves to the beſt of their underſtanding by general Rules. And the different Circumſtances under which Chriſtians are in ſeveral Nations, will neceſſitate them to uſe ſome difference in practice even while they govern themſelves by the ſame general Rules. *Do all things to edifying*; *let the Peace of God rule in your Hearts to which ye are called in one Body*, are two general Rules; and Chriſtians are to have reſpect to one as well as the other in ordering their Practice: The ſame Circumſtances of Worſhip will not tend both to Edification and to Peace alſo, at one time and in one place, which will do ſo at another. Theſe Rules touching Edification and Peace would lead a Man to do otherwiſe in his Communion in Publick Worſhip with the Churches in *France*, in *Geneva*, in *Holland*, if he ſhould ſojourn in theſe places, than he does while he is here in *England*, and obſerves the Uſages of this National Church: For it would not tend to Peace and Edification for ſuch an one to make a diſturbance by labouring to ſet on foot among them all the ſame Circumſtances of Worſhip he had been accuſtomed to here becauſe he likes them better. And the ſame is true of ſuch as come from thoſe foreign Churches to ſojourn here, or in any other Reformed Church. The right way of maintaining true Catholick Communion, is to refuſe Communion with no Church in any Country that is Orthodox in the Faith, and in the Eſſence of Worſhip, and is not Schiſmatical, notwithſtanding any difference there may be in the degrees of Uſefulneſs in the external manner of Worſhip, between one Church and another, ſo long as they are all uſeful to their end in ſome good meaſure, and agreeable to general Rules in that caſe. I cannot take him for a right Catholick Chriſtian that can have no Communion with any Church where he comes but where the external Mode of Worſhip agrees with that which he moſt affects. *When I am at* Rome *I faſt on Saturdays*, *when I am here (at* Milan*) I do not*, ſaid St. *Ambroſe* to St. *Auſtin*.

5. One external Mode of Worſhip is not therefore uſeleſs becauſe another is more uſeful: For a greater degree of Uſefulneſs herein does not exclude a leſs, but only excel it. The Geſture of Kneeling in Prayer is better and more ſuitable to the nature of the Duty than that of ſtanding; yet that does not make it unlawful to pray ſtanding; one Verſion of the Pſalms is more uſeful to its end than another; yet that does not make it unlawful to joyn with thoſe who uſe that which is leſs uſeful. Nay, I will ſay more than this; That Mode of Worſhip which is beſt under ſome Circumſtances, is not ſo

under others: As when it cannot be uſed without cauſing ſuch a Diviſion of the Church as will produce moſt pernicious effects in reference to the Church it ſelf, and to Religion. Upon which account the Diſſenters ought to eſteem it better to joyn in the Worſhip performed by the Liturgy than in that performed in their Aſſemblies under the ill Circumſtances which do attend it, tho' they eſteem theirs to be better abſtractedly conſidered.

6. If a leſs degree of Uſefulneſs in the external manner of Worſhip ſhould be allowed to be a ſufficient ground of Separation from Communion in it where it is uſed, our Church-Diviſions would be irrepairable and beyond all remedy in whoſe hands ſoever the ordering the external Circumſtances and manner of Worſhip may fall, be they the *Diſſenters* themſelves, or any other. For when they ſhall have done the beſt they can therein, there will be others who will find out ſome circumſtantial Defects in it that will in their Judgment (and perhaps according to Truth too) render it leſs uſeful than it was capable of being made. There is ſuch a difference in the Thoughts and Apprehenſions of wiſe and good Men themſelves, and much more in thoſe that are weaker, that it is impoſſible unleſs they were all divinely inſpired, that they ſhould all agree to a Circumſtance in ſuch a thing as the external manner of Worſhip, but that ſome will think this, and others will think that might have been better done than it is.

There is a neceſſity therefore, unleſs we reſolve to perpetuate Diviſion and Separation, to take up with the beſt external way and manner of publick Worſhip we can obtain from the Wiſdom of the Nation, ſo long as it is competently uſeful to its end, and not to divide and ſeparate upon account of our eſteeming it leſs uſeful than we deſire. For otherwiſe it is not to be expected that the beſt Wiſdom that is to be found in the Nation ſhould ever be able to find out any way or means of curing our Church-Diviſions, and to put an end to our Unchriſtian-like Separations? And to give liberty for every one to do that which he eſteemeth beſt, is fartheſt of all from working ſuch a Cure.

Object. But it may be it will be ſaid, and indeed is alledged by ſome, That ſince every Man is to worſhip and ſerve God in the beſt manner he can, it follows, that therefore if there be one way of Publick Worſhip, which he eſteems better than another, he is to make uſe of that when he has opportunity of doing ſo. And by this thoſe that do eſteem the external manner of Worſhip uſed in ſeparate Aſſemblies to be better than that performed by the Liturgy in Parochial Congregations, do labour to defend their Separation.

To this ſeveral things are to be ſaid.

1. In ordering the Mode or Manner of Publick Worſhip, reſpect is to be had, not to what is moſt acceptable to one ſort of Men only, but to what is uſeful and profitable for the whole Community, as well thoſe who are of a lower Capacity as thoſe of a higher, as well thoſe who deſire a Liturgy, as thoſe that do not, and to what is moſt likely to preſerve Peace among them. And when the Government to this end hath ordered that part of the Publick Worſhip ſhall be performed by the Liturgy, and has allowed a liberty of performing part of it without by Pulpit-Prayer; Proviſion is thereby made to accommodate both the one and the other in the external manner of Worſhip. And Chriſtian Ingenuity and *Charity which ſeeketh not her own*, will teach Men to be content that others ſhould be accommodated as well as themſelves in things wherein they may, rather than to make a Diviſion in the Church becauſe all things are not ordered juſt as they would have them. And of this truly Chriſtian Strain was St. *Paul*, which made him ſay, *I pleaſe all Men in all things, not ſeeking mine own profit, but the profit of many that they may be ſaved*, 1 Cor. x. 33. And that it has been the Judgment of the Church from Age to Age, that it is beſt for the Church, all things conſidered, that the Publick Worſhip, at leaſt in part, ſhould be performed by a Liturgy, appears by their having ordered that ſo it ſhould be. And this ought to weigh much with humble and modeſt Men, remembring what St. *Paul* hath ſaid in another caſe to ſhew what eſteem ought to be had of the Uſages and Cuſtoms of the Churches of God: *If any Man ſeem contentious, we have no ſuch Cuſtom, neither the Churches of God*, 1 Cor. xi. 16.

2. To ſatisfie, yea, to convince ſuch as are under a Prejudice againſt worſhipping God by the uſe of our Engliſh Liturgy, that there is no ſuch difference as they fancy between the worſhipping God according to that, in Conjunction with Pulpit-Worſhip, and that way of Worſhip which they ſo much prefer before it, I ſhall offer this to their Conſideration, *viz.* That there have as worthy Men for Piety and Learning, both Conformiſts and Non-conformiſts, as perhaps ever *England* bred, lived and died in Communion in that Worſhip which has been performed by our Engliſh Liturgy, from the beginning of the Reformation downward. And we may well conclude that their Souls would never have proſpered and flouriſhed ſo as no Mens more, if there had been any ſuch difference as ſome Men imagine between the way of their Communion and that of others. Men do

not gather Grapes of Thorns, nor Figs of Thiſtles. That the Souls of many proſper no better under it, proceeds not from the nature of the Proviſion for them, but from their own groſs neglect both of it, and of themſelves, who doubtleſs would be ſuch as they are, whatever the manner of Worſhip is in the places where they live.

3. If we have, in the place where the Providence of God hath ſet us, means of worſhipping God publickly, competently uſeful and ſufficient to the ends of ſuch Worſhip, tho' it ſhould in ſome reſpects be inferiour to ſome other; yet if we can have no better without breaking Order, and running into Confuſion, nor without breaking one Commandment to obſerve another, nor without making our ſelves guilty of an unlawful Separation, and all the dreadful Conſequences of it, we may be ſaid to worſhip God in the beſt manner we can, tho' we content our ſelves with this, provided we be not wanting to improve it the beſt we can to its end. And the reaſon is, becauſe we then perform the beſt Worſhip we can that will conſiſt with Edification, Publick Order, and the Peace of the Church: And a Worſhip wherein all theſe concur, does beſt anſwer to general Rules for the manner of Publick Worſhip, taken together.

4. For Men to ſeparate from Parochial Communion in the Worſhip performed according to the Liturgy, to the end God may be worſhipped by them after a better manner in ſeparate Aſſemblies, *Is to do evil that good may come of it*; unleſs they can prove a neceſſity ſo to ſeparate or to ſin. For that to ſeparate without ſuch neceſſity *is to do evil*, is a Proteſtant *Maxim* aſſented to on all hands among them. And that they are under no ſuch neceſſity as to ſin if they do not ſo ſeparate, I have ſhewed before, by ſhewing that the ſaid Worſhip is neither corrupt in the Eſſence of it, nor is the external manner of Performance of it deficient as to its end and uſe; one of which muſt be proved againſt it, before Separation from it can be juſtified.

5. By ſuch a Separation as that we ſpeak of, Men really do much more diſſervice to God and the great Concerns of Religion and the Souls of Men, than they can with any colour of Reaſon pretend that by worſhipping God without the Liturgy, they honour him or Religion, or advantage the Souls of Men. The Effects of ſuch a Separation are very viſible which do too naturally flow from it; ſuch as the Deſtruction of Peace, Charity, and Humility, the engendering of Envy, Hatred, Strife, and Contention, to the great Reproach of Religion, and Diſhonour of Almighty God, and the hurt of Mens Souls. But how theſe great Evils can be pretended to be counter-ballanced by their Worſhip being performed without the Liturgy, I underſtand not; but do take it to be a Matter paſt doubt, that the Benefit which thoſe that ſeparate get by their Communion without a Liturgy over and above what they might have gained by Communion where that is uſed, will never equal the hurt they draw upon themſelves and others, and the wrong they do to Religion by their Separation: And if not, then whenever the account comes to be made up, and their Loſs to be compared with their Gain, they will be found exceeding great Loſers by their Separation, notwithſtanding all the Advantages they promiſed themſelves by it.

Thus far to ſhew that there is no juſt cauſe of ſeparating from Communion in the Worſhip performed by the Liturgy every Lord's Day. As for the Geſture of Kneeling in the Act of receiving the Lord's Supper; ſo much hath been written to prove it no ſin, and ſo little that looks like an Argument to prove the contrary, that if Men of Underſtanding would but lay aſide Prejudice, and impartially compare and conſider what hath been ſaid on both ſides, I cannot think that after this, any could be long without Satiſfaction touching the Lawfulneſs of complying with publick Order in that Matter; eſpecially conſidering how much is declared at the end of the Office for Adminiſtraion of the Lord's Supper in the Liturgy, to clear that Geſture in that Action from all Suſpicion of Bread-worſhip, more than in the Liturgy in uſe in the old Non-conformiſts Days when they ſcrupled it.

But if any, after they have done thus, ſhall not for all that be ſatisfied, yet that can be no more an Argument to them than it was to the old Non-Conformiſts, why they ſhould not hold Communion in the reſt of the Lord's-Day-Worſhip as they did; and not only ſo, but preſſed it alſo on others as their Duty to do ſo, and zealouſly inveigh'd againſt Separation from it as a great Evil, as their Writings do abundantly ſhew. And that for ſuch to hold Communion with their Brethren, ſo far as they can, is plain Matter of Duty, I have ſhewed before. And in caſe they ſhould thus hold Communion in the other parts of Worſhip, they need no more to live without the uſe of the Lord's Supper than the old Non-Conformiſts did, ſince I doubt not but they know how to be therein accommodated as well as they did, and as they were.

And ſo for Baptiſm, in caſe they cannot be active in the uſe of the Croſs *after it*, yet they may be paſſive, inaſmuch as it is not uſed as any ſign of God's conveying Grace, as Sacraments are, but only as a token of Duty; nor as any Rite in Baptiſm neither, but only in receiving the Perſons baptized into the Church after they are baptized; and ſeems to be no more ground of ſcruple, than laying the hand upon, and kiſſing the Book in ſwearing is, which is a piece of Divine Worſhip, which none ſcruple but *Quakers*.

There are others who frame to themſelves other Reaſons of Separation from Parochial Communion in Worſhip, beſides its being performed by the Liturgy; as, namely, becauſe thoſe Congregations are not, as they pretend, conſtituted of viſible Saints, nor by a Church-Covenant. Who theſe are, is well known, for whoſe ſakes ſeveral of my former Enquiries are made: In which there are ſuch things produced from the holy Scriptures, as may, I ſuppoſe, be ſufficient to ſatisfie their Reaſon, if not their Prejudice, touching their Miſtake in theſe Opinions.

As for their Exceptions againſt the Government of the Church by Biſhops as *Dioceſan*, how they would make Communion with the particular Congregations under their Juriſdiction unlawful upon that account, I underſtand not; unleſs they think the Miniſters of thoſe Congregations, by whom the Ordinances are adminiſtred, to be no true Miniſters, becauſe Epiſcopally ordained, and not by Presbyters. And if this ſhould be their Scruple, they may eaſily receive ſatisfaction by conſidering that Dioceſan Biſhops were *Preſbyters* before they were *Biſhops*, and therefore muſt needs remain ſo after. For they were not diveſted of any Miniſterial Power or Authority by being made Biſhops, but only inveſted with a ſuper-addition of Authority and Power they had not before. So that they who are ordained by them, are ordained by a Presbyterial Authority and more. And with this the old Non-Conformiſts ſatisfied themſelves touching the Validity of their Miniſterial Authority received by Ordination from the Biſhops that then were.

Some again diſlike Parochial Communion, becauſe the Civil Power is ſo much concerned as it is in Eccleſiaſtical Affairs relating to it one way or other, and for that all ſuch things are not left wholly to the ordering of Eccleſiaſtical Rulers, as they were in the Apoſtles times, and long after.

But there is not the ſame Reaſon why they ſhould be ſo left now, as there was why they were ſo then. The reaſon why they were wholly left then to the ordering of an Eccleſiaſtical Power was, becauſe there was no Civil Powers as *Chriſtian* then in being, ſo that they could not promote Chriſtianity better any other way. But it is not ſo now: For it is ſhewed in our laſt former Enquiry but one, that the Affairs of the Goſpel, and the Salvation of Men in a Chriſtian Kingdom or State, may better be provided for, and promoted by a National Conſtitution, than they can be without it. And that therefore things of this nature are not to be ordered as if we were ſtill in a *Pagan* Kingdom, when we are not.

For where the Reaſon of things is alter'd, it is but reaſonable and fit that there ſhould be a ſuitable Alteration in the Things themſelves. Thus the Geſture of Standing with Loins girt, and a Staff in the Hand, appointed to be uſed in eating the Paſſover at the firſt Inſtitution of it, for that it was then to be eaten in *haſte*, was afterwards altered to another Geſture by the Church, when that Circumſtance of eating in *haſte* ceaſed; and our Saviour himſelf did eat it in that Poſture, to which the Church had changed it; which is a Conſideration of very great weight in reference to this and ſome other Caſes. And the Obligation of the Ceremonial Law ceaſed upon the ſame ground, when the Subſtance was come which had been prefigured by Ceremonial Rites. And the like might be obſerved touching the diſcontinuance and diſuſe of Anointing the Sick, Waſhing Diſciples Feet, and the Kiſs of Charity, and ſome other things which were obliging until the Reaſon of the Obligation ceaſed.

But altho' the Civil Power doth concern it ſelf by a National Conſtitution to order and direct in things appertaining to the Church, for the promoting of Religion, and the Salvation of Men, yet it does not this without the advice and aſſiſtance of thoſe that are Officers, and bear Rule in the Church. And when the Civil Powers have gone as far as they think fit in ordering and directing by Eccleſiaſtical Advice and Aſſiſtance, yet they do not act any thing themſelves peculiar to the Miniſtry of the Church, but leave all ſuch things wholly to them who are inveſted with Miniſterial Authority; reſerving only to themſelves a Power of reſtraining ſuch Men from an undue Exerciſe of their Office tending to publick Diſturbance.

And thus I have endeavoured to ſatisfie the *Diſſenters*, that there is no ſufficient Reaſon or Cauſe for them to ſeparate from the publick Worſhip of our Parochial Aſſemblies, and that their Pretences for their doing ſo, when narrowly look'd into, are found to have nothing of Subſtance in them ſufficient to bear them out in it. And if I am not miſtaken in my Allegations and Reaſonings, I cannot diſcern how their Separation can poſſibly be defended from being an unlawful Schiſm. And if it be, I am ſure they have upon many accounts great reaſon to deſiſt from engaging farther in it.

QUERY XV.

Suppoſing things touching viſible Church-Memberſhip and Communion to be as they have been repreſented in our former Enquiries: Yet how do they tend to leſſen our Church-Diviſions?

THE Anſwer to which is, That if the Matters of our Enquiry be as they have been repreſented, then they tend to leſſen our Church-Diviſions, by removing and taking away the very Foundation on which they and our Church-Separations are in great part at leaſt built. For I do not know any one of the different Parties among the Proteſtant-Diſſenters (except thoſe called *Presbyterians)* who do not found their Separation from our Pariſh Churches (at leaſt principally) upon this Suppoſition, that they are not *conſtituted according to the Order of the Goſpel.* And why not according to the Order of the Goſpel, but becauſe as they ſay they are not conſtituted of Goſpel-matter, that is, not of viſible Saints, but of ſuch as, for a great part of them at leaſt, were never duly reputed to be Regenerate, or to be of the inviſible Church; and their meaning is (as I collect both from their Writings and Converſe) That they were not at firſt, nor ſince, conſtituted of ſuch particular Members only, as at the time of ſuch their Conſtitution had a probable appearance of Regeneration, but of all baptized Perſons, however they proved, good or bad, and without any other Probation or Diſcrimination.

Now if thoſe things be true, which have been endeavoured to be proved to be ſo in the management of the former Enquiries; then this ground, on which they build their Separation, is altogether unſound, and ſuch as has no firmneſs or ſubſtance in it, but is only imaginary. For our Pariſh Congregations are conſtituted of Perſons viſibly in Covenant with God the Father, Son, and Holy Ghoſt, by being baptized in their Name, and thereby engaged to be theirs, to worſhip and ſerve the Father by the Son, through the aſſiſtance of the Spirit. And of ſuch, and no other, were the Churches planted by the Apoſtles conſtituted: And this Covenanting was then, and ſo is now, the viſible formal Difference between thoſe of the Viſible Church, and thoſe of the World: All under this Character and Badge, and none but they, were of the viſible Church; and therefore it muſt needs be the Conſtitutive Form of that Relation, viſible Church-memberſhip, *All that have been baptized into Chriſt, have put on Chriſt*, and are viſibly Chriſtians, and of Chriſt's Church. How ancient and how long before Chriſt's appearance in the World in our Nature, this way of conſtituting viſible Church-members has been, by ſuch a Rite as God appointed, I have ſhewed before.

And if this viſible Covenanting with God by Baptiſm, be that by which Perſons become Members of the viſible Church, then a probable appearance of Regeneration, or a Reputation of being of the Church as inviſible, cannot be it that makes them viſible Church-Members, though it does qualifie them for it, unleſs this probable appearance of Regeneration, and Covenanting with God by Baptiſm, be one and the ſame thing: And if they be, then thoſe of which our Pariſh Churches are conſtituted, have a probable appearance of Regeneration, or of being of the inviſible Church, and then they are conſtituted of Matter according to thoſe Diſſenters own mind: And if ſo, then we may well hope they will no longer ſeparate from them, as if they were not conſtituted of qualified Matter. So that things are brought at laſt to this iſſue, That theſe Diſſenters muſt either overthrow this Plea againſt the Reaſon and Ground of their Separation, and prove that viſible Covenanting with God by Baptiſm is not that by which viſible Church-Memberſhip is made, or elſe it will certainly overthrow this Plea of theirs for their Separation. And if they will ſo much as attempt to overthrow this Plea againſt them, they muſt row all the way againſt the Stream and ſtrong Tide of the Scriptures, and againſt the Stream of Antiquity, and the ſenſe of the ancient Church from the Apoſtles times downwards, who always eſteemed Baptiſm the *door of entrance* into the viſible Church; and conſequently that all ſuch as had paſs'd through Baptiſm, were within the Church.

And as it is more agreeable to Scripture, ſo it is much more reaſonable to ſay, that Men cannot ſeem to be of the Church as inviſible, without being firſt of the Church as viſible,

viſible, than it is to ſay their being of the Church as viſible, proceeds from their ſeeming to be of the Church as inviſible. For as touching Mens entrance into the Church by Baptiſm, our Saviour hath ſaid, *Except a Man be born of Water and of the Spirit, he cannot enter into the Kingdom of God*, John iii. 5. And Baptiſm is enjoyned in order to the obtaining Remiſſion of Sin and Salvation, which are Privileges of the Church as inviſible, *Acts* ii. 38. and xxii. 16. *Mark* xvi. 16. So that according to theſe Scriptures, Mens being and ſeeming to be of the Church as inviſible, and their ſharing in the Privileges of it, ſeems ordinarily to depend upon their being of the viſible Church by Baptiſm.

Now one would think a Notion ſo prepoſterous as this oppoſed appears to be, ſhould be very unfit to make a Foundation to build Churches upon, or to juſtifie a Separation from thoſe which have a ſubſtantial Foundation, the Scriptures I mean.

But if Mens ſeeming in the Apprehenſion of others to be of the Church as inviſible, did not depend upon their being of the Church viſible, yet ſuch ſeeming could be no proper or fit Rule by which to judge, determine, and conclude who are, and who are not of the viſible Church. And the reaſon is, becauſe it is *Arbitrarious and uncertain*: For Mens being or not being acknowledged to be of the viſible Church, would depend upon the Uncertainty of Mens Opinions and Affections: And thoſe would ſeem in ſome Mens Apprehenſions to be of the Church inviſible, which to others would ſeem otherwiſe: And then thoſe would be owned by ſome to be of the Viſible Church, which would be denied to be ſo by others. Of the Truth of all which this preſent Age hath furniſhed us with plentiful Experience: And if this ſhould be the Rule obſerved through the whole Chriſtian World, it would be the ready way to make Parties and Sidings, Unchriſtian Oppoſitions, and uncharitable Cenſurings among Chriſtians, in all parts of the World, as it has done here in this Nation.

Whereas to be viſibly in Covenant with God by Baptiſm, is a *certain*, *fixed*, *a common*, *open and publick Rule*, by which to judge who are of the viſible Church, ſo long as they continue to own themſelves under the Obligation of that Covenant; and have neither ſo far violated it as to give Divine Worſhip to other Objects than their God, nor incurr'd to themſelves Excommunication by Hereſie, or other ſcandalous living. And this Rule gives no occaſion of Diviſion in the Church as the other does, but tends to bind and hold the ſeveral Members together in the *Unity of the Spirit and Bond of Peace*: To which purpoſe St. *Paul* urgeth it upon the Chriſtians, Motive-wiſe, *Eph.* iv.

All theſe things conſidered, one would wonder how Men of Learning and Piety ſhould ever be betrayed into ſuch Notions and Principles, and to lay ſo mighty a Streſs on them as they have done, when yet they have no more colour from Scripture or Reaſon than ever yet they have been able to produce for their Defence.

But to make the beſt of it I can, we will ſuppoſe it was the Appearance of a more thorow Reformation, and more pure Communion, which in their Apprehenſion was to be obtained by theſe new Methods, that firſt drew them into this way. Reformation and pure Communion, are things which ſound mighty well in good Mens Ears, and which they can eaſily believe to be well-pleaſing unto God. And as there is an Appearance of *greater Strictneſs* in that way than in that of more general Communion, ſo it was eaſie for them hereupon to think there *was more Purity in it alſo*, which has been the prevailing Reaſon which has carried Multitudes into *Quakeriſm*. And when ſuch an Opinion has once ſeated it ſelf in Mens minds, they quickly grow confident that nothing in Scripture can be againſt it: And then they can eaſily ſanſie that every ſlight Appearance and Sound of words in Scripture is for them, upon which they can but put ſuch a Gloſs as ſhall favour them, though it be nothing to their purpoſe when impartially ſcann'd.

And had their Opinions and Practice which I have oppoſed, and wherein they differ from all other good Men, been Matter of Purity indeed, I ſhould not have made one to find fault with them. But if this their way be diſagreeable to God's pure Word, (which is the Rule by which we muſt judge of what is pure, and what is impure) and if it run counter to our Lord's Method laid down in the Scripture of ordering the Affairs of his Church, in very material points, then it will be found an impure Practice, a ſinful Mixture, and a Corruption to be purged out of the Church: And yet ſuch it is, if I have not miſrepreſented that Method of our Lord in the general Tenour of my Enquiries. And indeed, if I have not taken wrong Meaſures, and unleſs very much miſtaken, their Communion in their State of Separation, if taken altogether, and the Terms on which it is held, muſt needs be far more impure than the Parochial Communion they have withdrawn from.

There are Extreams on both hands, as well on the right hand as on the left: And there is a Proneneſs in Men to run into the one by flying from the other. And good Men, eſpecially in Matters of publick Reformation, are through miſtaken Zeal more in danger of running into an extream on the right hand than into one on the left, and in flying from *Babylon*, to run beyond *Jeruſalem*. And there is a danger of doing much hurt in the Church by *over-doing* as well as there is by *under-doing*, and both Extreams are carefully to be avoided.

The *New-England* Miniſters in their Anſwer to Mr. *Davenport*, formerly mentioned, do ſay; *We may be very injurious to Chriſt as well as the Souls of Men, by too much ſtraitening and narrowing the Bounds of his Kingdom or viſible Church here on Earth. Certainly Enlargement, ſo it be a regular Enlargement, is a very deſirable thing. In Church-Reformation it is an obſervable Truth (ſaith* Pareus *on the Parable of the Tares) that they which are for too much Straitneſs do more hurt than profit the Church.* So much they, *p.* 45. Thus the miſtaken Zeal of the *Donatiſts* and *Novatians* of old, for a purer Church, and purer Communion, as was thought or pretended put them upon ſeparating from other Orthodox Chriſtians, which proved an Inlet to the moſt Unchriſtian Practices imaginable, for the carrying on their undertaken Reformation, and deſtructive of the Peace of the Church in the higheſt, and lamentably ſcandalous to the Chriſtian Religion; in the Doctrinal part whereof notwithſtanding they were for the moſt part all agreed, as we are now, and differ moſtly about Diſciplinary Points as they did then.

Such a Strictneſs in Church-Reformation as does ſo narrow and leſſen the viſible Church, as to endeavour to reduce it to the ſize of the inviſible, is many ways hurtful, as I have ſhewed in my Reaſons for the contrary. It tends to hinder and leſſen the great Work of thorow and ſound Converſion in the Church: It tends to hinder the ſpreading and propagating of the Chriſtian Religion: It tends to harden Men in an unſafe Condition: It tends to deprive *good* Men of Communion with the Church, under the Notion of *bad*: It tends to ruine the Church as to its Exiſtence in the World: And laſtly, it tends to beget and foment Diviſions, Contentions, Feuds, Envyings, Strifes, and undue Cenſurings among Chriſtians, and ſo to caſt the Church into a ſickly State, and ſuch as threatens her ſpiritual Life: Beſides, the Encouragement and Advantage which is thereby given to our common Enemies to plot and attempt againſt us. And thus *over-doing*, is indeed *un-doing*.

And leſt any ſhould be offended at a Diſcourſe againſt over-much Strictneſs. It ought to be conſidered that there is a great difference between a Man's being ſtrict towards himſelf, and in reference to his own Practice, and his being ſtrict and ſevere towards others in depriving them of the outward Privileges of Chriſtian Profeſſors. A Man cannot well be too ſtrict in keeping a narrow Watch over his own Heart, Words, and Ways, in governing his Appetites, Thoughts and Paſſions, Tongue and Actions. Nor does this kind of Strictneſs depend upon ſuch a Purity of Communicants or Communion in which no carnal Chriſtians have any ſhare: But it depends upon, or rather it conſiſts in a due Attention of Mens minds to their own Duty, and to the Opportunities of receiving good by the Ordinances of God.

The reſt of the Gueſts in the Parable were not the worſe, nor did fare the worſe, for that there was one among them that had not on the Wedding-Garment. The Ordinances of God do not the leſs avail good Men that with a due frame of Mind wait upon God in them, tho' unregenerate Men participate with them therein.

And when by the Cenſures of the Church, capital Offenders, and notorious ſcandalous Perſons are deprived of Communion with the Church, it is not for that reaſon as if the Ordinances of God were the leſs uſeful to the good by ſuch Mens ſharing in them: But it is to bring ſuch Perſons to Shame, and by that means to Repentance, and to free the Church from that Diſhonour which otherwiſe would ſtick upon it for tolerating ſuch ſcandalous Perſons among them: And partly alſo for Admonition to others, and to prevent the tainting of ſuch as are leſs wary by their ill Example and familiar Converſe. But otherwiſe bad Mens ſharing in external Communion with the Church, is no ways likely to hinder the Growth of good Men in Grace, or their profiting by the Ordinances of God there adminiſtred. *To the pure all things are pure:* Bad Men cannot in the leaſt pollute the Ordinances of God to the good by their participating with them in them.

And therefore if God would have ſuch as are not obnoxious to Excommunication for capital Crimes, tho' not regenerate, to be continued in the Church, being once received into it by Baptiſm, to the end they might be under the Influence of his Ordinances for their Converſion: I ſay, if God would have it thus in order to their Converſion; no good Man ſhould envy or grudge them this Benefit of enjoying the means of ſuch Converſion. And they eſpecially ſhould not who have themſelves been converted and regenerated in the ſame way of general Communion, and by the means therein afforded; which yet has been the caſe, I doubt not, of ſuch as have been leading Men in modelling this new Church-way, as it has been of many others. For their Congregations at the firſt, and long after, conſiſted ſcarcely of any other than what had been drawn out of the Parochial Congregations where they had been converted, if they were indeed converted, as they ſuppoſed them to be, before their incorporating and aſſociating in their new way. And if they had continued in the ſame way wherein they were by God's Bleſſing upon the means of Grace they therein enjoyed, made ſuch as they then were, they might without doubt have attained to as much growth in all Chriſtian Virtues as ever they did afterwards, and I think much more, provided they had but diligently and carefully improved the ſame Means and Opportunities by which they had acquired what they had then attained to.

For the Word and Ordinances of the Goſpel, which are the means of increaſe of Grace, as well as of the beginning of it, are the ſame, and will produce the ſame Effects in thoſe who with a good frame of Mind attend upon God in them, as well when Unregenerate Men ſhare in them, as when they do not. And therefore neither the holy Prophets, or other holy Men of greateſt Piety under the Old Teſtament, nor our Saviour or his Apoſtles, or any other holy Men in the Primitive Times of Chriſtianity, did ever decline the publick Worſhip, or the uſe of God's Ordinances in ſuch Aſſemblies, where bad Men as well as good had Communion in them. Such a mixture of bad with good cannot hinder good Men from any growth in Grace by thoſe Ordinances, if they have but a due care to make the beſt improvement of them they can. And therefore there can be no *need* of ſeparating and new aſſociating, in reference to Mens growth in Grace, tho' we ſhould ſuppoſe it poſſible they could be ſure it were ſimply lawful. Which makes ſuch Separation on the one hand, and Aſſociating on the other, the more inexcuſable, when it cauſes ſo much hurt to the Church in general, and ſuch obſtruction to the ſucceſs of the Goſpel in the World, as hath been ſhewn it does, and would do more if it ſhould more generally prevail.

The *few Names* in the Church of *Sardis* did not defile their Garments by communicating with the greater number of thoſe that had: Nor did they thereby deprive themſelves of the Benefit which Chriſt deſigned them in his Ordinances, either by having their Minds diſcompoſed by ſuch a mixture of Communicants, or otherwiſe: For if they had, we cannot think that our Saviour, who *walked in the midſt of his golden Candleſticks, ſearching the Reins and the Hearts, to give to every one according to their Works,* would have applauded them as he did, with promiſe of great Reward, ſaying, *They ſhall walk with me in white, for they are worthy,* Rev. iii. 4.

And now for a Concluſion, That no Man may take offence at the Diſcourſe in theſe Papers, nor at me for the ſake of it, I muſt inform thoſe, that are moſt likely to do ſo, of two things:

Firſt, That if I had diſcerned that what is herein pleaded had had no better Foundation than ſome few obſcure Texts of Scripture, of dubious and uncertain Interpretation, I ſhould not thus far have engaged in it as I have done. But if it ſhall appear to others, as it does to me, that I have the general ſtream of the Scriptures on my ſide herein, both of the Old Teſtament and of the New, both as to matter of Doctrine, and matter of Fact; I hope I ſhall be excuſed for making this Eſſay for the Satisfaction of thoſe that moſt need it.

Secondly, That I take the Scope and Deſign of the whole of the Diſcourſe in theſe Papers, to be perfectly agreeable to Chriſtian Charity, as tending to no Man's hurt, but to the general good of all ſorts, elſe I ſhould not have been ſatisfied in it. For I know not how to think any thing Orthodox in Divinity which is againſt Charity. Now if the extent of viſible Church-memberſhip and Communion pleaded for, tends more to the Converſion of ſuch of them as are unregenerate, and not otherwiſe obnoxious to Excommunication, than the excluding ſuch from both would do, then what I plead for is great Charity to them.

And this extent of viſible Church-Memberſhip and Communion tends to propagate and ſpread the Chriſtian Religion among thoſe that are yet without the Church, more than the narrower way can do, as has been ſhewn; and therefore it's matter of Charity to them alſo.

And in that this more general way of viſible Church-Memberſhip and Communion is not pleaded to the denying the uſefulneſs of Excommunication in reference to capital Offenders, but the contrary; that's matter of Charity to them alſo: Becauſe by that they may be brought to Shame, and ſo unto Repentance, when they ſee all ſober Chriſtians aſhamed to own them, or to be numbered with them, as being a diſgrace to the Religion they profeſs. And I am ſo far from being leſs for the exerciſe of Church-Diſcipline upon the proper Objects of it, than our Diſſenting Friends are, That I think it a piece of great Uncharitableneſs towards groſs Sinners, when it is neglected by them to whom the exerciſe of it does belong. Only I would have the Scripture-Rules obſerved in the exerciſe of it, and not to uſe ſuch Severity, as to exclude all ſuch from Church-Communion as may be ſuſpected to be unregenerate, when yet not guilty of any Hereſie, ſcandalous Crimes, or groſs Ignorance: For Men may give occaſion of Suſpicion of their Unregeneracy by ſuch ſinful neglects of doing good, as yet may be no juſt ground of Excommunication.

Neither is this more extenſive way of viſible Church-memberſhip and Communion hurtful to thoſe that are good, but gives them opportunity of doing the more good; and therefore is no matter of Uncharitableneſs unto them neither. For this will not hinder them from being as good as they have a mind to be, if nothing elſe do. They may be as ſtrict as they will in reference to themſelves: And they will not be at the leſs, but the more liberty to converſe with the beſt Men for their own improvement in Wiſdom and Goodneſs.

And then it will be beneficial to them, by putting them into a capacity, and giving them an opportunity of doing more good than otherwiſe they could. For while good Men do not ſeparate themſelves from formal Profeſſors of the ſame Religion, nor exclude them from Communion with them in the means of Grace; they the better preſerve their own eſteem among them, and the eſteem of that wherein they excel them; and they will be the more ready to hearken to them in their Advice and Counſel, and in their Admonition or Reproof, and the ſooner be brought to imitate their Virtues. Whereas a contrary Carriage produces contrary Effects. For Separation from Neighbours, as no Members of a truly Chriſtian Church, when yet they are ſo, breeds more or leſs Eſtrangedneſs between them, and that begets Prejudices againſt them, and Jealouſies and Suſpicions concerning them, as Men wanting in true Chriſtian Charity and Humility, which will make them the leſs valued, and their good Counſels and Exhortations the leſs regarded, and their good Example, in what is worthy Imitation, the leſs taking with, and the leſs gaining upon ſuch Men.

A Diſcourſe likewiſe which evinceth a more extenſive Viſible Church-Memberſhip and Communion to be approved of by God than theſe Diſſenting Brethren will allow, muſt needs be matter of Charity to themſelves more eſpecially. For it tends to reſcue and deliver them from ſuch Error as makes them injurious to the Church of God, and the Affairs of the Goſpel in the World. And what good Man is there that would not be glad to be delivered from ſuch Apprehenſions as made him troubleſome even to good Men themſelves without any cauſe! and from ſuch Opinions as have kindled a Fire of Contention and Diſcord in the Church, deſtructive of that Chriſtian Charity, without which all we do in Religion will ſignifie nothing. It is certainly a great Grief to all good Men, that there ſhould be any Bar in the way to keep them at any undue diſtance from one another; and conſequently it muſt be very grateful to them whenever it is removed.

This more general way of viſible Church-Memberſhip and Communion being then more uſeful and beneficial to all ſorts of Men than the other is, and truly hurtful to none: I ſay, it being a way and method ſo full of Charity in the Nature of it, and ſo agreeable to moral Principles of Wiſdom and Goodneſs, as it appears to be, would commend it ſelf to right Reaſon, and to that natural Light that is in Men, if it ſhould not have had that Evidence from Supernatural Revelation to back and authoriſe it which it has. The Conſideration of which, as it was a great motive to me to engage in the defence of it, ſo I hope it will plead my Excuſe in every good Man's Conſcience for this Undertaking. For indeed I, that do certainly know my own Mind, do know that I have more Love and true Reſpect for the Perſons, whoſe Opinions I have herein oppoſed, than to wiſh or do any thing that tends to their hurt.

And now methinks I might reaſonably promiſe this to my ſelf, that ſuch as love Truth for Truth's ſake, and are of the number of thoſe that will *buy the Truth*, but not *ſell it* at any Rate whatſoever, ſhould not be unwilling to lay aſide all Prejudice and Self-intereſt, and to conſider impartially a thing of this nature, by what hand ſoever it be prepared; and yet that is all that I deſire from them, for whoſe ſakes this Diſcourſe was compoſed.

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THE Grand ERROR OF THE QUAKERS Detected and Confuted:

SHEWING

How they contradict GOD's Method of directing Men to Salvation, by following that Light within which comes by outward Teaching, by their directing them to ſeek it by following that Light within, which is wrought without External Teaching by the Scriptures, or by Men.

Wherein thoſe things are conſidered likewiſe which have betray'd them into Deluſion.

BRITISH MUSEUM

THE Grand ERROR OF THE QUAKERS Detected and Confuted.

SIRS,

I Have cauſe to think that your unmeaſurable Confidence of the Truth and Goodneſs of your own Way, in oppoſition to the beſt Men that differ from you, and the ſcornful Entertainment the beſt Endeavours of Men have met with, to convince you of Error and Miſtake, have diſcouraged many of thoſe from attempting it, who are beſt able herein to ſerve you. But my Love to your Souls, and Deſires of recovering you to a ſound Mind, being ſtronger than my Hopes of effecting it by any Endeavours of mine, have prevailed with me to offer a few things to you however, whether you will hear, or whether you will forbear; not being without all hope, but that it may have ſuch effect upon ſome among you, or inclining to you, as may be worth my labour.

§ I. You know it was ſaid by our Bleſſed Saviour, That *ſtraight is the Gate, and narrow is the Way that leadeth unto Life, and few there be that find it.* And I little doubt, but that an *Appearance* at the firſt of a greater *Strictneſs* and *Narrowneſs* in your Way, than in theirs that differ from you, was a Temptation to ſome injudicious Perſons I have known, and probably to many other ſuch, to ſtrike into it, as ſuppoſing it muſt be the beſt and ſafeſt, becauſe the narroweſt and feweſt of it.

Which Snare, I preſume, they would eaſily have eſcaped, had they been but wiſe enough to have conſidered theſe two things:

Firſt, That that Narrowneſs and Strictneſs, conſiſting in outward *Auſterities* and *Incivilities*, wherein you differed from other ſober Chriſtians, was no Narrowneſs or Strictneſs of *God*'s *appointing*, but a piece of Superſtition of your *own deviſing*, when you placed Religion in it. And you are not the firſt that have been deceived with ſuch Appearances; ſeveral Orders among the *Papiſts* have been built upon the ſame bottom, long before your Way was heard of in the World. And we read of others, long before them alſo, who ſubjected themſelves to like Ordinances of Men; ſuch as *touch not*, *taſte not*, *handle not*: Such things having *a ſhew of Wiſdom* in Will-worſhip and Humility, and *neglecting of the Body*, not in any honour, to the ſatisfying of the Fleſh, as the Apoſtle ſpeaks, *Col.* ii. 20, 23. In reſpect of which, and other like little things, that had no real Worth or Goodneſs in them, the falſe Apoſtles pretended to more Strictneſs than was in the Apoſtles of Chriſt themſelves; whom they repreſented but as Men *walking according to the Fleſh*, in compariſon of themſelves, 2 *Cor.* x. 2. And the *Phariſees* before them, by reaſon of ſome Auſterities they uſed about Faſtings, external Purifications, and ſhunning the Company of *Publicans*, pretended to greater Strictneſs in Religion than was in Chriſt's Diſciples, yea, than in Chriſt himſelf, whom they accounted to be but a *Gluttonous Perſon*, and a *Wine-bibber*, a *Friend of Publicans and Sinners*, in compare with themſelves. By ſuch appearance of extraordinary Zeal and Strictneſs, though, alas, it be but in things that do not tend at all to the bettering or perfecting Men in their Nature. *Deceivers* are wont to procure to themſelves a Reputation among People of weak Minds; by advantage whereof, as of a Bait that covers the Hook, they obtain a ready Reception for their moſt dangerous Doctrines.

Again, They would not ſo eaſily have been overcome with the aforeſaid Appearances of Narrowneſs and Strictneſs, if they had but well conſidered, that in reference to thoſe things wherein the Narrowneſs and Strictneſs of Chriſt's way to Life doth moſt conſiſt; and wherein he hath tied up his Followers to Strictneſs indeed; ye have taken liberty to walk looſely, and to caſt off his Yoke; and that is, in not governing your Spirits, Paſſions, and Tongues, according to the Laws of his Kingdom and Government. He hath ſtrictly enjoyned his Followers to be humble and lowly in Heart, to eſteem others better than themſelves, to ſpeak Evil of no Man, but to ſhew all Meekneſs to all Men; yea, and in Meekneſs to inſtruct even thoſe that oppoſe themſelves; to bleſs thoſe that curſe them, to overcome others Evil with their Good; not to judge, and the like. But quite contrary hereunto, your very Leaders, and ſuch as have been eſteemed moſt eminent among you, have by their Examples taught you to rail on, and revile, if not bitterly to curſe ſuch as wiſhed you no harm, but ſought your good; and proudly to exalt and juſtifie your ſelves, and to deſpiſe and ſet at naught, yea, to judge, condemn, and ſentence to eternal Deſtruction, ſuch whom ye ought to have honoured, as probably much better than your ſelves. What leſs ſignifies ſuch Language as this? *Thou accurſed, thou Beaſt, to whom the Plagues of God are due, a Reprobate, a Child of Darkneſs thou art; thou diſobedient one, upon whom God will render Vengeance in flaming Fire; thou dark, blind Hypocrite; thee Man that is* Cain; *with the Light of Chriſt thou art ſeen, and with the Life judged and condemned; thou Sorcerer, thou dead Beaſt, and ſo art not juſtified before God, nor never ſhall be;——But ſuch polluted filthy Beaſts as thou: Thou polluted Beaſt——who art a Reprobate; and thou ſhalt find him to be thine eternal Condemnation; thou dark Beaſt and Conjurer; thou dark, ſottiſh Beaſt.* Works of *Edw. Burroughs*, p. 29, 32, 33, 34. With abundance more in other of your Writings. This truly is Language more like to proceed (one would think) from ſuch *preſumptuous*, daring, arrogant Men, *whoſe Mouth ſpeaketh great ſwelling words*; as *Peter* and *Jude* deſcribe; than from Men inſpired with any of that Spirit of Meekneſs and Gentleneſs which was in Jeſus Chriſt. If Humility, Charity, and Modeſty, were the prevailing Conſtitution of theſe Mens Spirits, as it is of thoſe who have been taught of Chriſt, as the Truth is in Jeſus, and are made one Spirit with him; I ſhould think they would by no means ſpeak at this rate.

And yet this, and ſuch like, is not the Language only of ſome bold, raſh, heady Women, or Men leſs conſiderable among you, tranſported with furious Zeal; but even of *Ed. Burroughs* himſelf, one of the Chieftains among you in his time: And that, not upon any ſudden ſurprize of Paſſion, but upon ſo much Deliberation as Men uſe in writing of Books; and upon no other Provocation, than a bare propounding certain Queries touching ſome points of Doctrine, about which you and others differ. And truly in vain do you boaſt of the Light within you, if you have not ſo much left as to diſcern this Behaviour altogether unbecoming, not only a Man of Note among Chriſtians, nor only of any worthy the Name of a Chriſtian, how weak ſoever; but even of any that is worthy but of the Name of a Man, and not a——. And yet how are thoſe Works in which theſe things are found, applauded as the Works of a *Prophet of the Lord*, by ſeveral Men of great Note among you; ſuch as *George Fox*, *George Whitehead*, *Francis Howgil*, and *Joſiah Coale*, who adjoin their ſeveral Teſtimonials to them. And wherefore do I lay theſe things before you, but to give you occaſion to reflect upon your ſelves and your way with a jealous Eye; and to convince you that ye know not of what Spirit ye are of; but that while ye have thought ye have been walking in the Light, ye have been walking in Darkneſs; and that whilſt ye have fanſied your ſelves the moſt ſpiritual among Chriſtians, ye have diſcovered your ſelves to be but carnal. If any Man among you ſeemeth to be religious; and *bridleth not his Tongue*, but deceiveth his own Heart, *that Man's Religion is vain*, Jam. i. 26. If there be bitter Zeal, glory not, and lie not againſt the Truth; for that Wiſdom is not from above as you are apt to boaſt it to be, but from beneath; and is Earthly, Senſual and Deviliſh, *Jam.* iii. 15.

But it is not ſtrange if Men be left firſt or laſt to fall into Unchriſtian Practices, who out of Affectation of Novelty, and Singularity in Doctrine, and a deſire to appear more ſublime in their Notions, than all that went before them, have left the old beaten Path of Chriſtian Doctrine, in which the ſeveral Generations of holy Men have lived and walked, from the Apoſtles time downwards. For when Men wax ſpiritually proud and wanton, in rejecting the plain Way and Method, which God hath choſen to bring Men to ſaving Faith, Repentance, and a holy Life, and to continue them in it; and invent and chuſe another in its ſtead, and call it by the Name of his, and preach to, and preſs it upon the People in his Name; he takes no pleaſure in their ſo doing, nor doth he delight to vouchſafe his concurrent Grace and Bleſſing therewith, which he doth with his own Way and Method, by which it becomes effectual to make Men good, and to keep them ſo. And therefore, as I ſaid, 'tis no marvel if Men by degrees loſe in the Goodneſs of their Fame and Temper, which ſometimes they had attained, while they kept cloſe to God's Way and Method, in which he beſtows it; and degenerate into Men of quite another Spirit and Temper, when they forſake that, and run into another of their own Invention and Choice. The diſobedient *Jews*, who had declined from the better way of their Anceſtors, and grew into a worſe Spirit and Temper; they had a Zeal of God ſtill, but not according to Knowledge. They did will and run for Juſtification and Life; they followed after Righteouſneſs, and yet attained not to the Law of Righteouſneſs; and wherefore? But becauſe they ſought it not by Faith; which was the Method of God's chuſing; but as it were by the Works of the Law, which was a Method of their own chuſing, in Oppoſition to God's, *Rom.* ix. 31, 32.

§ 2. And whether you are not guilty of rejecting God's Way and Method of converting Men to, and keeping them in the way of ſaving Faith, Repentance and Evangelical Obedience; and of inventing and chuſing one of your own, different from that, comes now to be conſidered. I ſhall ſtate your way in this, by what you have publiſhed to the World in your own Books; and for Brevity ſake, ſhall inſtance but in two Authors, *Ed. Burrough* formerly, and Mr. *Pen* of late, who ſpeak for you, that which is otherwiſe well enough known to be your common Opinion.

In the Works of *Ed. Burrough* (whom you are pleaſed to ſtile *that true Prophet*, in the Title-Page) which are publiſhed by you, there are theſe Sayings: In *Page* 252, thus. *His pure Spirit is put into the inward parts, to be the Rule and Guide of Life in all things.* And again, [*Only*] *by the teaching of the Eternal Spirit, is the Living God known in the Creature.* Again, *p.* 408, *It is promiſed* (ſaith he) *that the Spirit ſhall lead into all Truth; and ſuch do own the Scriptures, but not as their Teacher; for the anointing dwells in them, and they need no Man to teach them, but as that anointing teacheth all things; and they have no need of the Scripture to teach them; for all the Children of God are taught of God, and need not any other Teacher; nor need not to ſay one to another, Know the Lord. And yet all ſuch do own the Scriptures to be the Teſtimony of that which they believe and have received.* And again, in *p.* 834, *The only perfect Rule of Conſcience in the Exerciſe to God, is the Spirit of Chriſt, and not any other thing. And becauſe ſomething beſides the Spirit of God exerciſes the Conſcience, therefore it is that here are ſo many Ways and Sects of Religion, and kinds of Worſhip in* Chriſtendom, *and among Chriſtians, while the Spirit of Chriſt* [*only*] *is not the Rule of Judgment, and Exerciſe of Conſcience to God and Man.* Again, *p.* 861, *The Judgment in that matter (Hereſie) muſt be juſt, equal, Holy, and* [*only*] *by the Spirit of Chriſt, which is infallible, and gives Infallibility of Judgment and diſcerning into all Caſes and Things.*

Mr. *Pen* ſpends the fourth Chapter of his late Book, entituled, *Reaſon againſt Railing*; to prove that the Light within, and not the Scriptures, is the Rule of Faith and Practice. In *p.* 47, he ſaith, *We dare boldly affirm in the Name of the Lord, that the great Reaſon of our Belief concerning them (the Scriptures) is* [*not any outward thing*] *but that inward Teſtimony, Record, and Heavenly Amen, that we have frequently received from the Holy Light within us, to the Truth and Faithfulneſs of thoſe Sayings.* Again, *p.* 48, *Wherefore the Scriptures are ſo far from being the great Rule of Faith and Practice, that the Light of Chriſt within us, is both our Warrant and Rule for Faith in, and Obedience to them.* Again, *p.* 114, *Let it be remembred* (ſaith he) *that Chriſt promiſed to ſend the Spirit of Truth to lead into all Truth; as much as to ſay, none are led into the Truth, nor in the Truth, but by the Holy Spirit of Truth; or that their Practice is a Lie, or they are led into a Lie, who are not led by the Spirit of Truth;* [*that alone*] *leads into all the Ways of Truth. Where, by Truth is not meant the meer Letter of the Scripture; which notwithſtanding is true, but the living, powerful Truth, Chriſt, the Way, the Truth, and the Life; of which the Scripture is but a Record, or Declaration.* And, *p.* 115. *Many may run into the Practice of ſeveral outward things mentioned in the Scriptures to have been the Practice of Saints in former Ages, and yet not be led into the Truth; for* [*all that*] *is but Will-Worſhip, Imitation, and unwarrantable.*

Your Notion concerning your Way, then, thus repreſented, is this, or to this effect.

That God, Chriſt, the Holy Spirit, do by immediate Illumination of your minds, and without external teaching by the Scriptures, or by Men, ſhew you, or reveal to you what you ought to believe and do; and by their immediate Motion or Operation, draw or perſuade you to believe and practiſe accordingly. Which Illumination or Operation, you call *The Light within*, or the *Holy Anointing*, which teacheth all things. This I take to be your Senſe, when you ſay, you own Scripture, but not as your Teacher; and that ſuch have no need of the Scripture to teach them, and that all the Children of God are taught of God, and need not any other Teacher. And again, That God's pure Spirit is put into the inward parts to be the Rule and Guide of Life in all things; and that the only perfect Rule of Conſcience in the exerciſe to God, is the Spirit of Chriſt, and not any other thing. That the Scriptures are ſo far from being the Rule of Faith and Practice, as that the Light within is both your Warrant and Rule. That the Spirit of Truth [alone] leads into all Truth. And that the infallible Spirit of Chriſt gives Infallibility of Judgment and Diſcerning into all Caſes and Things.

This then is your Method and Way.

Now I will ſhew you what is God's Method and Way, which is quite different from yours. The Goſpel plainly declares, that there ſhall be a Reſurrection of all Men after Death, and a State of everlaſting Weal or Wo in another World; and that as many as believe Chriſt to be the Son of God, and Saviour of the World, and repent them of the evil they have done, and ſincerely obey his Laws, ſhall, by his Death which he ſuffer'd for Sin, receive Remiſſion of Sin, and Eternal Life; but that thoſe that do not, ſhall be puniſhed with everlaſting Deſtruction. This Goſpel, this Doctrine, being not knowable by Men, by any Natural Light in them, without Divine Revelation from God; Jeſus Chriſt, who came from the Boſom of the Father, he revealed it himſelf to his Apoſtles and others by his Doctrine; and after his Aſcenſion into Heaven, he, by ſending them the Holy Spirit, immediately inſpired them with a clear Knowledge and Underſtanding of it, and ſo by the Gift of ſpeaking divers Languages, accompanied with Boldneſs and Utterance, enabled them to reveal and publiſh it to the World, and to procure Credit to it by many Signs and Wonders which were done by them. And ever ſince that, God's way and method of bringing Men to Salvation, that live where the Goſpel comes, hath been by making known this Goſpel to them by Word or Writing; and ſo by the mighty Motives contained in it, ſuch as the Manifeſtation of God's Love in the Gift of Chriſt, the Hopes of Eternal Life, and the Fears of Eternal Death, in concurrence with the Operation of his Grace and good Spirit, together with the rational Evidence of the Truth of it, to perſuade Men to believe and embrace it, and to live according to it.

So that according to this Repreſentation, compared with that made of your Way, God's Way and Method and Yours greatly differ.

You holding that the Holy Spirit directs and perſuades Men what to believe, and do, by his own immediate Working, without outward Teaching: Whereas (as we ſay) he doth it by outward Teaching.

It is God, Chriſt, the Holy Spirit, that works the ſaving Change in Men; but he doth it ſtill by the Word of the Goſpel, as communicated to Mens Minds by the Scriptures, or by Mens teaching the ſame Doctrine which is contained in the Scriptures; and it is this Doctrine that is the Rule of Faith and Practice. And this I doubt not to make very plain to you (in oppoſition to your way) if you will not ſhut your Eyes. And this I ſhall endeavour gradually, ſtep by ſtep, in certain Propoſitions.

§ III. *Firſt*, In the Apoſtles Days, in which there was the greateſt Effuſion of the Holy Spirit on them and other Chriſtians, that ever hath been yet; even then God's way of bringing Men to believe the Goſpel, and to live according to it, was by publiſhing it to Men by Men, either by Word or Writing, and evidencing it to be from God. The Apoſtles indeed had the Goſpel from Chriſt himſelf immediately, as he himſelf had it from the Father, who gave him Commandment what he ſhould ſay and what he ſhould ſpeak: It at the firſt began to be *ſpoken by the Lord himſelf*, and was confirmed unto us by them that *heard* him, as 'tis ſaid, *Heb.* ii. 4. But after Chriſt's Aſcenſion, others at the firſt received the Knowledge and Faith of the Goſpel by the Miniſtry of the Apoſtles, who were his Ambaſſadors to the World, by them he made known his Salvation to the Ends of the Earth. When our Saviour prayed for all other good Chriſtians that ſhould be in the World, beſides his Apoſtles he deſcribes them thus, *viz.* Such as ſhould believe through *their Word*, *John* xvii. 20. Neither pray I for theſe alone, but for them alſo which ſhall believe on me *through their Word*. And *it pleaſed God by the fooliſhneſs of Preaching, to ſave them that believe*, 1 Cor. i. 21. *And ſo Faith cometh by Hearing*, ſaith he, *Rom.* x. 17. By hearing of what, and of whom? Why, by hearing the Goſpel preached by ſuch whom God ſent to preach it; of which mention is made in the precedent Verſes. The Doctrine which the Apoſtles preached, which is the Goſpel, is ſaid to be the *Power of God to Salvation*, Rom. i. 16. And the Reaſon is given in *ver.* 17, 18. Becauſe thereby the *Righteouſneſs of God is revealed from Faith to Faith*. That is God's method of juſtifying Men, upon Condition of their Believing and Obeying of it; and becauſe thereby the Eternal Wrath of God from Heaven is revealed againſt all Ungodlineſs and Unrighteouſneſs of Men. This Revelation being from God, and the Things, the

Motives revealed, being powerful Arguments to prevail with Men to receive and obey the Goſpel; upon their doing of which they ſhall be ſaved: Thence it is that 'tis called *The Power of God to Salvation*, not excluding the concurrent Operation of God's Spirit upon the Heart by it.

This being ſo, your Leaders manifeſt a ſtrange degree of *Unlearnedneſs* in the things of the Goſpel, when they deny ſaving Grace to be wrought by the outward Adminiſtration of the Word, or Teaching by Man, (as they do when they attribute it to God alone, as his immediate Work) and all becauſe the Scripture attributes it to God, to Chriſt, to the Holy Spirit: Whereas nothing is more common, than to attribute the ſame Effect ſometimes to one Cauſe, ſometimes to another, when there is the Concurrence and Cooperation of ſeveral Cauſes to the producing of the ſame Effect, as there uſually is in God's working ſavingly upon Men. As Men are ſaid in Scripture to be *born of God*, to be *born of the Spirit*; ſo they are ſaid to be *born of the Immortal Seed of the Word*, 1 Pet. i. 23. becauſe that is God's Inſtrument. *Of his own Will begat he us by the Word of Truth*, Jam. i. 18. And the Goſpel is the *Miniſtration of the Spirit*, and the *Sword of the Spirit*, as it is called; becauſe it is the great Inſtrument or Means by which the Spirit doth its Work upon Men.

Indeed the Work of Grace in Men is moſt properly attributed to God, to Chriſt, tho' other Cauſes concur to the producing of that Effect; becauſe he is the principal Cauſe of it, and all other but ſubordinate; and yet the Effect is ſometimes attributed to ſubordinate and ſecond Cauſes alſo, tho' leſs properly. Thus Chriſt, the principal Cauſe of it, is ſaid to be *The Light of the World*, *The Light of Men*; becauſe He, by his Goſpel, as the Author of it, diſcovers and reveals to them a future Everlaſting Happineſs attainable in another World, and the way to it; and yet the Goſpel it ſelf, yea the Apoſtles, and Paſtors, and Chriſtian Profeſſors, are alſo ſaid to be the *Light of the World*, as ſubordinate Cauſes, under Chriſt, of the Illumination of Men in the Knowledge hereof, *Matth.* v. 14. 2 *Cor.* iv. 4. *Phil.* ii. 15, 16. All which, had you well conſidered, you would never have oppoſed Mens being enlightned and taught by Chriſt, as ye do, to their being taught by the Scriptures, or by Men; and all becauſe, forſooth, the Illumination of Men is attributed to Chriſt. This very thing, here ſuggeſted to you, would in great part reduce you, and ſet you to rights, if you could be but willing to receive and own that for Truth, which cannot, without great Abſurdity and Contradiction to the Scriptures, be denied. But for want of diſtinguiſhing between things and things, which in ſome reſpect ſeem to be the ſame, but in other reſpects greatly differ, you run your ſelves into Error and great Abſurdities.

I will upon this occaſion inſtance in another thing, not much unlike to that but now mentioned, wherein you greatly miſtake for want of diſtinguiſhing; and that is, touching the *Preſence of Chriſt in Men*: For, becauſe the Scriptures ſpeak of Chriſt's being [in] Men, and becauſe Chriſt is God, and God every where preſent, and ſo in all Men; from theſe, thus jumbled together, you infer, That therefore *Chriſt is in all Men*; and that being ſo, you farther infer, that all Men are taught by him himſelf immediately, without external Teaching. In doing of which, you confound things together which are diſtinct, to the darkning of them in your Underſtandings, and the miſguiding you in Judgment: You do not diſtinguſh, as you ought to do, between the *Eſſential* Preſence of Chriſt, as *God*, and his *Virtual* Preſence, as *Mediator*, God-Man. For although Chriſt, as God, is preſent to every Man, in the exerciſe of common Providence in the World; (*My Father worketh hitherto, and I work*, ſaith he, *John* v. 17.) yet in reſpect of his *Virtual* Preſence, as *Mediator*, as when he rules and operates in Men's Hearts by his Authority, and by the Evangelical Law, in this ſenſe, (which yet is, doubtleſs, the ſenſe in which Chriſt is ſaid in Scripture to be *in Men*, and to *dwell in them*) I ſay, in this ſenſe he is not in all Men. For Men are ſaid to be *without Chriſt*, until they are converted to Chriſtianity, *Eph.* ii. 12. And it is by Faith (which only ſome, and not all Men have) that Chriſt dwells in any Men's Heart, *Eph.* iii. 17. It is by that Faith that his Authority in his Doctrine and Law is owned, and where that's ſincerely owned, there Chriſt is ſaid to dwell. Not that Chriſt as Mediator, *God-Man*, dwells *perſonally* in Men; for in that ſenſe and reſpect he dwells in Heaven, and is at the right Hand of the Majeſty on high. And therefore as Teacher of his Church, he doth not teach Men now immediately in Perſon, but by his Goſpel which he ſends to them, by which he enlightens them in the way of Salvation. Ye do therefore err, not knowing or underſtanding the Scriptures, while you attribute thoſe Effects to the *Eſſential* Preſence, and immediate Operation of Chriſt in Men, which are wrought by him indeed, but it is by the *Inſtrumentality and Agency of ſecond Cauſes*, the Goſpel and the Miniſtration thereof by Men.

I wiſh that by theſe Inſtances, you could be made ſenſible of your great Weakneſs in deſpiſing *Diſtinctions*, as if they were but Effects of carnal Reaſon and fleſhly Wiſdom; for ſith words that are the ſame in ſound, are often uſed to ſignifie things of a different Nature; and words different in ſound, to ſignifie things of the ſame Nature; Inſtances of which the Scripture abounds with, they muſt of neceſſity be perpetually liable to Error and groſs Miſtakes, that throw away Diſtinctions as uſeleſs, which is your own caſe in many other things beſides theſe now inſtanced in.

Since then it was God's Method in the Apoſtles days to bring Men to Salvation, by believing and obeying the Doctrine preached by them, as I have ſhewed; it is marvellous that any that pretend to know any thing in Chriſtianity, ſhould deny this Doctrine to be the Rule of Faith and Chriſtian Practice, whenas that's the very end and reaſon of the Promulgation of it, to direct Men what to believe and do, that they might be ſaved; and to excite them to believe and do accordingly. When St. *Paul* ſaith, Whereto we have attained, let us walk by the ſame *Rule*; doth he not by *Rule* mean the Apoſtles Doctrine, whenas in the next words, he propoſeth himſelf that lived according to what he taught, as an Example for them to follow, *Phil.* iii. 16, 17. It was the great Commendation of the Primitive Chriſtians, that they continued ſtedfaſtly in the *Apoſtles Doctrine*, Acts ii. 42. And St. *John* ſaid, *Whoſoever tranſgreſſeth, and abideth not in the Doctrine of Chriſt, hath not God:* And to tranſgreſs, ſure is to ſwerve from the Rule, 2 *John* ix. This Doctrine of Chriſt is called the *Goſpel of the Kingdom*, Matth. iv. 23. and ix. 35. and xxiv. 14. For it is that Rule by which Chriſt our King doth rule and govern his Subjects both in Heart and Life; as the Laws of the Land are the Rule according to which Earthly Kings do govern theirs.

The Sum and Subſtance of the Doctrine which the Apoſtles preached, one as well as another, and in one place as well as another, is called *The Form of ſound Words*, 2 Tim. i. 13. *The Principles of the Doctrine of Chriſt*, Heb. vi. And this Form of Doctrine was delivered to the Chriſtians, to rule and govern themſelves by, *Rom.* vi. 17. *But now have obeyed from the Heart that Form of Doctrine which was delivered to you:* And it was ſo much a Rule to them, that they were commanded to *mark* and *avoid* ſuch as cauſed Diviſions and Offences *contrary to the Doctrine which they had learned*, Rom. xvi. 17. And forbid to receive into their Houſes ſuch *as brought not this Doctrine*, 2 John x. And if any Man teach otherwiſe, ſaith St. *Paul*, and *conſents not* to wholeſome words, even the words of our Lord Jeſus Chriſt, and *the Doctrine which is according to Godlineſs*, he is proud, knowing nothing, 1 *Tim.* vi. 3, 4.

Theſe things being all ſo plain, as what can be plainer; it cannot but be highly ridiculous for ſuch as are ignorant in the very A, B, C, of Chriſtianity (as by your diſſent in this plain Truth, you appear to be) to pretend to ſuch Sublimity and Spirituality, as to eſteem all other Chriſtians in the World, of what Denomination ſoever, that are not of your way, in compariſon of your ſelves, to be all in Darkneſs and Confuſion.

§ IV. The *Second Propoſition* is this; although the firſt Promulgators of the Goſpel were enabled by immediate Revelation from Chriſt to teach it unto others; yet afterward God's ordinary Way and Method of tranſmitting the Knowledge and Faith of the Goſpel downwards to others ſucceſſively, was by ſuch Mens teaching it to others, as had themſelves learned it of the Apoſtles, or others that taught the ſame Doctrine as they did. Thus *Timothy* and *Titus*, though Evangeliſts, were inſtructed by *Paul* in the Chriſtian Faith; and how they ſhould behave themſelves in their publick Capacities as Evangeliſts or Biſhops; and this was done, partly by Speech, and partly by his Epiſtles to them, 2 *Tim.* i. 13. Hold faſt the Form of ſound words which thou *haſt heard of me*, 2 Tim. iii. 14, 15. Continue in the things which thou haſt learned, and haſt been aſſured of, knowing of whom thou haſt learned them, and that from a Child thou haſt known the Holy Scriptures. *Titus* learned the Chriſtian Faith by *Paul*; for which cauſe he ſtiles him his *Son in the Common Faith*, Tit. i. 4. And by his Epiſtle inſtructs him in the Election of Biſhops, which he was to place in the Cities of *Crete:* And one of his Inſtructions about this Affair was, that he ſhould ordain ſuch as *held faſt the faithful word as they had been taught*, Tit. i. 9. And the ſame things which *Timothy* had learned of *Paul*, he was to commit to faithful Men, and ſuch as ſhould be able to teach others, 2 *Tim.* ii. 2. The things which thou haſt *heard of me* among many Witneſſes, *commit thou to faithful Men, who ſhall be able to teach others alſo.*

§ V. 3. The ſame Doctrine, and many of the ſame Miracles were committed to writing by the Apoſtles, which were firſt preached and done by Chriſt, and his Apoſtles, and for the ſame end, to wit, to bring Men to the Chriſtian Belief and Life, *John* xx. 31. But theſe are *written that ye might believe that Jeſus is the Chriſt, the Son of God, and that*

that believing, ye might have Life through his Name, 1 John v. 13. Theſe things have I *written* unto you that believe on the Name of the Son of God, that ye may *know* that ye have Eternal Life; and that ye may *believe* on the Name of the Son of God: That is, that they might believe more groundedly and firmly, and ſo conſtantly and perſeveringly againſt all Oppoſition and Temptations to the contrary, *Luke* i. 3, 4. It ſeemed good to me alſo, having had perfect Underſtanding of things, from the very firſt, to *write* unto thee, moſt excellent *Theophilus*, that thou mighteſt *know the Certainty* of thoſe things wherein thou haſt been inſtructed. 2 *Tim.* iii. 15, 16. *The Scriptures given by Inſpiration* of God, are profitable for Reproof, Correction, and Inſtruction in Righteouſneſs; and able to make Men wiſe unto Salvation, through Faith which is in Chriſt Jeſus, *Rom.* xvi. 26. And by the *Scriptures of the Prophets*, according to the Commandment of the everlaſting God, *made known* to all Nations for the Obedience of Faith. God of old commanded the Law written, to be read to all the Congregation of *Iſrael*, that they might learn to fear him, *Deut.* xxxi. 11, 12.

§ VI. 4. The Apoſtle required the ſame regard to be given to what he taught by his Epiſtles, as to what he taught by Speech, Face to Face, 2 *Theſſ.* ii. 15. Therefore ſtand faſt, and hold the Traditions which ye have been taught, *whether by word or our Epiſtle*, 1 Cor. xiv. 37. If any Man think himſelf to be a Prophet, or ſpiritual, let him acknowledge that the things which *I write unto you, are the Commandments of the Lord.* And the Epiſtles written to particular Churches, were intended for the Benefit of all, in thoſe things which in their nature were of common concern unto all, 1 *Cor.* i. 2. Unto the Church of God at *Corinth*——*With all that in every place* call upon the Name of Jeſus Chriſt our Lord both theirs and ours. The two Epiſtles of St. *Peter*, the firſt Epiſtle of St. *John*, the Epiſtle of St. *Jude*, and that of St. *James*, are all General Epiſtles, not directed to any particular Churches, as ſuch; but to the Chriſtians ſcattered abroad in the World. And the *Coloſſians* were to read the Epiſtle ſent to *Laodicea*; and the *Laodiceans* to read that ſent to the *Coloſſians*, as well as thoſe that were ſent to both themſelves reſpectively, *Col.* iv. 16. And St. *John* was commanded to ſend all the ſeven Epiſtles to each of the ſeven Churches in *Aſia*, and not only one Epiſtle to one Church, and another to another. And in *Rev.* Chap. ii. and iii. It is ſeven times ſaid, He that hath an Ear, let him hear what the Spirit ſaith unto the Churches; as every Man in the World hath, that is not deaf. And *Chap.* xxii. 18. I teſtifie to *every Man* (ſaith Chriſt) that heareth the words of the Prophecy of this Book, &c. And there is great reaſon why the ſame regard ſhould be given to what the Apoſtles and Evangeliſts wrote, as to what they ſpake; as long as they wrote either the ſame Doctrine, or Hiſtory, upon the ſame evidence. For the Doctrine is the ſame after it is written, as it was before; for its being written doth not alter the Nature of it. And therefore Men muſt needs be as much concerned in their Belief or Disbelief, Obedience or Diſobedience to it, when it is communicated to them by writing, as when it is ſo by preaching; yea, I had almoſt ſaid, or by immediate Revelation: For 'tis not the way and manner of communicating the Will of God to us, that makes it ſaving; but our Belief and ſerious Conſideration of it, and yielding Obedience to it, how, or by what means ſoever we come to know it. Otherwiſe 'tis poſſible Men may have Revelations from God, as *Balaam* had; and as *Judas* and other Workers of Iniquity, that propheſied and caſt out Devils in Chriſt's Name, had, or might have had, and yet not be profited by them. And if there be any leſs degree of evidence of Divine Truth when it is communicated to us by writing, than when it was communicated to others by the Apoſtles preaching, or to the Apoſtles themſelves by immediate Revelation; yet Belief of it, and Obedience to it upon that leſs degree of Evidence, is not the leſs, but rather much more rewardable, than is Obedience to it upon greater Evidence, *John* xx. 29. Jeſus ſaith unto him, *Thomas*, becauſe thou haſt ſeen, thou haſt believed; bleſſed are they which have *not ſeen*, and yet have believed.

It is not to be imagined but that the Apoſtles and Evangeliſts have expreſſed the Chriſtian Doctrine, and the Reaſons why it ſhould be believed, in as plain Terms when they wrote it, as when they preached it.

They could hardly ſpeak thoſe great Doctrines touching the Eſſentials of Chriſtianity, plainer than they are communicated to us by their Writings; yet how plain ſoever they ſpake them, the very ſame things (Prejudice, Worldly-Intereſt, and the Love of Luſt) which now detain Men from obeying their Doctrine, as communicated and tranſmitted down to us by their Writings, did in like manner keep back Multitudes from yielding Obedience to their Doctrine, then when they themſelves preach'd it to them, and wrought many Miracles to convince them that it was from God. And as Men then that had no mind to obey the Doctrine which Chriſt and his Apoſtles preach'd, raiſed Cavils and pickt

Quarrels againſt it: *Why do you not underſtand my Speech? even becauſe ye cannot hear my Word*; ſaid our Saviour to ſuch, *John* viii. 43. Even ſo at this Day, thoſe Atheiſtical and looſe Men, that have no mind to conform their Hearts and Lives to the holy Doctrine of Chriſt in the Scriptures, raiſe Cavils and pick Quarrels againſt the Scriptures, which are a ſtanding Reproof to their bad Tempers and evil Lives; which, becauſe they are ſo, they ſeek by all means to invalidate them, that they might the more ſecurely, and without diſturbance from them, hold on their Ungodly Courſe, ſecretly or openly.

How far any that have led you the way, may be concerned in ſuch a thing as this, I ſhall not ſay; but ſure I am, it concerns both you and them to think on't: And ſo much the rather, becauſe 'tis ſeldom, if ever ſeen among other Men, but that thoſe that are cold in their Affection to the Scriptures, are as cold to the Power of Godlineſs, or rather zealouſly hot againſt it.

And indeed I muſt needs ſay, you bewray your cold Affection to, and your little and ſlight Eſteem of the holy Scriptures, while you think you have ground pleaſedly to call them the *Dead Letter*, from that Saying of the Apoſtle in 2 *Cor.* iii. 6. *Who hath made us able Miniſters of the New Teſtament, not of the Letter, but of the Spirit:* And to call thoſe that preach from the Scriptures, *Miniſters of the Letter.* Whereas that Expreſſion is ſo far from ſerving your purpoſe herein, as that if you underſtood it (which, alas, you do not) you would find it to caſt a Glory and Honour upon the Scriptures of the New Teſtament, and no diſparagement at all upon thoſe of the Old, upon any account of the Matters therein contained, as being written. For the Doctrine of the Old Teſtament it ſelf is not called the *Letter*, becauſe it is in Writings; nor that of the New, the *Spirit*, becauſe not in Writing; but becauſe the Subject-matter of which the *Moſaical* Covenant did much conſiſt, and many of the things therein contained were but Figurative, and outward Repreſentations of thoſe excellent Spiritual Things, which in the Goſpel are plainly and nakedly expreſſed, without any ſuch Veil or Cover: For ſo the Apoſtle, in the proceſs of this his Diſcourſe, doth more plainly expreſs it, *ver.* 12, 13, 14. *We uſe great plainneſs of Speech, and not as Moſes, which put a Veil over his Face, ſo that the Children of Iſrael could not look or ſee to the end of that which is aboliſhed——Which Veil is done away in Chriſt*; that is, in the Doctrine of Chriſt, in the New Teſtament; in which Doctrine, Divine and Spiritual Truth is ſtripp'd out of its Cloathing and Covering, and repreſented as it is in its own Nature, and not in dark Figures. And that this, and not the Writing, or not Writing, is meant by *Letter* and *Spirit*, will farther appear by comparing other Texts of Scripture with this. *Rom.* ii. 29. *Circumciſion is that of the Heart, in the Spirit, and not in the Letter.* By *Letter* here is plainly meant, Circumciſion in the *Fleſh*; and by *Spirit*, that which was couched under it, or ſignified by it, and that is the Circumciſion of the *Heart*, which in the New Teſtament is called *Mortification*, or purifying of the Heart, or crucifying Affections and Luſts.

So again, *Rom.* vii. 6. *But now we are delivered from the Law, that being dead wherein we were held, that we ſhould ſerve in Newneſs of Spirit, and not in the Oldneſs of the Letter:* That is, according to thoſe plain Precepts of the Goſpel, which anſwer the Spirit and Scope of the Law; and not in the outward Ceremony, which were but figurative of them; as in offering our Bodies a living Sacrifice, inſtead of ſlain Beaſts; in cleanſing our ſelves from the Filthineſs of the Fleſh, inſtead of Legal Purifications by waſhing the Body; in *putting off the Body of the Sins of the Fleſh*, and all evil Concupiſcence, and not in cutting off the Foreskin of the Fleſh. And thoſe Miniſters that preach this, and other like Spiritual Doctrine, out of, or according to the Scriptures of the New Teſtament, and not the Ceremonies of *Moſes*, they are Miniſters of the New Teſtament, not of the *Letter*, but of the *Spirit.* Which had you underſtood, you would never have poured your ſpiteful Contempt on them as you have, by calling them *Letter-Preachers.*

I ſhall conclude what I have ſaid in this Propoſition, to ſhew that the ſame regard is due to the Doctrine of the Apoſtles when written, as now it is, as when it was preached by them, by remembring you of this one great Truth, That every Man ſhall be tried and judged at the laſt Day by that Law he hath been under. The Gentiles, that are or have been without a written Law, ſhall be judged without any ſuch Law: And the Jews, which were under a written Law, they ſhall be judged by it, *Rom.* ii. 12. Even ſo, thoſe that are under the Goſpel written, will be judged by that; as thoſe that were under the immediate Preaching of it by Chriſt and his Apoſtles before it was written, will be judged by that. *He that rejecteth me, and receiveth not my words, hath one that judgeth him; the Word that I have ſpoken, the ſame ſhall judge him at the laſt day*, ſaith our Saviour, *John* xii. 48. And if that be the Rule by which thoſe ſhall be judged that have his Word made known to them, be it by one means or by another, then it greatly concerns all ſuch to make that Word of his the Rule of their Life and Practice, as ever they hope to come off well upon their Trial at laſt, whatever you talk of its not being a Rule as it is a written Word. And therefore beware, leſt then that come upon you, and be ſaid of you, which is written in one of the Prophets; *I have* written *to them the great things of my Law, and they have counted them as a ſtrange thing*, Hoſ. viii. 12.

§ VII. 5. The next Propoſition is this, That the Holy Scriptures extant in the Apoſtles Days, in Conjunction with the Doctrine of the Chriſtian Faith, however made known, by Writing or otherwiſe, were then, through that Grace of God which uſually attends a due uſe of them, able to make Men wiſe to Salvation, 2 *Tim.* iii. 15. *And that from a Child thou haſt known the Holy Scriptures, which are* able *to make thee wiſe unto Salvation, through Faith which is in Chriſt Jeſus.*

If by *Scriptures* here, you will underſtand the Scriptures of the Old Teſtament only, yet you may eaſily collect, that if thoſe Scriptures were in great part able to make Men wiſe unto Salvation, then when the Goſpel was on foot, then the Scriptures of the New Teſtament, as containing the Chriſtian Doctrine, are able to do it much more; and both in conjunction to be effectual to that end,

The Apoſtle acquainted the Chriſtians then, that the Myſtery of the Goſpel by the *Scriptures of the Prophets*, is, and that according to the Commandment of the everlaſting God, *made known to all Nations for the Obedience of Faith*, Rom. xvi 25, 26.

§ VIII. 6. The Holy Scriptures, as the means which God works by, are able, not only to make Men in a private capacity wiſe unto Salvation; but alſo to furniſh Men for the diſcharging of the publick Office of Teaching and Governing in the Church of God. The *Holy Scriptures, given by inſpiration of God, are profitable for Doctrine, Reproof, Correction, and Inſtruction in Righteouſneſs, ſo as to make the Man of God*, to wit, a publick Preacher, *perfect, throughly furniſhed to all good Works*; even to enable him to diſcharge his whole Duty towards the Souls of others, 2 *Tim.* iii. 16. And St. *Paul* by his *Writings* inſtructed even *Timothy* himſelf, how to behave himſelf in his Office and publick Capacity, 1 *Tim.* iii. 14. *Theſe things* write *I unto thee, that thou may'ſt* know how to behave *thy ſelf in the Houſe of God, which is the Church of the Living God.* And for the better diſcharge of his Miniſterial Office, directs and enjoins him to give attendance to *Reading*, and to *Meditation*, or Study, 1 *Tim.* iv. 13, 15. Which ſure would have been needleſs, if he had been ſufficiently able to have done all by the immediate Illumination and Operation of God's Spirit, as you fancy your Teachers are able to do.

§ IX. 7. The ſame Promiſe is made to the *reading* of the Word *written*, and to the keeping of it, as is to the hearing and keeping of it, *Rev.* i. 3. *Bleſſed is he that* readeth, *and they that* hear *the Words of this Prophecy, and keep thoſe things that are written therein.*

§ X. 8. The Scripture is ſaid to ſay this or that, which yet God ſaid himſelf, or by his Servants, *Rom.* ix. 17. *The* Scripture *ſaith unto* Pharaoh, *Even for this ſame purpoſe have I raiſed thee* [illegible]*at I might ſhew my power in thee*, Rom. x. 11. *The* Scripture *ſaith, Whoſoeve*[illegible]*lieveth on him, ſhall not be aſhamed*, Gal. iii. 22. *The* Scripture *hath concluded all under Sin. What ſaith the* Scripture? *Caſt out the Bondwoman and her Son*, Gal. iv. 30. Which yet was the Saying of God himſelf, *Gen.* xvi. *Another* Scripture *ſaith, They ſhall look on him whom they have pierced*, John xix. 17. *No Prophecy of the* Scriptures *is of private Interpretation*, 2 Pet. i. 20. So that, according to this, look what God ſaith in and by the *Scriptures*, touching ſuch things as concern us, is in effect the ſame as if he had ſpoken them to us himſelf immediately: *If any Man think himſelf to be a Prophet, or Spiritual, let him acknowledge that the things* I write *unto you, are the Commandments of the Lord*, ſaid St. *Paul*, 1 Cor. xiv. 37.

You are wont to inſinuate indeed, as if the Scriptures were not of that uſe to us now, as they were to them, to whom they were firſt written. But however they might more concern them than us in ſome particular Caſes *proper to them*, yet in things of *common concern* they are as much for our uſe as they were for theirs: *For whatſoever things were* written *aforetime, were* written *for our Learning*, Rom. xv. 4. What God ſaid to *Joſhua*, *I will never leave thee nor forſake thee*, the Apoſtle would have all faithful Chriſtians relie on, as if it had been ſpoken to themſelves, *Heb.* xiii. 5. That which was firſt ſpoken to the *Jews*, *Levit.* xxvi. the Apoſtle applies to the Believing *Gentiles*, as much as if it had been ſpoken to them only, 2 *Cor.* vi. 16. *For ye are the Temples of the living God, as God hath ſaid, I will dwell in them, and walk in them, and I will be their God, and they ſhall be my People.*

§ XI. 9. We that have the Doctrine of Chriſt and his Apoſtles brought down to us in the Scriptures, may, according to Scripture-Dialect, be ſaid to *have* Chriſt and his Apoſtles, as truly as it was ſaid of the *Jews* in our Saviour's Days on Earth, that they had *Moſes* and the Prophets; for it was by having in the Scriptures, what they ſaid and did, that they were ſaid to have them. And by hearing and believing the Scriptures of the New Teſtament, we may as well be ſaid to hear and believe Chriſt and his Apoſtles, as they to hear and believe *Moſes* and the Prophets; which yet they were ſaid to do, when they did believe their *Writings*, Luke xvi. 29. *They* have *Moſes and the Prophets, let them* hear them, *ver.* 31. *If they hear not Moſes and the Prophets, neither will they be perſuaded though one roſe from the dead.* John v. 46, 47. *Had ye* believed Moſes, *ye would have believed me; for he wrote of me: But if ye believe not his* Writings, *how ſhould ye believe my Words?* Chriſt promiſed his Apoſtles, upon his giving them Commiſſion to teach all Nations, that he would be with them to the end of the World; and he is ſo in one Senſe, when he accompanies their Miniſtration by their Doctrine and Writings, with the Preſence of his Grace and Power in their Continuation to the end of the World. And as it is ſaid of *Moſes*, Acts xv. 21. That he had thoſe *in every City that* preached *him, being* read *in the Synagogues every Sabbath-day*; inaſmuch as his Books of the Law were read; ſo for the ſame, or like reaſon, it may be as truly ſaid, that Chriſt hath thoſe that preach him now, when the Books of the New Teſtament written by Inſpiration of his Spirit, are read among us, and opened unto us every Lord's Day. You may then ſafely conclude, that thoſe that have the Doctrine of Chriſt in his Goſpel among them, have Chriſt among them; and all that receive and hold faſt that, do receive and hold faſt him: So ſaith St. *John* in his ſecond Epiſt. *v.* 9. *He that abideth in the Doctrine of Chriſt, he hath both the Father and the Son.* And again, 1 *John* ii. 24. *If that which ye have* heard *from the beginning, ſhall* remain in you, *ye alſo ſhall* continue in the Son and in the Father.

§ XII. 10. That in Chriſt Jeſus neither Circumciſion availeth any thing, nor Uncircumciſion, but a new Creature; is a moſt important Doctrine, declared in *writing* by St. *Paul*, Gal. vi. 15.

And when he ſaith in the next Verſe, *As many as walk according to this* [Rule] *Peace be on them*; it is moſt evident he was not of your Mind and Way, who hold that the Holy Scriptures, or Doctrine contained in them, which is the ſame, are not a Rule of Chriſtian Faith and Practice.

This written Doctrine of the Goſpel, we ſee, is a Rule for Chriſtians to walk by; as the written Law and Teſtimony was to the *Jews*; and as it was ſaid of thoſe that walked not according to that Word or Rule, that it was becauſe there was no Light in them, *Iſa.* viii. 20. Even ſo, and for the ſame reaſon, it may now be ſaid of you, that if you walk not according to this Rule, it is becauſe in Truth there is no Light in you, how much ſoever you vainly boaſt of it, and cenſure others for want of it; that yet make it their daily care and endeavour to walk according to the Light and Guidance of that Rule, that hath its ſeat in their Conſcience.

And now, Sirs, by this time, methinks you ſhould not but perceive, that I have given you proof in good meaſure heaped up, ſhaken together, preſſed down, and running over; That God's Way and Method of directing Men, what to believe and do as neceſſary to their Salvation, and of perſuading them to believe and do accordingly, is, and hath been by that teaching which comes from God into the Soul by outward means, ſuch as is his Word written, or by Mens teaching the ſame Doctrine which is contained in the Scriptures; and if ſo, then not by his immediate Teaching and Operation, without ſuch outward teaching, which yet is that which you hold and teach, in Oppoſition to God's Method. The Proof of this is ſo evident and convincing, that if you will but give your Minds and Conſciences Liberty ſeriouſly to conſider it; I cannot imagine how you ſhould poſſibly perſiſt in your way, without offering ſome Violence to the Reaſon of your Minds.

§ XIII. But ſince you have ſtrengthened your ſelves in this your Perſuaſion, out of an Opinion you have that ſome Scriptures are on your ſide in it, I ſhall yet add ſomething farther to convince you of Error and Miſtake therein.

You ſeem to ground your ſelves much upon *John* i. 9. Where it is ſaid of Chriſt, *This is the true Light which lightneth every Man that cometh into the World.*

That Chriſt doth one way or other lighten every Man that comes into the World, is a great Truth here declared: But that which you are wont to alledge it for, and which you are to prove hence, if you would have it do your buſineſs, is, That Chriſt lighteneth every Man that comes into the World, with the Knowledge of what he ought to believe and do in order to his Salvation, without learning it from or by any *outward Means.*

That no ſuch thing, as that Chriſt ſo lightens all Men without *outward Teaching*, can be proved; either from this or any other Scripture, I ſhall eaſily ſhew you.

Chriſt doth enlighten all whom he doth enlighten in one or more of theſe three ways; either, 1. By Natural Light. Or, 2. By Supernatural Revelation. Or, 3. By outward Teaching by Speech, or Writing, or Example, in Conjunction with the inward Aſſiſtance of his Spirit.

1. Chriſt indeed, as God Creator (as he is deſcribed in the beginning of that Chapter) doth enlighten every Man that comes into the World, with the Faculty of Reaſon and Underſtanding, by which he may know that there is a God, and that he is to be worſhipped, and that he is placable; and the difference between moral good and evil in many things. But however this may poſſibly be a Light ſufficient to direct the Heathen to as much as God expects from them (if they live up to it) to whom he affords no other Light; yet this Natural Light is *not ſufficient* to direct thoſe that live under the Goſpel, to believe and do what they are bound to believe and do, upon pain of Damnation. They that live under the Goſpel, are bound to believe Jeſus to be Chriſt, the Son of God, and Saviour of the World, and that upon pain of Damnation. *If ye believe not that I am he, ye ſhall die in your ſins*; ſaid our Saviour to them to whom the Goſpel came, *John* viii. 24. *Every Spirit that confeſſeth not that Jeſus Chriſt is come in the Fleſh, is not of God, but is the Spirit of Antichriſt*, 1 John iv. 3. *He that believeth not the Son of God, ſhall not ſee Life; but the Wrath of God abideth on him*, John iii. 36.

Now that no Man can know Chriſt, know him to be the Son of God, and Saviour of the World, by his Natural Light, without ſupernatural Revelation from God, or Inſtruction from without, derived from them that had ſuch Revelation, is moſt evident. When St. *Peter* ſaid to Chriſt, *Thou art Chriſt the Son of the Living God*; our Saviour told him, *Fleſh and Blood had not revealed that unto him, but his Father*, Matth. xvi. 16, 17. *And the Natural Man receiveth not the things of the Spirit of God, neither can he know them, becauſe they are ſpiritually diſcerned*; that is, they are knowable only by means that are purely ſpiritual and ſupernatural; as the Revelation of the Goſpel at firſt was. And it may well be, that in this reſpect 'tis ſaid, that *no Man can ſay that Jeſus is the Lord, but by the Holy Ghoſt*, 1 Cor. xii. 3. For no Man could know that he was ſo, but by that Revelation and Diſcovery which the Holy Ghoſt ſeveral ways at the firſt made concerning him. *He ſhall glorifie me; for he ſhall receive of mine, and ſhall ſhew it unto you*, ſaid Chriſt to his Apoſtles, concerning the Holy Spirit, *John* xvi. 14. And Chriſt is ſaid to be *juſtified* in or by the *Spirit*, to be what he himſelf ſaid he was, and his Apoſtles witneſſed him to be, 1 *Tim.* iii. 16.

All this ſhews that though Chriſt do enlighten all Men with Natural Light, yet this is not ſufficient without ſomewhat elſe, to enlighten all Men; particularly thoſe that are under the Goſpel, with the Knowledge of what is neceſſary for all ſuch to know and believe in order to their Salvation: For *to whom much is given, of him much ſhall be required*, Luke xii. 48.

Then ſecondly, Another way by which Chriſt enlightens Men with the Knowledge of himſelf, and of what is neceſſary for Mens Salvation, is by immediate and ſupernatural Revelation; and thus he enlightened the Apoſtles, that they might be able infallibly to teach the way of Salvation by Chriſt, through Faith in him, and Obedience to him; *For God*, ſaith one of them, *who commanded the Light to ſhine out of Darkneſs, hath ſhined into our hearts*, to *give* the Light of the Knowledge of the Glory of God, in the Face of Jeſus Chriſt: To give, that is, to give it forth to others, 2 *Cor.* iv. 6. And again, in 1 *Cor.* ii. 12, 13. *Now we have received, not the Spirit of the World, but the Spirit which is of God; that we might know the things that are freely given to us of God:* Which things alſo we ſpeak, not with the words which Man's Wiſdom teacheth, but which the Holy Ghoſt teacheth. And beſides this of internal and *immediate* Revelation, there is no way imaginable for Men to come to the Knowledge of Chriſt as Mediator, but by external and *mediate* Revelation.

So that by the Proceſs of this Diſcourſe, you are brought to this; either to ſay that all Men to whom the Goſpel comes, are enlightned by Chriſt with the Knowledge of his being the Son of God, the Chriſt of God, and Saviour of the World, by immediate and ſupernatural Revelation, as the Apoſtles were; or elſe to grant that ſome Men in the World are not enlightened by Chriſt without being taught by outward means, to know what they are bound to believe, upon pain of Damnation. For I have ſhewed before, that all Men and Women to whom the Goſpel is preached, are bound to believe Jeſus to be the Chriſt, the Son of God, upon pain of Damnation; and that there is but theſe two ways imaginable, by which they can come to know it, that they might believe it, *immediate* and *mediate* Revelation or Inſtruction.

If being reduced to this ſtraight, you ſhall be ſo abſurd as to chuſe to ſay that all thoſe under the ſound and outward teaching of the Goſpel, that ſhall be damned for not believing on Chriſt as the Son of God, and for not obeying him, had that knowledge of him by immediate and ſupernatural Revelation, as the Apoſtles had; for the ſinning againſt which they ſhall be damned, as knowing their Maſter's Will, and not doing it; yet the Scriptures, as well as all Experience, will detect your Folly in ſo ſaying: For I have proved in my Propoſitions, to which I refer you, that God's way and method of proceeding with Men, in juſtifying or condemning them, will be according to their Obedience to, or Diſobedience againſt that Doctrine of the Goſpel which they had heard preached by Men to them. *Go, preach the Goſpel to every Creature* (ſaid our Saviour) *He that believeth not, ſhall be damned*; that believeth not that Goſpel ſo preached, and made known to them by preaching, *Matth.* xvi. 16. And the Apoſtle ſuppoſeth it impoſſible for the generality of Men to believe, that have not *heard* of Chriſt in the way of Preaching the Goſpel to them; and concludes, that thoſe that do believe, are brought to it by *hearing* it preached; and that is not by way of immediate inward teaching of God's Spirit, without the teaching by Man, *Rom.* x. 14, 15, 16, 17. *How ſhall they believe in him of whom they have not* heard? *And how ſhall they hear without a* Preacher? ſaith St. *Paul*. Yes, might it have been ſaid, by immediate Revelation and inward Teaching of God's Spirit, or the Light within, if that had been the common way of bringing Men to believe the Goſpel. But you ſee St. *Paul* knew of no ſuch way to propagate the Faith, after it was once ſet on foot in an extraordinary way: If he had, he would not have put ſuch Queſtions, nor have made ſuch a Concluſion as he doth in *ver.* 17. *So then Faith cometh by* hearing, *and hearing by the Word of God*. And do you know more and better than he did?

And for your ſelves, it is not to be imagined that ever you could have known that ever there was ſuch a one as Chriſt in the World, any more than the poor *Indians* or *Pagans* that never heard of him, had you not been beholding to the Scriptures, or Oral Tradition for it, as God's means, for all your great talk of your Light within you.

If Chriſt Jeſus then doth not ſavingly enlighten all thoſe who yet are ſavingly illuminated, neither by Natural Light, nor by Supernatural Revelation in an *immediate* way; then it follows, that ſuch are enlightned by Supernatural Revelation *mediately* or *inſtrumentally* by the Scriptures and Miniſtration of Men, unleſs there can be another way of ſaving Illumination aſſigned, different from the three before mentioned, which none pretend to do, ſo far as I have heard.

Theſe things are ſo plain and full of Evidence, and ſo eaſie to be underſtood, and in their Nature ſo apt to prevail with all ſuch as do not deny but that the Scriptures are true, that after you have conſidered them, I cannot but think you will be convinced by them, if there be that love to Truth in you, which you pretend to, that you have unawares all this while abuſed that firſt Chapter of St. *John*, v. 9. and abuſed your ſelves and the World, by a miſrepreſentation of it; whereas Chriſt is the Light of the World divers ways, and in ſeveral reſpects; as, by his Spirit, by his Word, and by his Works, both Miraculous and Exemplary; it cannot but be very great weakneſs or waywardneſs in you to limit his being ſo to one of theſe only.

§ XIV. Another Scripture which you alledge, as favouring your foreſaid Opinion, is that Prophecy of *Joel* ii. 28, 29. Cited by St. *Peter* in *Acts* ii. 17. *Behold the days come, ſaith the Lord, that I will pour out my Spirit upon all Fleſh, and your Sons and your Daughters ſhall propheſie, and your young Men ſhall ſee Viſions, and your old Men ſhall dream Dreams; and on my Servants and on my Handmaids I will pour out of my Spirit in thoſe days, and they ſhall propheſie.*

But that this Scripture alſo is impertinently alledged to prove, that in the days of the Goſpel every one is *immediately* directed and moved by the Spirit of God, without outward Teaching, in what they are to believe and do, will appear by two things. The one from the Nature of the thing here predicted: The other by the Application of this Prediction to the Event.

1. From the Nature of the Subject-matter of this Prophecy. It is not that the Spirit ſhould be poured out upon all Fleſh, ſo as to direct every one what to believe and do without outward Teaching; but to qualifie Perſons extraordinarily for outward Teaching: It is to enable them to *propheſie*; for that is twice mentioned in the Prophecy fore-cited, as the end for which the Spirit ſhould be poured out upon all Fleſh. And Propheſying is for the Inſtruction of others; it is a means of conveying Knowledge of the Divine Will from one Man to another: *He that propheſieth edifieth the Church*, ſaith St. *Paul*, 1 *Cor.* xiv. 4. This of Prophets, was a ſecond Order in the Evangelical Miniſtry: *God hath ſet ſome in the Church, firſt Apoſtles, ſecondarily Prophets*, 1 Cor. xii. And altho' *ſeeing Viſions*, and *dreaming Dreams*, be alſo mentioned as the effect of the pouring out of the Spirit,

yet that refers but to the ſame thing, the qualifying of Perſons to propheſie: For the Prophets of old did uſually receive the Matter of Prophecy by Dreams or Viſions, *Numb.* xii. 6. *If there be a Prophet among you, I the Lord will make my ſelf known unto him in a Viſion, and will ſpeak unto him in a Dream*, Hoſ. xii. 10. And it was not unuſual for Prophets then to fore-tell Evangelical Events in an Old-Teſtament-Dialect. And when 'tis ſaid the Spirit ſhould be poured out upon *all Fleſh*; it is not meant of all Perſons in the World, without exception; for it was never given unto all Perſons to propheſie, taking *all* in ſo large a ſenſe, but to Perſons of *all ſorts*, both for Sex and Age, Sons and Daughters, Old Men and Young, yea Servants and Handmaids alſo, as they are particularly expreſs'd in the Text: And theſe not of the *Jews* only, but on the *Gentiles* alſo, as the Event ſhews, which was new to the World.

2. The Application of this Prophecy to the Event, plainly ſhews, that the End for which a Promiſe of this *pouring out of the Spirit* was made, was to enable ſome to teach others. For the Event of this Prophecy, in which it received its Completion, was the pouring out of the Spirit in extraordinary and miraculous Gifts upon the Apoſtles and Diſciples on the Day of *Pentecoſt*, and for ſome time after. This appears by St. *Peter*'s Application of that Prophecy to this very Event, *Acts* ii. 16. *This is that*, ſaith he, *which was ſpoken by the Prophet Joel*, &c. And that thoſe miraculous Gifts were poured out on ſome to enable them to teach others, will appear in theſe two things, not to inſtance in more. *Firſt*, The Gift of ſpeaking divers Tongues, which was one of them, was to enable them to declare the things of the Goſpel to People of all Nations, Tongues and Languages, in their own Mother-Tongue wherein they were born. Upon the uſe of this Gift thoſe of every Nation under Heaven, then reſident at *Jeruſalem*, ſaid, *We do hear them ſpeak in* our *Tongues the wonderful Works of God*, Acts ii. 11. By this Gift the Apoſtles were prepared to preach the Goſpel to all Nations, to every Creature, as Chriſt afterwards commiſſioned them to do.

Secondly, As by this Gift of Tongues they could and did propagate the *Knowledge* of the Goſpel to them that never heard of it before; ſo by this, as by other miraculous Gifts of the Spirit, was *Belief* of the Goſpel procured from them to whom it was made known. For hereby they knew, or had reaſon to believe, that Perſons thus qualified were ſent of God, and the Doctrine they brought was from God: *John* iii. 2. *We know that thou art a Teacher come from God; for no Man can do theſe Miracles that thou doſt, except God be with him.* In which reſpect, this and other miraculous Gifts were called Signs; and ſigns of what? but that the Perſons ſo qualified, and their Doctrine, were of God. *Tongues*, ſaith St. *Paul*, *are for a ſign to thoſe that believe not*, 1 Cor. xiv. 22. They were teaching Signs, they taught thoſe to believe the Goſpel, who did not believe before. Signs and Wonders done by the Apoſtles and others, were thoſe things by which God gave teſtimony to the Word of his Grace, as it is *Acts* xiv. 3. *Theſe Signs*, ſaid our Saviour, *ſhall follow thoſe that believe in my Name: In my Name they ſhall caſt out Devils, they ſhall ſpeak with new Tongues*, &c. Mark xvi. 17. And in *ver.* 20. *They*, the Apoſtles, *went forth, and preached every where; the Lord working with them, and* confirming *the Word with Signs following*. And *Heb.* ii. 4. *God alſo* bearing them witneſs *with Signs and Wonders, and divers Miracles and Gifts of the Holy Ghoſt according to his own will. Truly*, ſaith St. *Paul*, *the Signs of an Apoſtle were* wrought among you in *Signs and Wonders, and mighty Deeds*, 2 Cor. xii. 12. Theſe were teaching Signs by which the Apoſtles were known to be Apoſtles, Meſſengers ſent by God, and their Word and Doctrine to be the Meſſage which God ſent by them. Theſe miraculous Powers of the Spirit of God, viſible in the Apoſtles, and thoſe that received their Doctrine, were that which procured ſuch wonderful ſucceſs to the Preaching of the Goſpel, notwithſtanding the fierceſt oppoſition of Adverſaries. The very firſt Day in which the Goſpel ſet out armed, and attended with theſe Powers, it brought in of Converts no leſs than *three thouſand Souls:* And ſo went forth conquering and to conquer, from *Jeruſalem* and throughout all *Judea* and *Samaria*, and to the uttermoſt parts of the Earth. *I will not dare*, ſaith St. *Paul*, *to ſpeak of any of thoſe things which Chriſt hath not wrought by me to make the Gentiles obedient, by word and deed* (by the Word preached, and the mighty Deeds that did accompany it) *through mighty Signs and Wonders by the Power of the Spirit of God; ſo that from Jeruſalem, and round about to Illyricum, I have fully preached the Goſpel of Chriſt*, Rom. xv. 18, 19.

That which made the Goſpel the more *credible*, as coming from God; and the more *ſucceſsful* in bringing in Multitudes of new Converts, and in *confirming* and eſtabliſhing thoſe who were already converted, was in that the Holy Spirit was ſhed abroad in thoſe miraculous Gifts, not only upon the Apoſtles that preached that Doctrine; but alſo upon thoſe that received it, and believed it afterwards, as well as on the Day of *Pentecoſt*. And that the more credit might be thereby procured to the Apoſtles in their Meſſage from God to Men, the Holy Ghoſt in extraordinary Gifts was given to the Diſciples after they believed, by the laying on of the Apoſtles hands. Thus at *Samaria*, the Believers converted by *Philip*, received the Holy Ghoſt, not by the laying on of his hands, but of the hands of St. *Peter* and St. *John*, Acts viii. 17. And that they received the Holy Ghoſt in ſome viſible effects, appears, in that it is ſaid that when *Simon ſaw* that through the laying on of the Apoſtles hands, the Holy Ghoſt was given, he offered them Money for the like Power. What, to confer inward ſpiritual Grace? No; that was not the thing which he ſaw or could ſee the Apoſtles do; nor is it probable that he deſired it. Likewiſe thoſe Believers at *Epheſus*, when St. *Paul* had laid his hands on them, the Holy Ghoſt came on them, and they ſpake with Tongues, and propheſied, *Acts* xix. 6. Thus it is ſaid of them, that *after* they believed, they were *ſealed with the Holy Spirit of Promiſe*, as the earneſt of the future Inheritance, and purchaſed Poſſeſſion, they continuing in the Belief and Practice of that Goſpel that came thus confirmed to them, *Eph.* i. 13, 14. At the very firſt indeed it ſhould ſeem the Holy Ghoſt fell on the Believers thus without laying on of the Apoſtles hands; as in *Acts* ii. & x. 44. But afterwards we have ſeen how it was. The Spirit in ſome extraordinary Gifts was poured on ſome of the Prophets of old; but we never read that it was in ſuch ſort poured out on them that believed their Prophecy likewiſe, as now it was upon thoſe that received the Apoſtles Doctrine. And therefore ſuch a thing as this was foretold by the Prophets, as peculiar to the coming of the *Meſſias*, and as that by which he might be known to be come when the event of ſuch Predictions took place, even as it came to paſs here. The Prediction, *Joel* ii. 28. was, That in the *laſt days* the Spirit ſhould be poured out upon all Fleſh; in the *laſt days*, that is, in the laſt days of the *Jewiſh* State or Commonwealth (as may be evinced by the Context) in which Chriſt came, as was foretold by his Prophets; in which time alſo the Spirit was poured out in miraculous Gifts and Operations, as a Teſtimony that the *Meſſias* was come. The Holy Spirit in the effects of it in theſe extraordinary Gifts and Operations, is called the *teſtifying* of Chriſt, or the *witneſs* which he bore touching his being the true *Meſſiah* and Saviour of the World, *John* xv. 26, 27. But when he, the Comforter, is come ——even the Spirit of Truth——he ſhall *teſtifie* of me; and ye alſo (Apoſtles) ſhall bear witneſs, becauſe ye have been with me from the beginning. And again, 1 *John* v. 6. This is he that came by Water and Blood——and it is the Spirit that beareth *witneſs*, becauſe the Spirit is Truth. *John* xvi. 8. *And when he* (the Comforter) *is come, he will convince the World of ſin, becauſe they believe not on me*, ſaith Chriſt; *of Righteouſneſs, becauſe I go to my Father*, (was taken up into Heaven) *and of Judgment, becauſe the Prince of this World is judged:* The Devil dethroned and caſt down, as he was when the Mouths of his Oracles were ſtopped, and the Idol-Temples ſhut up, and his Kingdom and Rule demoliſhed by the preaching of the Goſpel among the Heathen, accompanied with theſe miraculous Effects of the Spirit, which bore down all before it, as it were; and therefore this is called the Demonſtration of the Spirit and Power; as oppoſed to Humane Oratory among Heathen Philoſophers, and the way of Humane Demonſtration, 1 *Cor.* ii. 4. This wonderful Effuſion of the Spirit in miraculous Gifts, was that Baptiſm of the Spirit we read of, which you with ſome others, have in theſe days, vainly pretended to under another Notion, of being baptized with the Spirit. But if you will but compare *Matth.* iii. 11. and *Acts* i. v. with *Acts* ii. 3, 4. and xi. 15, 16. you may eaſily diſcern your Error in applying it to any thing but to that extraordinary and miraculous Effuſion of the Spirit.

By all this you may ſee how one Scripture falls in with, and explains another, if you will but take hold of a right Notion of the end for which the plentiful Effuſion of the Spirit was foretold and promiſed. Which was not to guide all Chriſtians by its inward Motions without outward teaching, but to enable ſome to teach the right Faith and Life to others, even to thoſe of other Tongues, in their own Language; and to confirm their Doctrine thereby, and by other Operations of the Spirit to be from God.

And theſe extraordinary Effects of the Spirit were greatly neceſſary to accompany the firſt Promulgation and planting of the Goſpel in the World, to procure Credit to it, Belief of it from the *Jews*, who otherwiſe would not have been taken off from their old way of Levitical and Ceremonial Worſhip, which they had received from God: And from the Gentile-Nations, who otherwiſe would not have been taken off from their idolatrous and ſuperſtitious way of Worſhip in which they had been deeply rooted by long and ancient Tradition, received from their Foreſathers. And therefore St. *Paul* ſaith, as was obſerved before, that Tongues, that is, the Gift of ſpeaking divers Tongues on a ſudden, are *a ſign, not to them that believe, but to them that believe not*; 1 *Cor.* xiv. 22. As the giving of the Law by *Moſes*, was accompanied with Signs and Wonders which were wrought by *Moſes*, both before and after the firſt Promulgation of it, to procure Belief from the *Jews*, that he was ſent of God, and that the Law given by him was from God: So it was as neceſſary that the firſt Promulgation of the Goſpel by the Son of God himſelf, and by thoſe that were immediately ſent by him, ſhould be, for the ſame reaſon, accompanied with more and greater Miracles and Wonders, than thoſe wrought by *Moſes* were; as Chriſt himſelf was greater than *Moſes*; and as the Abrogation of the Old, and the giving of the New Law, was more than the giving of the Law only, when there was no promulgate Law before in being. And therefore our Saviour ſaid of the *Jews* that would not receive his Doctrine, but ſtill ſtuck to the Letter of the Law of *Moſes*; *If I had not done among them the Works which none other Man hath done, they had not had ſin*, John xv. 24. And as it was not neceſſary to continue thoſe or the like Miracles and Wonders in the *Jewiſh* Church, after the Law had been well eſtabliſhed by them; but that the Law being once committed to writing, might be, as it was, their ſtanding Rule of Worſhip and Converſation: Even ſo after the Goſpel had received a ſufficient Atteſtation to be from God, by the Continuance of thoſe miraculous Gifts of the Holy Ghoſt in the Church for ſome time, till the Doctrine and Hiſtory of the Goſpel were committed to writing, and thoſe Writings owned as Authentick Records every where by the Church, in all known parts of the World; it was then no more neceſſary, as the event ſhews, to perpetuate Miracles in the Chriſtian Church, for the Confirmation of the Goſpel, than it was to perpetuate them in the *Jewiſh*, for the Ratification of the Law; but that the Doctrine and Hiſtory of the Goſpel in the Books of the New Teſtament, ſhould be of like uſe to Chriſtians, as the Law and Prophets in Books was to the *Jews* of old.

The Prophets of old, who though they were extraordinarily inſpired, did all along, in their time, call the *Jews* to Obedience to the written Law of *Moſes*, and to Repentance for tranſgreſſing that. And when propheſying in this Senſe, was to ceaſe from among them, for ſeveral Ages, God by *Malachy*, the laſt of thoſe Prophets, gave it in charge to that People, to remember the written Law of *Moſes*, as that by which they were to govern themſelves. *Remember*, ſaith he, *the Law of Moſes my Servant, which I commanded him in Horeb for all Iſrael, with the Statutes and Judgments*, Mal. iv. 4.

And it was foretold by *Moſes*, concerning Chriſt, that a Prophet ſhould be raiſed up by God, *like* unto him, *Deut.* xviii. 15, 18. And although Chriſt that Prophet was *unlike* unto *Moſes* in many other things wherein our Lord excelled him, yet he was truly *like* unto him in this, *viz.* in that he as Mediator, gave forth the Evangelical Law at his Appearance in the World, as that which was to be the ſtanding Rule unto Chriſtians throughout the whole Duration of the Kingdom of the *Meſſias*; as *Moſes*, who alſo was a Mediator in that reſpect, had delivered a ſtanding Law to the *Jews*, by which they were to govern themſelves throughout their Generations, and the Adminiſtration of the *Moſaical* Covenant.

By what hath been ſaid touching the plentiful Effuſion of the Spirit upon the firſt ſetting out of the Goſpel into the World, you may ſee (if Prejudice do not blindfold you) that what was done in that kind, is ſo far from giving any countenance to your Opinion of the Spirit's being given to teach Men immediately by internal Illumination and Operation, without outward Miniſtry and Teaching, that it is an evident Proof of the quite contrary. For the Spirit was thus given to the Apoſtles and others, that they might propagate the Chriſtian Faith in the World, being enabled thereby to make it known to them of other Languages, in their own Tongues, and to embolden them to run all Hazards in ſo doing (for they being filled with the Holy Ghoſt, ſpake the Word of God with all Boldneſs, *Acts* iv. 31.) And likewiſe to convince the World that Chriſt and his Apoſtles, and their Doctrine, were all from God. All which was done by Vocal Teaching, and Viſible Signs, not excluding the inward Aſſiſtance of Divine Grace: All which would have been needleſs, if God had choſen to teach Men by the Light of Chriſt within only, as you ſpeak. So that either your Enthuſiaſtical Notion overthrows God's Method of proceeding to teach Men the Chriſtian Religion, or elſe his Method overthrows your Notion; for doubtleſs they are contrary one to another; and whether it be better to follow God or Man, judge you!

§ XV. Another place miſunderſtood and miſapplied by you, is *John* xvi. 13. *When the Spirit of Truth is come, he will guide you into all Truth.* Which is not a Promiſe of ſending the Spirit to guide *all Chriſtians* by its immediate Motions; but a Promiſe to his *Apoſtles*; for they only were then preſent with Chriſt at the Paſſover, juſt before his Apprehenſion and Suffering.

And this, and other like Promiſes of ſending the Spirit, were made to them, to encourage them the better to bear his departure from them; giving them to know thereby, how they ſhould be enabled, when he ſhould be taken from them, to carry on the great Work of Apoſtleſhip, to which he had choſen them. And this he did, 1. By giving them to underſtand, that this Spirit ſhould bring all things to their Remembrance which he had ſpoken unto them while he was yet with them. 2. That this Spirit of his ſhould teach them all things, in which Chriſt himſelf had not inſtructed them while he was with them, inaſmuch as they were not then able to bear them. 3. That the Spirit (to wit, in his miraculous Gifts) ſhould concur with them in teſtifying of Chriſt, *John* xiv. 26. *But the Comforter, which is the Holy Ghoſt, whom the Father will ſend in my Name, he ſhall bring all things to your remembrance whatſoever I have ſaid unto you.* John xvi. 12, 13. *I have yet many things to ſay unto you, but ye cannot bear them now: Howbeit, when he, the Spirit of Truth is come, he will guide you into all Truth, and he will ſhew you things to come.* Chap. xiv. 26. *He ſhall teach you all things.* Chap. xv. 26, 27. *But when the Comforter is come, whom I will ſend unto you from the Father, he ſhall teſtifie of me; and ye alſo ſhall bear witneſs, becauſe ye have been with me from the beginning.* This agrees exactly with what he ſaid again to them after he was riſen, *Acts* i. 8. *Ye ſhall receive Power after that the Holy Ghoſt is come upon you, and ye ſhall be Witneſſes unto me*, &c.

And that theſe Predictions and Promiſes of ſending the Holy Ghoſt upon the Apoſtles, the better to qualifie them for their great Work and Office, began to be made good to them in thoſe extraordinary Gifts which were poured out on them on the Day of *Pentecoſt*, and that Chriſt's Prediction of the coming of the Holy Ghoſt did refer to that, appears by what St. *Peter* ſaid in his Sermon upon that occaſion, *Acts* ii. 33. *Therefore being by the right hand of God exalted, and having received of the Father the promiſe of the Holy Ghoſt, he hath ſhed forth this which ye now ſee and hear*, the Spirit in its ſenſible effects. Compare herewith *Acts* i. 4, 5. *Wait for the Promiſe of the Father, which ſaith he* (Jeſus) *ye have* [heard of me]---- *ye ſhall be baptized with the Holy Ghoſt not many days hence.* The giving of the Spirit *thus*, was purpoſely reſerved for the honour and evidence of Chriſt's Exaltation in Glory; but the Spirit to ſanctifie was given before: *The Holy Ghoſt was not yet given, becauſe Jeſus was not yet glorified*, John vii. 39.

But the ſending of the Holy Ghoſt to theſe Ends, is greatly remote from the End you aſſign thereof, as hath alſo been ſhewn before, and which you may eaſily ſee by what hath been here repreſented to you, if the Light which was once in you be not become Darkneſs. Your applying Promiſes, as if made to all Chriſtians as Chriſtians, and to common and ordinary Caſes, which were made to the Apoſtles only, or to them and ſome others in extraordinary Caſes, peculiar to Perſons extraordinarily qualified, and extraordinarily ſent, hath led you and ſome others into very dangerous Errors, that have made very bad Work in the Church of God.

§ XVI. Another Scripture which you are wont frequently to produce in defence of this Opinion of yours, touching the Spirit's inward Teaching, without outward Teaching by Man, is 1 *John* ii. 20. *But ye have an Unction from the Holy One, and ye know all things.* And again, *ver.* 27. *But the Anointing which ye have received of him, abideth in you, and ye need not that any Man teach you, but as the ſame Anointing teacheth you of all things, and is Truth, and is no Lie; and even as it hath taught you, ye ſhall abide in him.*

Whatever the right ſenſe of this Scripture is, 'tis certain your Notion of the Holy Spirit's teaching Men (that live under the Goſpel, as thoſe did to whom theſe words were written) whatever they ought to believe and do without any outward Teaching by Speech or Writing, cannot be the ſenſe of it; becauſe ſuch a ſenſe of the place is inconſiſtent with what is manifeſtly proved in my Propoſitions before laid down; and becauſe it would render the deſign of St. *John* in this Epiſtle, and other Writings of his, needleſs, in which he labours to ſettle and firmly eſtabliſh the Chriſtians in the Belief and Practice of what they had heard, and by hearing had been taught from the beginning, againſt all Temptations to Apoſtacy from, or Looſneſs in the Profeſſion of Chriſtianity. But if we conſider upon what occaſion theſe words are here brought in, and compare them alſo with what we find in ſome other Scriptures, it will be no hard matter to underſtand the Apoſtles ſcope in them.

He had obſerved to them in *ver.* 18. that even then *there were many Antichriſts.* And in *ver.* 19. that they, thoſe many Antichriſts, *went out from them:* And his ſcope in the reſt of the *Chapter* is to fortifie and antidote them againſt the poyſonous Pretenſions of thoſe Antichriſts, who, as he deſcribes them in *ver.* 22. *did deny that Jeſus was the Chriſt.* That this was here his Scope and Deſign, appears by *ver.* 26. where he ſaith, *Theſe things have I written unto you concerning thoſe that ſeduce you.*

Now the means he makes uſe of to preſerve them under this danger, and to eſtabliſh them, is by putting them in remembrance by what means they at the firſt came to be perſuaded of the Truth of that Doctrine, by which they were taught that *Jeſus is the Chriſt*, and that was by pouring out the Holy Ghoſt in viſible Effects upon the Apoſtles that taught it, and upon thoſe that believed it, and conſequently upon themſelves, by which the Truth of it was abundantly confirmed to them as coming from God.

For that doubtleſs is meant by the *Anointing* here ſpoken of. *Jeſus Chriſt* himſelf, in reſpect of the Spirit of Glory that appeared in him by his Doctrine and Miracles, was ſaid to be *anointed with the Holy Ghoſt and with Power*, Acts x. 38. As it was foretold by *Iſaiah* the Prophet, ſaying, *The Spirit of the Lord is upon me*, *becauſe he hath anointed me to preach the Goſpel to the Poor*, Iſai. lxi. 1. Luke iv. 18. And ſo in like manner the pouring out of the Holy Ghoſt in miraculous Gifts, both upon the Apoſtles and Believers for the confirmation of the Doctrine the one preached and the other believed, is elſewhere called their being *anointed by God*, as here alſo it is called the *Unction of the Holy One*; which is the ſame thing. 2 *Cor.* i. 21, 22. *Now he that eſtabliſheth us with you in Chriſt*, *and hath anointed us*, *is God*; *who hath alſo ſealed us*, *and given the earneſt of the Spirit in our Hearts*. By this it appears, that both Apoſtles and other Believers were eſtabliſhed into Chriſt by the Anointing of God upon them, which Anointing was his pouring out of the Holy Spirit. *Ye have an Unction from the Holy One*, *and ye know all things*. Not that by this *Unction* the common Chriſtians were immediately inſpired with the knowledge of all Truths, but that by it they were aſſured of the Truth of all things which the Apoſtles had taught them; and conſequently muſt needs know thereby that *Jeſus* was the *Chriſt*, becauſe that was one of the principal Doctrines which they taught, and taught all they did teach in the Name of him as ſuch. As they were induced at the firſt to believe the Doctrine to be from God, becauſe they perceived the Anointing of God to be upon them that preached it; ſo they were afterwards confirmed in the Truth of it, becauſe upon their receiving of it, they themſelves alſo received of the ſame Anointing. It is not ſaid, That this Anointing did teach them all things, but that it did teach them [of] all things; that is, of, or concerning the Truth of all things to which it was a Witneſs or Evidence, as I have ſhewed it was to the Apoſtles Doctrine from *Heb.* ii. 4, 5. *Mark* xvi. 20. and other places.

When then this Apoſtle ſays, *Ye have an Unction from the Holy One*, *and ye know all things*; he did not intend thereby to tell them, that all things they were to believe and do, were *revealed* to them by it; but that the Doctrine, by which they were taught all things neceſſary to their Salvation, was thereby *atteſted* to be from God, appears evidently by that which he perſuades them to by it in *ver.* 24. and that was, that the Doctrine which they had heard from the beginning, might therefore be retained and held faſt by them that had been ſo ratified and confirmed to them by the Unction they had from the Holy One. *Let that therefore abide in you*, *which you have heard from the beginning: If that which ye have heard from the beginning ſhall remain in you*, *ye alſo ſhall continue in the Son and in the Father*. Agreeable to what he ſays alſo in his ſecond Epiſtle, *ver.* 9. *He that abideth in the Doctrine of Chriſt*, *he hath both the Father and the Son*. And therefore when he ſays again, *Ye need not that any Man teach you*, *but as the ſame anointing teacheth you of all things*, *and is truth*, *and is no lie*; he doth not thereby mean that they needed no farther Teaching by Man for their Eſtabliſhment and Building up in the Faith: For if he had, he had contradicted himſelf in what he was now doing in this *Chapter*, and all along in this *Epiſtle*. And therefore his meaning muſt be, that they needed not from him, or any other Man, any Teaching that could, or could reaſonably pretend to give them greater aſſurance of any thing, than that Anointing gave them of *Jeſus* his being the *Chriſt*, and of the Truth of that Doctrine which they had heard from the beginning: *For that Anointing*, ſaith he, *is Truth*, *and is no Lie*; but ſuch as could not deceive them, it being God's Witneſs from Heaven. And from thence concludes, ſaying, *That as it hath taught you*, *ye ſhall abide in him*. As if he ſhould have ſaid: As this Anointing did at the firſt prevail with you to receive *Jeſus* as the true *Meſſias*, ſo for the ſame cauſe I am confident you will (as you have the greateſt reaſon) ſtill abide in him, notwithſtanding all Pretences of Seducers to take you off.

This then being the ſcope and drift of the Apoſtle in this place, to which the ſeveral Expreſſions here uſed are accommodated, and by which they are to be interpreted and underſtood, how I pray you will you find your Opinion here, of the Spirit's inward Teaching of all things without any outward Teaching? You are wont to ſay, that the Scriptures are not to be underſtood but by the ſame Spirit that gave them forth: And the Spirit, doubtleſs, is not wanting to aſſiſt the ſincere Endeavours of Men in ſearching after the ſenſe of the Scriptures in order to practiſe. But truly if we ſhould judge of Mens having the Spirit by their underſtanding the Scriptures, I think there would be as little reaſon to think you have the Spirit as any ſort of Men that have read the Scriptures; for doubtleſs there are ſcarce any ſort of Men, if any at all, that do more groſly miſunderſtand and miſapply, and ſo abuſe the Scriptures, than you do, and that under the greateſt Confidence too of being guided in your Senſe and Notions of them by the Spirit of God. You take the ſound of words in Scripture, which, as you fancy, comport with your Notions and Opinions, and then apply them to your purpoſe, and then are confident the Holy Spirit hath guided you therein. Whenas alas you do not underſtand the intent or deſign of the Writer in the places where ſuch Expreſſions, no nor, as is to be feared, do you make it your Buſineſs to underſtand it, but think your Buſineſs is rather to ſit ſtill and to expect the immediate Teachings of the Spirit, and then conclude your Conceptions which firſt offer themſelves to you, to be his Teachings. And on the other hand conclude all rational Oppoſition that is made againſt you by ſuch as have taken pains to conſider the Scope and Coherence of Scripture, to be the Iſſues of fleſhly Wiſdom and carnal Reaſon. So that I know not which is more to be pitied, your Ignorance or your Confidence: But certain it is that you are to be pitied for both.

It is obſervable that when *Solomon* (a Man wiſer in his Generation than any of you are in yours) had a Promiſe from God of being made wiſe above all that were before him, did not therefore think himſelf unconcerned in labour and diligent ſearch to attain it, but ſaid, *I gave my heart to ſeek and ſearch out by Wiſdom concerning all things that are done under Heaven: This ſore travel*, ſaith he, *hath God given to the Sons of Men to be exerciſed therewith*, Eccleſ. i. 13. And as he ſaith the Bleſſing of the Lord maketh rich, in one place; ſo he ſaith the diligent hand maketh rich, in another, from which may fairly be collected, that the Bleſſing of God in the diligent uſe of due means, is the way to proſper in the World. And it is as true in the courſe of attaining to ſpiritual Riches in Underſtanding and Grace, as it is in Temporals. And therefore he ſaith again in reference to that: *If thou crieſt after Knowledge and lifteſt up thy Voice for Underſtanding: If thou ſeekeſt her as Silver, and ſearcheſt for her as for hid Treaſures: Then ſhalt thou underſtand the Fear of the Lord and find the Knowledge of God, for the Lord giveth Wiſdom: Out of his Mouth proceedeth Knowledge and Underſtanding:* That is, he gives ſuch Wiſdom unto Men uſually upon thoſe Terms fore-mentioned, *Prov.* ii. 3, 4, 5, 6.

But your rare Notions, like *Jacob*'s Veniſon, are uſually too ſoon and too eaſily come by to be right.

§ XVII. But becauſe I would not be too tedious, I ſhall, I think, in reference to the Buſineſs in hand, conſider but one or two places of Scripture more, at which you ſtumble; unleſs others fall in upon occaſion of diſcuſſing thoſe. And one of them is, *Rom.* viii. 14. *As many as are led by the Spirit of God, they are the Sons of God.* And you ſuppoſe this comports with your wild Notion of Mens being guided by the internal Teachings of the Spirit, without outward teaching. But why, I pray you, without outward Teaching? Do you not know that the whole Goſpel preached by Chriſt and his Apoſtles, and afterwards written, is the Iſſue or Product of the Spirit? Is not all the Holy *Scripture* given by *Inſpiration of God?* Did not the holy Men of old (the Prophets) ſpeak and write as they were *moved by the Holy Ghoſt?* And do not you your ſelves ſay that the *Scriptures* cannot be underſtood but by the *ſame Spirit that gave them forth?* By which you ſuppoſe and grant that they were given forth by the Spirit. And for what end did the Holy Spirit inſpire the Apoſtles firſt to preach, and after that to write the Holy Doctrine of the Goſpel, but to teach Men thereby what to believe, and how to live that they might be ſaved? And if ſo, are not all thoſe who are led and guided by this Goſpel, which is the Doctrine of the Holy Spirit, led by the Spirit of God?

There's no doubt but that the Spirit by its inward Operations upon the minds of Men doth concur with that teaching of his which is from without by the Scriptures, and by Men from the Scriptures. But methinks it's wonderful! I mean wonderfully abſurd that you ſhould divide the Spirits teaching and leading, and oppoſe his inward to his outward teaching. Whereas the Lord hath declared expreſly that his word outwardly, and Spirit ſhall be ſo conjoined in carrying on his Deſign of Grace towards the World under the Goſpel, as that they ſhall never be ſeparated, *Iſa.* lix. 21. *As for me, this is my Covenant with them ſaith the Lord; my Spirit that is upon thee and my words* which I have put in *thy Mouth*, ſhall not depart out of thy Mouth, nor out of the Mouth of thy Seed, nor out of the Mouth of thy Seeds Seed, ſaith the Lord, from henceforth and for ever. By which and by other Scriptures, I know aſſuredly that whatever inward teaching by the Spirit you pretend to, yet the Holy Spirit never taught you to believe or to ſay that the Spirit's inward teaching only, without any outward teaching by the Scriptures or by Men, is the Rule of Faith and Practice, whatever other Spirit it is that taught it you, the which it concerns you more than me to examine. For the

Spirit having ſaid thus much by this holy Man of God in this place (for he as all other Prophets ſpake as they were moved by the Holy Ghoſt) I am ſure he hath ſaid nothing to the contrary in any other; for the word that proceeds from the Spirit of Truth, *is not yea and nay.*

When St. *Paul* ſaid, *Gal.* v. 18. *If ye are led by the Spirit ye are not under the Law*; he did not mean, if they were led by the inward Guidance of the Spirit without the outward Conduct of the Goſpel, but under the word Spirit here, he oppoſeth the Goſpel to the Law. And his meaning was, that if they gave up themſelves to the Conduct of the Spirit by the Goſpel, they ſhould not need to make Conſcience ſtill of the Ceremonies of *Moſes*'s Law, as Circumciſion or the like, as ſome among them did, from which he had been dehorting them in the beginning of this Chapter.

This Goſpel is called the *Law* of the *Spirit of Life in Chriſt Jeſus*, which frees thoſe that walk after it, and not after the Fleſh, *from the Law of Sin and Death*, Rom. viii. 1, 2. And where this Goſpel is received into the Heart ſo as that it is predominant there, there Chriſt dwells, and the Spirit dwells by that word of the Goſpel. And thus *Chriſt is in Men the Hope of Glory*: And thus *Chriſt dwells in the Heart by* Faith, by Faith in his word: And thoſe live and *walk in the Light*, that live and walk according to this word: And thus they *abide in Chriſt, that have his word abiding in them*: And thoſe that *abide in the Doctrine of Chriſt, have both the Father and the Son*: And *they are ſpiritually minded*, whoſe Minds are powerfully influenced by the Goſpel: And they *reſiſt the Holy Ghoſt*, who reſiſt that word which hath been declared by Motion and Inſpiration from him: So inſeparable are the Word and Spirit in the Conduct of Chriſtians to Happineſs.

St. *Paul* exhorted the *Epheſians* to *be filled with the Spirit*, in order to their ſpeaking to themſelves in Pſalms, and Hymns, and Spiritual Songs, *Eph.* v. 18, 19. and the *Coloſſians* that they would *let the word of Chriſt dwell in them richly*, in order to the ſame end, *Col.* iii. 16. From both which Paſſages compared it appears, that the word of Chriſt which is the Goſpel, and the Spirit, do concur and co-operate in producing the ſame ſpiritual Effects in Men: Yea, it ſeems they are ſo unanimous in their Operation in reference hereto, that when but one is named, the other is to be underſtood; or elſe that the Variation of Expreſſion, is but another word for the ſame thing.

Theſe things being ſo plain throughout the current of the Scriptures; your bold and confident Aſſertion to the contrary, diſcovers your very great Unſkilfulneſs in the nature of the Evangelical Diſpenſation, and your utter Inſufficiency and Unfitneſs to take upon you to teach others, and that you need rather your ſelves to be taught the firſt Principles of the Doctrine of Chriſt.

§ XVIII. *Heb.* viii. 10, 11. is another place which you would conſtrain to ſerve your turn, and to make it evident that under the New Covenant, God himſelf doth ſo inwardly teach Men and write his Laws in their Hearts, that they need no outward teaching what to believe or do, by any other means: Becauſe it is there ſaid, *I will put or give my Laws into their Minds and write them in their Hearts: And they ſhall not teach every Man his Neighbour, and every Man his Brother; ſaying, know the Lord; for all ſhall know me from the leaſt to the greateſt.* But when you can but obtain of your ſelves ſeriouſly and impartially to conſider for what end God hath ſet in his Church firſt Apoſtles, and then Paſtors and Teachers, if not to teach Men what to know, believe and do that they may be ſaved; I doubt not but you will then find it neceſſary to underſtand this place of Scripture ſo as that it may not run counter to, and contradict the whole current of Scripture, elſewhere; as it will if your Senſe of it take place, as I have already ſhewed at large. And therefore ſeeing your Senſe of it cannot ſtand unleſs the general Teſtimony of the Scriptures fall; another Senſe of it muſt of neceſſity be accepted of.

Theſe words then as noting the difference of the ſecond Covenant from the firſt, are a Form of Speech to ſet forth after a Rhetorical way, how plainly and eaſily to be underſtood, the Mind of God touching the Salvation of Men, ſhall be revealed and made known under the Goſpel, in compariſon of what it was before. Before and under the old Covenant it was but obſcurely made known by dark Propheſies, (which are therefore ſaid to be *a Light ſhining in a dark place*, 2 Pet. i. 19.) and under Types and Figures and literal Repreſentations, ſo that the Children of *Iſrael* could not *ſee to the end* of thoſe things which are now aboliſhed: They could rarely and not without much Difficulty and Uncertainty, if at all, underſtand the end or deſign of them, or what was ſignified by them, till the Goſpel came and revealed them. And therefore St. *Paul* ſaith, before Faith came, we were kept under the Law, *ſhut up* unto the Faith, which ſhould *afterwards be revealed*, Gal. iii. 23. So that by all the teaching they had though there were *Precept upon Precept*, *Precept upon Precept*, *Line upon Line*, *Line upon Line*, *here a little and there a little*, as the Prophet ſpeaks, yet they had and could have but a dim and very imperfect Sight and Knowledge of what is now revealed in the Goſpel. And therefore it's ſaid of the Prophets themſelves, who having their Predictions by immediate Revelation from God, were like to know more in this kind than any other in thoſe times; yet it is ſaid of them, that when they propheſied of the Grace that ſhould come to them that are under the Goſpel, tho' they *enquired diligently what* as well as *what manner of time the Spirit of Chriſt which was in them did ſignifie, when it teſtified before-hand the Sufferings of Chriſt, and the Glory that ſhould follow*; yet, I ſay, 'tis ſaid of them, *That not unto themſelves, but unto us they did miniſter the things which are reported by them that have preached the Goſpel with the Holy Ghoſt ſent down from Heaven*, 1 Pet. i. 10, 11, 12. In this reſpect it was ſaid, tho' none of the Prophets were greater than *John* the *Baptiſt*, yet *the leaſt in the Kingdom of God is greater than he*. This was their Caſe then.

But now by the Goſpel the way of Salvation by Chriſt, and the Terms and Conditions upon which it is promiſed, are ſo nakedly, plainly and clearly revealed, and fitted to Mens Underſtandings and Capacities, that ſo much as is neceſſary to Salvation may very eaſily be underſtood by Perſons of very ordinary and common Capacities, and without much Teaching; as appears by thoſe that were converted and baptized (as the Jaylor and his Houſhold, and the three thouſand in *Acts* ii.) with little teaching. Upon account of which clear Revelation, it's ſaid, *We all with open face behold as in a Glaſs the Glory of the Lord*: The Glory of his Wiſdom, Goodneſs, Grace and Mercy, in the way of Salvation now exhibited in the Goſpel, 2 *Cor.* iii. 18. Upon account of this Difference it is, I conceive, that St. *John* ſaith, *The Darkneſs is paſt, and the true Light now ſhineth*, 1 John ii. 8.

Beſides the Laws and Terms of the New Covenant are not only fitted to the Underſtandings and Capacities of all ſorts of Perſons, by the plainneſs of the Revelation of them, but are ſuch alſo in the very Nature of them as that they commend themſelves to every Man's acceptation and choice, and are every whit as worthy to be embraced by their Wills, as they are eaſie to be underſtood by the reaſon of their Minds.

A great part of the Laws of the Old Covenant which were but figurative of the Terms of the New, had little or nothing in them to commend themſelves to Mens acceptation and choice; ſo long as their Symbolical Nature was not underſtood, ſave what the Authority of God in commanding them gave them. Circumciſion, Sacrificing, legal Waſhings and Purifications, and the like, were in St. *Paul*'s account but *beggarly Elements* when the command of God for the Obſervation of them was taken off: And not only ſo, but they were a *Yoke, which*, as St. *Peter* ſaid, *neither we nor our Fathers were able to bear*; a *Yoke of Bondage*, as St. *Paul* calls them. Whereas moſt of the Precepts of the Goſpel, the things commanded there, are deſirable in themſelves, if they had not been commanded by a promulgate Law: To love and worſhip God; to repent of that which hath been ill done, to be ſober, chaſte and temperate; to do to others as we would be done to our ſelves in point of Equity, Fidelity and Charity; to be humble and meek, patient and contented, and the like, are things that tend to the Peace and Satisfaction of the Mind; to the Health of the Body and long Life; to a Man's Credit, Reputation, and Thriving in the World, and to the good of Humane Society; beſides their certain Relation to a future happy State. And there is no Man that acts according to the beſt reaſon of his Mind, but would chuſe theſe things, tho' you ſhould ſuppoſe him under no expreſs command to do it, and tho' there were no Heaven promiſed or Hell threatned. But when you conſider the great Reward in another World, that is promiſed to a faithful Obſervance of the Laws of Chriſt, and to a Belief in him; and the dreadful Threatnings againſt ſuch as deſpiſe and neglect them, it makes them yet far more deſirable and eligible; becauſe as it is natural for every Man to deſire the Happineſs and Perfection of his own Being, ſo it is agreeable to the higheſt Reaſon in Man to chuſe the means that tend thereto, and ſuch is our Obedience to the Goſpel. And theſe Rewards, which are ſuch mighty motives to Obedience, are far more clearly reveal'd and brought into open light by the Goſpel, than they were before; which makes the Goſpel far more effectual to perſuade to holy Living, than the Law could be. *The Law made nothing perfect, but the bringing in of a better hope did, by which we draw nigh unto God*, Heb. vii. 19.

Theſe two things forementioned then, the *eaſineſs of underſtanding* God's way and method of Salvation, from the plainneſs and fulneſs of the Revelation of it under the New Covenant, by which it is fitted to every capacity, and the *innate Goodneſs of the Laws thereof*, in conjunction with the Promiſe of Eternal Life made to the obſervance of them, by which they are alſo completely fitted to attract and draw Mens Wills to accept, embrace and chuſe them: Theſe, I ſay, are the things I conceive foretold in that Prophecy, *Jer.* xxxi. here cited in *Heb.* viii. under thoſe Expreſſions of God's putting, giving or conveying his

Law

Laws into the Mind, and writing them in the Heart, ſo that they ſhall not teach every Man his Neighbour, and every Man his Brother, *&c.* And when it is ſo ſaid, it is not then ſaid, that they ſhall not be taught neither by Apoſtles, Evangeliſts, Paſtors or Teachers; but *they ſhall not teach every Man his Neighbour and every Man his Brother*. And tho' the Phraſe here uſed ſeem abſolute in ſound, yet it may well be underſtood in a Comparative ſenſe, as other Expreſſions in Scripture of like nature ſometimes muſt be. As when it's ſaid, *Labour not for the meat that periſheth, but for that meat which endureth to everlaſting Life*, John vi. 26. The meaning here of *labour not*, is labour not ſo much. And ſo again, *I deſire Mercy and not Sacrifice*, Hoſ. vi. 6. the meaning is, I deſired Mercy more than Sacrifice, or Sacrifice not ſo much as Mercy. So again, *Eph.* vi. 12. *We wreſtle not with Fleſh and Blood*; that is, not only, or not ſo much, *but againſt Principalities*, &c. And ſo here, when it is ſaid, *They ſhall not teach every Man his Neighbour*, &c. The meaning may be, that they ſhall not ſo much need to do it under the ſecond Covenant as under the firſt. But indeed the Words and Phraſe here uſed ſeem to be a ſtrain of Elegance oft uſed in Scriptures, when to ſet forth the greatneſs or great abundance and plenty of things, Expreſſions are uſed improperly and hyperbolically in reference thereto, and ſo are not to be underſtood properly but figuratively. As when it is ſaid in reference to the ſame thing under the Goſpel with that I have been now ſpeaking of, that *the Earth ſhall be filled with the knowledge of the Lord as the Waters cover the Sea*, Iſai. xi. 9. I ſuppoſe you will not underſtand this in ſuch a ſtrict ſenſe, as if it foretold in Goſpel-times, that there ſhould be no more Knowledge of God wanting on the Earth, than there is bare Ground in the Sea; or that *David* would have the World believe that he did weep a River, yea Rivers full of Tears, when he ſaid, *Mine Eyes run down with Rivers of Tears, becauſe Men keep not thy Laws*, Pſal. cxix. or that St. *John* did think in a ſtrict ſenſe that the World could not contain the Books, if all the Signs which *Jeſus* did ſhould be written, *John* xx. And if not, why ſhould you ſo much as once imagine, that theſe words of the Prophet ſhould foretel, that under the New Covenant there ſhould be no need of teaching by Man's Miniſtry, when the whole current of the Scriptures of the New Teſtament, both in Precept and Example, ſhew the contrary? The words of the Prophet here, are only a Prediction of the rich and plentiful means of Knowledge and Grace that was to be vouchſafed under the New Covenant more than under the Old.

§ XIX. One would think you have an aking Tooth againſt outward Teaching, when you build ſuch Caſtles in the Air as ye do, rather than none, to batter it down. But how comes it to paſs that you uſe it ſo much your ſelves, if there be no more need of it than you pretend? I know that which you alledge to excuſe your ſelves in this ſeeming Contradiction, is this, or to this effect: You ſay, Tho' Men need not be taught by Men what it is which they ought to know, believe and do, the Light within teaching them this, and being a Rule to them in theſe things: Yet inaſmuch as Men may and do rebel againſt this Light, it's neceſſary to call upon and perſuade them to obey it.

But in this Plea you ſuppoſe for Truth that which is a manifeſt, groſs, and moſt dangerous and pernicious Error, which is this: That it is not as well neceſſary to teach Men by the Scriptures and by the Miniſtry of Men, to know and believe what is neceſſary to their Salvation, as it is to perſuade them to do what is neceſſary thereto. For contrary hereunto I have already proved, that for Men that live under the Goſpel, it's neceſſary to their Salvation that they know and believe that *Jeſus* is the Chriſt the Son of God, and Saviour of the World, and that Remiſſion of Sin is promiſed in his Name to ſuch as repent. I have proved likewiſe, that theſe things cannot be known, but either by immediate Revelation from God, or by Inſtruction from them that have had ſuch Revelation, or by them whoſe Knowledge thereof hath been deriv'd down ſucceſſively by outward Teaching from the firſt Preachers of ſuch Doctrine. To which I ſhall now add as follows:

In the Apoſtles days the Converts, that were then made ſuch, were brought to the Knowledge and Belief of thoſe great Articles of the Chriſtian Faith, fundamentally neceſſary to Salvation, by hearing the Word taught and the Scriptures opened. This appears all along in the *Acts of the Apoſtles:* In *Chap.* ii. when St. *Peter* had ſaid, *ver.* 36. *Let all the Houſe of Iſrael know aſſuredly, that God hath made that ſame* Jeſus *whom ye crucified, both Lord and Chriſt:* And had farther ſaid unto them, *ver.* 38. *Repent and be baptized every one of you in the Name of Jeſus Chriſt for the Remiſſion of Sins:* Then it's ſaid, ver. 41. *Then they that gladly received his Word were baptized.* And *Chap.* viii. 12. *But when they believed Philip, preaching the things concerning the Kingdom of God and the Name of* Jeſus Chriſt, *they were baptized.* And *Chap.* xi. 13, 14. *Send Men to Joppa, and call for Simon, whoſe ſirname is Peter, who ſhall tell thee words, whereby thou and all thy Houſe ſhall be ſaved.* Again, *Chap.* xvi 31, 32, 34. *They ſaid, Believe on the Lord*

Jeſus Chriſt, and thou ſhalt be ſaved and thy Houſe. And they ſpake unto him the Word *of the Lord, and to all that were in his Houſe. And he rejoyced, believing in God with all his Houſe.* And, *Chap.* xvii. 2, 3, 4. *And Paul, as his manner was, went in unto them, and three Sabbath days reaſoned with them out of the* Scriptures, *opening and alledging that Chriſt muſt needs have ſuffered and riſen from the dead: and that this* Jeſus, *whom I preach unto you, is Chriſt. And ſome of them believed.* Ver. 11, 12. *They received the Word with all readineſs of mind, and ſearched the* Scriptures *daily whether thoſe things were ſo; therefore many believed.* Again, *Chap.* xviii. 8. *And many of the Corinthians hearing, believed and were baptized.* Ver. 28. *And he mightily convinced the Jews, and that publickly, ſhewing by the* Scriptures *that* Jeſus *was Chriſt.* And *Chap.* xxvi. 17, 18. *To whom I now ſend thee, to open their Eyes, and to turn them from Darkneſs to Light.* Alſo *Chap.* xxviii. 23, 24. *To whom he expounded and teſtified the Kingdom of God, perſuading them concerning* Jeſus, *both out of the Law of Moſes, and out of the Prophets, from morning till evening: And ſome believed the things which were ſpoken.* By all theſe Inſtances you ſee, or may ſee, in what way and by what means God brought Men to know Chriſt, and to believe in him in the Apoſtles days, under the higheſt Diſpenſation of Goſpel-Light as ever ſhined upon the World. The Apoſtles Commiſſion was to *Go and teach all Nations, baptizing them in the Name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghoſt: teaching them to obſerve all things whatſoever he had commanded them,* Matth. xxviii. They, in purſuance of this, firſt taught the People to know and believe that *Jeſus* was the *Chriſt*, and that Remiſſion of Sins was granted in his Name to ſuch as believed, repented, and were baptized: And then they afterwards inſtructed them in the particular Duties of Holy Living.

Nothing can be plainer than that this was the way and method which God pitch'd upon, and uſed in the Apoſtles days, to bring Men to the Knowledge and Belief of what was neceſſary to their Salvation. And how you will ſatisfie the World, or your ſelves either, that God a few Years ago, not heard of till then, hath alter'd his method, and that now he reveals theſe things to Men without any ſuch Teaching by the Scriptures and Miniſtry of Men, as in thoſe times he conſtantly uſed to do, I know not, nor, as I believe, you neither.

But, I pray you, give an honeſt account to ſuch as are unſatisfied, for what Reaſon it is that you are ſo zealous againſt Teaching by Men, when you have but ſuch thin Pretences to ſupport your ſelves in ſo doing. Suppoſe your Error were the Truth, and that God did, by a Light created in every Man, ſufficiently teach them what they ought to believe and do: pray you what hurt would accrue to Men by having the ſame things imparted to them by Men from without, which they know and believe already by a Light within? When St. *Peter* had occaſion to write to thoſe that were already enlightned within (tho' not in your pretended way) he ſaid unto them, *I will not be negligent to put you always in remembrance of theſe things, though ye know them and be eſtabliſhed in the preſent truth,* 2 Pet. i. 12. And St. *John* in his firſt *Epiſtle*, c. ii. 21. *I have not written unto you, becauſe ye know not the Truth, but becauſe you know it, and that no Lye is of the Truth.* And do not you your ſelves grant, that the Light within you witneſſeth to that which is in the Scriptures, and that the Scriptures are as a Copy of it? Why then are you ſo angry with them that teach the People from the Scriptures, thoſe Truths which you ſay the Light within you witneſſeth to?

I would ye did not give too much occaſion hereby to ſuſpect your Integrity, when you make ſuch ſad Out-cries againſt the publick Miniſtry, one as well as another without diſtinction, as you are wont to do; when-as you cannot but know, if you know at all what they preach, that they teach the ſame Doctrine in the main to the People, which the Apoſtles taught, and which is declared in the Scriptures, and ſo the ſame which you ſay the Light within you witneſſeth to: And alſo that they teach the People, that it is not the hearing of this Doctrine preached to them, no nor yet the Knowledge of it neither, will avail them to their Salvation, without receiving it into their Hearts, or without ſuch a Belief of it as iſſues it ſelf in a frame of Spirit and tenour of Life and Converſation, as is ſuitable to it. And if you know not this, and yet ſpeak evil of them for their Preaching, as ſurmiſing worſe; you then make your ſelves of the number of thoſe ill Men which St. *Peter* and St. *Jude* deſcribe, *who ſpake evil of the things they knew not,* 2 Pet. ii. 12. Jude 10.

Beſides, you apparently diſcover a very ill mind, while you ſeek to make them odious to the People, by that which doth not at all make them ſo, ſave only in the Opinion of thoſe whoſe Minds are corrupted with Prejudice againſt all Teachers of Holy Things, as ſuch, or with Covetouſneſs, or Intereſt of a Party; and that is their taking Money of the People wherewith to ſupport themſelves and Families in ſerving them in the dear Concernments of their Souls: And therefore you ſtile them *Hirelings*, ſuch as preach for Hire, and make a Trade of it, and ſo make Merchandize of Mens Souls: Not conſidering that in doing thus you reproach the Wiſdom of our Lord, who hath ordained, *that thoſe that preach the Goſpel ſhould live of the Goſpel*, 1 Cor. ix. 14. and hath ſaid in reference hereto, that *the Labourer is worthy of his hire*, Luke x. 7. and that ſuch as *labour in the Word and Doctrine are worthy of double honour*, 1 Tim. v. 17. *That thoſe that are taught in the Word, ſhould communicate to him that teacheth in all good things*, Gal. vi. 6. And St. *Paul* ſaid of himſelf, *that he robbed other Churches, taking wages, that he might ſerve the Church of Corinth without charge*; which he did only to take occaſion from the falſe Apoſtles, who ſought occaſion to blaſt the Reputation of his Miniſtry upon occaſion of his taking Money; juſt as you do now by the Miniſters of the Goſpel, 2 *Cor.* xi. 8, 12, 13. And if you do as they did, you will too much deſerve the ſame Name they had.

You think it ſeems you may compare them (as frequently you do) with the falſe Prophets and bad Prieſts of old, of whom it is ſaid, that *the Prieſts did teach for Hire, and the Prophets divine for Money*. But are you indeed ſo far forſaken of Underſtanding, as to think it was a Crime in the Prieſts under the Law, to take Money, or Moneys-worth, whereby to live to diſcharge their Office? You cannot but know what ample Proviſion God made for them, and accounted himſelf robb'd when their Tithes were detained and kept back from them; and therefore that could not be their crime: But when the People were wicked, and did not make Conſcience of obſerving God's Laws, but broke them in keeping back the Tithes, as well as in other things, the Crime of the Prieſts complained of then, doubtleſs was, that they taught the People corrupt Doctrine, ſuch as would pleaſe them, that they might thereby incline them to pay them their Tithes. God, in *Malachi*'s Prophecy, complains of the People that they had robbed him in Tithes and Offerings, even the whole Nation. And then he complains of the Prieſts alſo, ſaying, *But ye are departed out of the way, ye have cauſed many to ſtumble at the Law, ye have corrupted the Covenant of Levi, ſaith the Lord of Hoſts. Therefore have I alſo made you contemptible and baſe before all the People, according as ye have not kept my ways, but have been Partial in the Law*, Mal. ii. 8, 9. And ſo the falſe Prophets that ſaw Vanity and divined Lies, ſaying, *Thus ſaith the Lord God, when the Lord had not ſpoken*. And why did they ſo, but to get the Peoples Money by pleaſing them in propheſying Peace to them, when the true Prophets propheſied of Judgment, and were perſecuted for it? *Ezek.* xxii. 25, 28.

And are you ſure that all thoſe Miniſters that receive Money of the People as a Reward of their Labours, whom you brand with *preaching for Hire and divining for Money*, are ſuch, and do as thoſe Prieſts and Prophets did, for which they are ſo ſtigmatized? And if you are not ſure of it, as I am ſure you are not, nor can be: Then I pray you conſider how or which way you will quit your ſelves from being of the number of thoſe *falſe Accuſers* of whom St. *Paul* propheſied, as Perſons that ſhould have a Form of Godlineſs, and yet deny the Power of it, by whom the *Times* ſhould be made *perilous*, 2 Tim. iii. 3.

'Tis poſſible, and too probable, that there may be ſome, who for worldly and fleſhly reſpects, may greatly fall ſhort of a faithful diſcharge of their Duty towards the Souls under their charge: And if there be any that, by dawbing with untempered Mortar, do betray them, I am no Advocate for ſuch; they ſhall bear their Burthen whoſoever they be. But if there be ſome ſuch, how unreaſonable and unchriſtian is it to condemn the Righteous with the Wicked, and to cenſure all for ſomes ſake! It looks as if the Work and Office it ſelf were the Eye-ſore to you, as much, if not more, than their miſcarriage in it. And that which adds ground of Suſpicion herein, is, that your great Out-cry againſt them is for their taking Money for Preaching, which is none of their Crime, they doing their Duty. But thoſe which I fear ſtand behind you, and inſenſibly influence you herein, know well enough, that if the People could be but prevailed with to with-hold Maintenance from the Miniſtry, the Miniſterial Work would ceaſe, and a Door would be opened for ſomewhat elſe. And therefore thoſe Romiſh Factors, that can turn themſelves into any ſhape, have cunningly made uſe of all ſorts of Sects among us, however otherwiſe differing among themſelves, yet in this to agree, to cry down the publick Miniſtry.

There were in the Apoſtles time ſuch Pretenders to Chriſtianity, and Teachers too, as *ſought their own things, and not the things of Jeſus Chriſt*; that *ſerved their own Bellies*, inſtead of ſerving Jeſus Chriſt; that *through Covetouſneſs with feigned words made merchandize of the People*: In order to all which they did *corrupt the Word*; *by reaſon of whoſe pernicious ways, the way of Truth was evil ſpoken of*: But by whom? doubtleſs by none, but by malignant Adverſaries to the Truth it ſelf. But we have not the leaſt Whiſper of any good Chriſtians ſpeaking evil of the faithful Miniſtry, becauſe of ſome Miſcarriages of the Scandalous and Unfaithful. And yet I believe you would take it ill, if upon account of your doing now not as the good, but as ill Men then did, you ſhould be rank'd and number'd not with the good but with the bad; which if you be not, it is becauſe ſome have more Charity for you, than you have for others that better deſerve it.

What I was beginning to anſwer to your Plea for the Incongruity of your Opinion and Practice, hath led me to ſomewhat a long Diſcourſe; and yet I have ſomething more directly to ſay to it. Your Opinion is, that Men being taught of God himſelf by his Light and Spirit within, now under the New Covenant, need not to be taught by Men, nor to have the Scripture for their Teacher. And yet for all that, you take upon you to teach the People your ſelves, whilſt you decry it in others; and ſay in your defence, that inaſmuch as Men may diſobey the Light in them, therefore your teaching is neceſſary to perſuade them to obey it. But I pray you, is God's ſhewing Men their Duty all the inward teaching you pretend to? Do you not pretend to be led and moved by the Spirit to do as well as to know your Duty? Do you not ſay expreſly, that the Spirit of God moveth and leadeth into all the Works of Righteouſneſs, and that the Spirit of Chriſt only exerciſes the Conſcience to God and Man, and leads into the Practice of all Truth? Nay, do you not make the Acceptation of what is acceptably done to depend upon the Motion and Work of the Spirit in the doing of it, and do you not count all that is not ſo done, to be done in Man's own Will? And therefore why do you thus diſſemble the Matter, and heap one Contradiction upon another? But ſuppoſe that which you pretend were the only reaſon of your teaching: Is there not then the ſame reaſon that others ſhould preach as well as you? Or are none in danger of rebelling againſt the Light but only ſuch as hear you? But the plain Truth is, for all your Talk, that you do undertake to teach Men what their Duty is, as well as perſwade them to do it; as appears abundantly in your Books, particularly in thoſe of *Edward Burroughs*. So that by this Tergiverſation and ſhuffling, it plainly appears to intelligent Men, that the Buſineſs at the bottom is not that you are againſt the Needfulneſs of Man's teaching, notwithſtanding all the teaching by the Light within; but only againſt all other Mens teaching but your own. So that if ye knew your own Hearts in this Buſineſs, you would find that the meaning of your crying down all other Teachers, is that yours alone might be exalted. But if your Teachers, or any among you, do ſee and know the Inconſiſtency of theſe your Pretences and Practices, and yet uſe the Pretences for a Blind, to hide the Deſign from the People, it is then a perfect piece of———

There is another thing like unto this: You ſay thoſe that are taught of God, need not that the Scripture ſhould teach them, and that all Men are taught of God by his Light within them; and yet it ſeems you think that Men have need to be taught by your Books, though they have no need to be taught by the Scriptures; elſe why is the World troubled with ſo many of them? The Phariſees made void the Commandments of God, that they might eſtabliſh their own Traditions: And it looks but untowardly, that while you repreſent the Holy Scripture as ſuch a needleſs thing, that you at the ſame time have ſent out ſuch a Croud of your own Books as you have done. And if you would have the People believe that they proceed from the ſame teaching of the Spirit as the Books of the Holy Scriptures do, what ſhall the People then do when they find them to contradict one another, as they may eaſily do, if they will but do as the noble *Bereans* did, who ſearched the Scriptures daily whether thoſe things were ſo which were preached to them in the Name of the Lord. As in the preſent caſe before us: The Scripture plainly teacheth one Method of bringing Men to Salvation, and your Books another. *Ed. Burrough*, in his Book, teacheth, That that is not the Body of Chriſt which was not with the Father before the World began, *p.* 465. But the Scripture teacheth, That in the fulneſs of time God ſent forth his Son, made of a Woman, *Gal.* iv. 4. Which of theſe two now muſt the People believe, or which of theſe muſt be the Rule to try the other by? Your Books or the Holy Scriptures? I pray you ſpeak out, and tell the People plainly; for if the Scriptures be true, as you dare not deny but they are, then your Books in ſuch things as contradict them muſt be falſe, and conſequently not the Iſſue of the Infallible Spirit, as you would have the World believe they are. *But though we, or an Angel from Heaven, preach any other Goſpel unto you, than that which we have preached unto you, let him be accurſed*, ſaid St. *Paul*, Gal. i. 8.

I have been the longer upon the point of your Enthuſiaſm, by which you have ſet up a new Method of your own in Oppoſition to God's Method of bringing Men to the Chriſtian Belief and Life, becauſe I deem it a Mother and a Maſter-Error to many others which you hold. And therefore have good Hopes, that if you could but be cured of this, you would be in a hopeful way of being cured of the reſt, which depend on it, with leſs Difficulty. Having therefore been ſo long upon this beyond what I firſt intended, I ſhall draw towards a Concluſion of this Addreſs to you, not engaging in particular with the reſt of your Miſtakes. But before I make an end, I would caution you touching two or three things, which among others may probably have had a large ſhare in introducing you into this ſtrange Miſtake.

§ XX. The one is an Opinion, or Conceit, that the Goſpel is a more myſterious thing than indeed it is. It is true, there are things in the Goſpel called a Myſtery, the Myſtery of God's Will, the Myſtery of Chriſt, the Myſtery of Faith, the Myſtery of Godlineſs: And to you, ſaith Chriſt to the Diſciples, 'tis given to know the Myſteries of the Kingdom of God, and the like. Upon occaſion of all which, and the like Expreſſions in Scripture, ſome People have fanſied that there is ſomething elſe neceſſary to make a Man a true Chriſtian indeed, than what is obvious to vulgar Apprehenſions, and eaſie to be underſtood as other Matters are. And therefore they have been wont to eſteem a plain and familiar way of teaching the Doctrine of Repentance, and the neceſſity of Obedience to the Law of God, together with a Belief that Chriſt died for our ſins, and roſe again according to the Scriptures, to be but a dry and legal way of Preaching. And thoſe that have vented high Speculations, and almoſt, or altogether unintelligible Notions and new coined Phraſes and Expreſſions, concerning the Work of God in the Soul, and of Union with Chriſt, and Communion with God, of living by Faith, and walking in the Spirit; theſe they have accounted Evangelical Preachers, and ſuch Preaching and Diſcourſes in Conference, to be truly Spiritual, and thoſe to be Spiritual Chriſtians that are of this make. And becauſe this way obtained a great Reputation among a great many of Chriſtian Profeſſors, many Perſons have been tempted hereby to proceed ſo far from one thing to another in this way, both allegorizing Scriptures of plain Import, and turning plain Points of Doctrine and of great Concern into Myſtical Speculations, until they have made another thing of the plain Doctrine of the Goſpel than Chriſt made it. And this ſeems to be directly your caſe, who in this way are come at laſt to turn the plain and intelligible Method of God's proceeding with Men to bring them to the Chriſtian Belief and Life, and ſo to Salvation, into Enthuſiaſtical Fancies, Airy Notions and Speculations. Such is your conceited Myſtery of the *inward Fleſh* of Chriſt in Contradiſtinction to the Fleſh of the Veil, as you phraſe it: As if Chriſt had two kinds of Fleſh, one hid under another; by which you trouble, yea, utterly confound the true Notion of Chriſt's humane Nature: And the great Effects which the Scripture attributes to the Fleſh or humane Nature of Chriſt, thoſe you attribute to a meer Fiction which you call the *inward Fleſh*; a thing altogether foreign to the Scripture, an Error doubtleſs of a very high nature. Such alſo is your ſpiritualizing Baptiſm and the Lord's Supper, to the Excluſion of their literal Uſe, and to the Diſparagement of his Wiſdom and Goodneſs that ordained them, as well as to the Contempt of his Authority which hath enjoined the uſe of them for the ends for which they were firſt inſtituted. Such likewiſe is your invented Myſtery of the Redemption of the *Seed* in Men: For the Scripture ſpeaks of no ſuch thing, but of the Redemption of Men themſelves.

This Miſtake about the Myſteriousneſs of the Chriſtian Religion, hath, I fear, had a bad Influence upon, and produced ill Effects in ſome others as well as your ſelves, who perhaps have not been yet carried ſo far out of the way by it, as you have been.

Whereas thoſe things that are abſolutely neceſſary for Men of all Capacities to know, believe and do, in order to their Salvation, are delivered in the Goſpel with great Plainneſs and Eaſineſs to be underſtood, even of thoſe of meaneſt Capacities that have but a *mind* to underſtand them, and will *attend* to them and *conſider them.* Who is ſo weak as not to underſtand it when it is declared to him, that there was ſuch a one as *Jeſus Chriſt*, and that he was declared to be one come from God, and his Doctrine touching his being the Son of God, and concerning all other things to be true, by the Wonderfulneſs of his Birth of a Virgin, and the many and mighty Miracles which he wrought, and which were wrought by others in his Name, and by his Reſurrection from the dead? Who is ſo weak as not to underſtand when it is declared to him upon good grounds, that this *Jeſus* was put to Death not for his own, but for our Sins; and that he roſe again from the dead the third Day? Who is ſo weak as not to underſtand when he hears it declared in the Goſpel, that Forgiveneſs of Sins, a glorious Reſurrection, and eternal Happineſs in another World, are promiſed to thoſe that believe in him as ſuch, and that believe his Doctrine, and ſincerely obey it; touching the neceſſity of Repentance, conſiſting in Amendment of Life, proceeding from Sorrow for Sin, and in a ſincere obſerving all his Precepts. Theſe are things that may be underſtood by every Body that hears and conſiders them: And yet theſe are the things revealed by the Goſpel as neceſſary to be believed and done in order to Salvation. The reaſon why ſo many of thoſe that hear the Goſpel, do not believe, and obey it to the ſaving of their Souls, is not becauſe they cannot underſtand it, but becauſe they are not willing to obey it, and ſo not willing to believe it, or to conſider it, that they might believe it, but chuſe rather to pleaſe themſelves in their evil ways for the preſent, and ſo run the hazard for the future, of the Goſpel's being true or not true; or elſe flatter themſelves with hopes that they do repent and obey the Goſpel, under vain and deluſive Notions of the Nature of ſaving Repentance and Obedience.

And it is not congruous to the Goodneſs of God's Nature to think, that when he hath been pleaſed, out of his great Compaſſion to loſt Men, to make a New Covenant of Salvation upon terms ſuitable to that Love and Goodneſs of his, to think, I ſay, that he ſhould lay the ſtreſs of their Salvation upon Terms not eaſie to be underſtood by all, one as well as another, that are concerned therein.

And therefore the greateſt Reaſon, I conceive, why ſome things in the Goſpel are ſtiled a *Myſtery*, is, becauſe they were ſo till they were plainly revealed by Chriſt; a great part of the things therein contained being ſuch as no Man, by the higheſt improvement of Reaſon, could diſcover or apprehend, till God in a ſupernatural way was pleaſed to reveal them. Such was God's ſending his Son to aſſume our Nature, and to die for our Sins, and the granting Remiſſion of Sins and Eternal Life for his ſake, to thoſe that believe and obey the Goſpel. But when they are once revealed, and by Revelation made plain and eaſie to be underſtood by Men of all Capacities, they are ſure then no longer Myſteries to them, unleſs they remain ſo through their own wilful neglect to underſtand them. Agreeable to this is that of St. *Paul*, Col. i. 26. ſpeaking of the Goſpel, *even*, ſaith he, *the Myſtery which hath been hid from Ages and from Generations, but now is made manifeſt to his Saints.* Eph. i. 9. *Having made known to us the Myſtery of his Will, according to his good pleaſure which he hath purpoſed in himſelf.* So the calling of the Gentiles is called a *Myſtery*, not becauſe it was hard to be underſtood when the thing was revealed by Chriſt's Commiſſion to preach the Goſpel to them, and by Preaching the Goſpel had given them the Holy Spirit, as he had to the believing Jews at the firſt; but becauſe this calling of them was little known or underſtood in the World till then.

God, ſaith St. *Paul*, *by Revelation made known to me the Myſtery, which in other Ages was not made known unto the Sons of Men, as it is now revealed unto his holy Apoſtles and Prophets by the Spirit; that the Gentiles ſhould be fellow-Heirs, and of the ſame Body, and Partakers of his Promiſe in Chriſt by the Goſpel*, Eph. iii. 2, 6. And ſo again, Ver. 9. *And to make all Men ſee what is the Fellowſhip of the Myſtery, which from the beginning of the World hath been hid in God.* So that as the Goſpel is called a *Myſtery*, as containing things in it which had been altogether a Myſtery till they were revealed; ſo it is called a *Revelation of the Myſtery*, by reaſon of its diſcovering that which was a Secret before, *Rom.* xvi. 25, 26.—The Preaching of Jeſus Chriſt, according to the *Revelation of the Myſtery*, which was kept ſecret ſince the World began, *but now is made manifeſt*, and by the Scriptures of the Prophets, according to the Commandment of the everlaſting God, *made known* to all Nations for the Obedience of Faith.

In all this I do not deny, but that there are in the Goſpel things very myſterious and hard to be conceived, as touching the manner of their Exiſtence, as the Union of Chriſt's two Natures, and the Doctrine of the Trinity of Perſons and Unity of Eſſence, and ſome other things: But it is not hard to underſtand, that thoſe things really are, when God hath revealed and declared that they are, tho' it is very hard, or rather beyond our Apprehenſion to know how and after what manner they are: And to know and believe more than he hath plainly revealed, is not doubtleſs neceſſary to Mens Salvation; and therefore Men ſhould be cautious of laying too great a ſtreſs upon their different Apprehenſions about them.

If you ſhall ſay, If Evangelical Truths be made ſo perceptible by the plainneſs and fulneſs of the Revelation of them; how comes it to paſs then, that there is ſuch difference in Mens Opinions, and ſo many Controverſies about them as there is? I anſwer, If the Differences and Controverſies be about thoſe things that are neceſſary to Salvation, I have told you the Reaſon already: It is becauſe Men will not be ſatisfied, nor acquieſce in that plainneſs in which ſuch things are delivered in the Scriptures, but ſtill fancy there is ſome farther Myſtery in them, than indeed there is. And when Men take that liberty, and think they do excellent well in it, then one fancies he ſees this hidden Myſtery couched under Truths plainly expreſs'd, and another that, when both are wide of the Mark. And then Men weary themſelves in defending their Notions on both ſides, and can never be reconciled until both lay down their By-opinions, and ſubmit their Judgments to the plainneſs and ſimplicity of the Truth, labouring to improve it to Practice, which is the true and proper uſe of it, which will bring more ſolid Satisfaction to the Mind, than all Mens airy Notions, how taking ſoever they may be with ſome.

But tho' the things neceſſary to Salvation, are in the Revelation of them, accommodated to the Capacities of the Weak and Simple, whoſe Salvation is deſigned by them, as well and as much as theirs of ſtronger and quicker Apprehenſions; yet there are things under the New Teſtament that are *hard to be uttered* (as the Phraſe is, *Heb.* v. 11.) and therefore *hard to be underſtood*, as the Phraſe is again, 2 *Pet.* iii. 16. As there is *Milk for Babes*, who are unſkilful in the Word of Righteouſneſs, ſo there is *Meat for ſtrong Men*, who by reaſon of uſe have their Senſes exerciſed to diſcern both Good and Evil, as 'tis ſaid, *Heb.* v. 13, 14. And Mens Differences about theſe Points proceed at the beſt from their different meaſures of Light and Underſtanding, and ſometimes are perſiſted in from that which is worſe. So it was in the Apoſtles time between the believing *Jews* and the believing *Gentiles*, Rom. xiv. Which by the way would not have been, if all good Chriſtians then had been guided by an infallible Light within, as you ſuppoſe they are now. If they had, they would not have needed to have been taught and re-taught which are the firſt Principles of the Oracles of God, as ſome of them were, *Heb.* v.

But when Men, which are but poor in Knowledge, and yet rich in Confidence, undertake to manage and maſter theſe more difficult Points and Paſſages of Scripture, they too often wreſt them to their own deſtruction, as St. *Peter* ſpeaks, 2 *Epiſt.* iii. 16. And this they either do, or are in great danger of doing, when they faſten upon ſome wrong ſenſe and notion of hard and difficult places of Scripture, and then pervert plain and eaſie places by interpreting them to their wrong ſenſe of thoſe that are more obſcure and difficult; eſpecially when their Interpretations are not mere Speculations, but ſuch as influence Men in their Practice, as becoming a Rule to them therein. Whereas the more Wiſe and Judicious never interpret hard places in oppoſition to the common ſenſe of thoſe that are plain and eaſie, but explain thoſe that are hard and difficult by thoſe that are plain.

The uſe I would adviſe you to make of all this, is, to review the Grounds you have gone on, and to ceaſe from your new Notions and Speculations of your being taught only by the Light within; which you have taken up from ſome Expreſſions in Scripture, miſunderſtood by you, and wholly diſagreeing to the Scope of the Places where they are found, and contrary to the general Current of the Scriptures in their plain and obvious ſenſe. Seek not a Knot in a Bulruſh; ſeek not for Myſteries there where the Lord hath declared his Mind plainly and in no Parable: But form your Notions of God's method of proceeding with Men to bring them to Salvation according to the plain and expreſs Doctrine of Chriſt and his Apoſtles in the Scriptures, and receive from and regulate by that Doctrine, all your Apprehenſions, Perſuaſions, Affections and Operations of your Souls, together with all your Words and Actions; ſo did the good Chriſtians of Old: *They obeyed from the Heart that Form of Doctrine which was delivered to them*, Rom. vi. 17. *They purified their Souls in obeying that Truth through the Spirit*, 1 Pet. i. 22. Yea, the Apoſtles themſelves were firſt taught by Chriſt's preaching unto them what to think and believe concerning Chriſt; *John* xvii. 8. *I have given unto them the Words which thou gaveſt me; and they have received them, and have known ſurely that I came out from thee, and they have believed that thou didſt ſend me.* And juſt as the Apoſtles preached, ſo the Chriſtians believed: They made their Doctrine the adequate Rule of their Notions of Things, the Rule of their Faith, the Rule of their Life: *So we preach, and ſo ye believed*, ſaith St. *Paul*, 1 Cor. xv. 11.

And thoſe great, plain, known, and commonly received Truths, neceſſary to Salvation, called the *common Faith*, Tit. i. 4. The *Faith once delivered to the Saints*, Jude 3. Theſe, I ſay, were the Rule and Standard by which they were to try the Doctrine of ſuch as only pretended to Inſpirations from the Spirit. *Beloved, believe not every Spirit, but try the Spirits whether they be of God; becauſe many falſe Prophets are gone out into the World*, 1 John iv. 1. And then St. *John*, in *ver.* 2, 3. commends to them one known fundamental Doctrine, pertinent to his Caſe then in hand, by which they might know the Teachers he cautioned them againſt, were not inſpired by God, nor authorized by him: *Hereby know ye the Spirit of God; Every Spirit that confeſſeth that Jeſus Chriſt is come in the Fleſh, is of God: And every Spirit that confeſſeth not that Jeſus Chriſt is come in the Fleſh, is not of God.* And again, *ver.* 6. *We are of God: He that knoweth God, heareth us* (adhered to and governed themſelves by the Apoſtles Doctrine) *He that is not of God, heareth not us: Hereby know we the Spirit of Truth, and the Spirit of Error.*

And truly if you will not make the plain and expreſs Doctrine of Chriſt and his Apoſtles in the Scriptures, touching Faith and a good Life, your Rule by which to try and to judge of the Truth and Erroneouſneſs of your Conceptions, Perſuaſions, Motions and Inclinations, under the Notion of the Light within, and of all your Words and Actions conſequent thereupon, you are and will be in great danger to be like the *wandring Stars*, and the *Clouds carried with a Tempeſt*, of which St. *Peter* and St. *Jude* ſpeak; unfixed and unſtable in your Judgment, Faith and Ways. For it is certain and evident, whatever you pretend to the contrary, that the Light within you is not, in your own account, always a certain, conſtant and infallible Rule to you; for if it were, you would not act ſo contrary to your ſelves as you have done, under pretence of being taught of God, and guided by the Light within: One while crying up your former Practice of ſhaking, as the effect of God's Work in and upon you; and another while confeſſing it to be a Deluſion, as *Samuel Fiſher*, one of note with you, did to me, ſaying it was ſo judged: One while crying down all Eccleſiaſtical Forms of Government, as Tyrannical; another while erecting one among your ſelves, pretending to as much Infallibility in *your Body* Repreſentative in managing it, as the Papiſts do in reference to the Pope; One while owning the witneſſing of a Perſon to be from God, and another while condemning the ſame for an Error or Deluſion. How often have thoſe of your number thought they have been ſent by God on Meſſages, who after have found themſelves deluded?

By theſe, and other like Inſtances, you may be convinced, that if you do not make the Doctrine of Chriſt in Scriptures the adequate Rule of the Motions and Inclinations of your Minds, and the Actions of your Lives, whereby to know when they are of God, and when not; you have then no certain Rule to go by, but are continually liable to moſt horrible Miſtakes, and to think that to be a Teaching or Command from God, which is indeed a Deluſion from the Devil. Nor without this Rule in Scripture, which lies open to all, have you any way to ſatisfie others, that what you ſay or do is from God. You have no Miracles amongſt you, by which God was wont to bear witneſs to his Servants, when he ſent them on Meſſages new to the World. And have you indeed ſuch an Opinion of your ſelves, as to think Men ought to believe only becauſe you ſay it? Our Saviour ſaid, *If I bear witneſs of my ſelf, my witneſs is not true*, John v. 31. And is your Credit better than his? And, I pray you, what have you to bear witneſs for you in what you ſay, if the Scriptures cannot? To the Law then, and to the Teſtimony of Chriſt in the Doctrine of the Scriptures, if you ſpeak not according to this Word, it is becauſe there is no Light in you.

§ XXI. There is one thing more which I would admoniſh you to beware of, and that is a *high* Opinion of your ſelves, and a *low and deſpicable* Opinion of all others that differ from you: A thing which I fear hath betray'd you into that deſperate Error which I have been detecting, together with many others.

For when Men, by reaſon of their new Myſtical Notions of plain Scriptures, and familiar points of Doctrine, and of their new-minted Phraſes anſwerable thereto, do fancy themſelves to be Spiritual, and all the reſt, that ſtill ſtick to the plainneſs and ſimplicity of the Goſpel, to be but Carnal and Formal Profeſſors (tho' in their Tempers and Lives better than themſelves) they then begin to think, that they are nearer and dearer to God than they, and conſequently that God will reveal himſelf after a more intimate way and manner to themſelves than he doth to ſuch. And when they are intoxicated and grown giddy with ſuch Conceits, then they are drawn by degrees to imagine themſelves to be brought into ſome kind of Equality with the Apoſtles themſelves, and that now they do not need to be taught by ſuch whom they eſteem ſo much below themſelves, but that they ſhall be now taught of God immediately. And when they are thus tranſported and exalted with theſe Dreams, Fancies, and high Conceits, then they conclude that all thoſe Scriptures which ſpeak of Men's being *taught of God*, *led by the Spirit*, and *anointed with the Unction of the Holy One that teacheth all things*, and the like, do ſpeak directly to their Caſe, and repreſent the happy State and Condition into which they are now brought. And now they look down upon all others with a kind of compaſſionating Contempt, as Men in the dark, ſticking in the Form and Imitation, and the Letter; and guided by carnal Reaſon and fleſhly Wiſdom, to whom the things of the Kingdom of God are altogether a Myſtery. And by this time they fancy themſelves to be in the Reſurrection, and to have attained to the perfect State, and are come ſo far as to be in the Judgment, and to ſit in Judgment upon the World. And thus through the abundance of Revelations, not which they have had, but which they fancy to have had, they are exalted above meaſure. And doth not your Conſcience witneſs that this comes home to you, and repreſents your Caſe, or the Caſe of many of you?

I confeſs, Pride, eſpecially Pride of this kind, is not ſo eaſily diſcerned by them that are infected with it, as it is by By-ſtanders; as a Feaver, when come to its height, ſometimes is not by them that are in it. And no doubt but you rather fancy your ſelves to be the humbled and moſt ſelf-denying People, of all others; nay, to be the only humble People: For you have thrown off and cryed down the Bravery and Pride of the World, which others retain. But do you not know, that a *voluntary* Humility, and a being vainly *puft up* with a fleſhly mind, do often keep company? If you do not, then read *Col.* ii. 18. And do you not remember that falſe Prophets are wont to come in Sheeps clothing, and to *wear a rough Garment to deceive*, who yet inwardly are ravening Wolves, not ſparing the Flock, but preying upon them, *Zech.* xiii. 4.

Be perſuaded then to enter into a ſerious and impartial Examination of your ſelves, and of your own Hearts, and feel the Pulſe of your Spirits, and try whether things have not been ſo, and ſo with you, as I have ſaid. And remember what our Saviour ſaid to thoſe Diſciples, who were ambitious of being greateſt in the Kingdom of Heaven, and of ſitting the one at his right hand and the other at his left: *Except ye be converted* (ſaid he to them) *and become as little Children, ye ſhall not enter into the Kingdom of Heaven*, Matth. xviii. Remember who hath ſaid, *If any Man think that he knoweth any thing, he knoweth nothing yet as he ought to know*, 1 Cor. viii. 2. Remember again, that if he which is but a *Novice* come to be *lifted up* with Pride, it's many to one that he *falls* into the Condemnation of the Devil, 1 *Tim.* iii. 6. *For God reſiſteth the proud, and knoweth them afar off:* He is far enough from being familiar with them, or communicating his Mind and Counſels to them in any extraordinary way; it is the humble he will teach, and the meek he will guide in Judgment, *Pſal.* xxv. Therefore take the Apoſtle's Counſel, who ſaid, *See that no Man among you think of himſelf more highly than he ought to think, but to think ſoberly, according as God hath dealt to every Man the meaſure of* Faith, Rom. xii. 3. Learn rather to eſteem others better than your ſelves, as knowing your own Weakneſs better than you do theirs, and not to lift up your ſelves in your own Conceits above all others that are not of your way, how worthy ſoever they are, as your manner hath been: Remembring who hath ſaid, he that exalteth himſelf ſhall be brought low. Do not flatter your ſelves with an Opinion that you are nearer and dearer to God than all others; or that he hath anointed you with the Oyl of Gladneſs above your Fellows; or that he will teach you more immediately himſelf, than he hath taught others before you.

Think it not below you to be taught by the Scripture, or by the Miniſtry of Man, no though you were indeed ſo highly in God's Favour as you ſuppoſe your ſelves to be. The Churches of *Smyrna* and *Philadelphia* were much favoured and highly commended and applauded by Chriſt, when the reſt of the Churches in *Aſia* were rebuked: And yet when he would make his mind known to them and the reſt of the ſeven Churches, he doth not do it immediately by himſelf, but firſt acquaints an Angel with it, and by that Angel makes it known to *John*, and by *John* to the Churches, and yet not by him in Perſon neither, but by his Writings, *Rev.* i. Chriſt could have taught St. *Paul* himſelf when he appeared to him, as well as to have ſent him to *Ananias* to be told what he ſhould do: He could have told *Cornelius* by himſelf, or by the Angel that he ſent to him, thoſe words by which he and his Houſe ſhould be ſaved, as well as to direct him to St. *Peter* to learn them of him. God could have revealed the ſame things to the World by immediate Inſpiration of his Spirit, which he made known to it by Prophets, by Chriſt himſelf; by Apoſtles, Evangeliſts, Paſtors, and Teachers; but he choſe rather at ſundry times and in divers manners to ſpeak unto the Fathers by the Prophets, and at laſt by his own Son which he ſent into the World in our Nature, to teach the way of Salvation. And when he left the World again and aſcended up on high, he gave ſome Apoſtles, and ſome Prophets; and ſome Evangeliſts, and ſome Paſtors and Teachers; for the perfecting of the Saints, for the Work of the Miniſtry, for the edifying of the Body of Chriſt.

Theſe things are ſo plain, that it is a Matter of great Aſtoniſhment that ever Chriſtians that have read theſe things, and that have not a deſign to undermine the Goſpel and to Paganize the World again (as I hope you have not) ſhould be ever tempted to think, much more that ever you ſhould be brought to believe it your ſelves and teach it others, That the Light within, without being taught by Man or by the Scripture, is the Rule of Faith and Practice. But doubtleſs the inward Pride, the over-valuing of your ſelves, which I have been admoniſhing you of, hath had a great hand in bringing you to it. And if ever you be recovered from this Snare of the Devil, it muſt be by being brought to a Sight and Senſe of your own Injudiciouſneſs and Ignorance, and altogether groundleſs Confidence. And if you were but well awakened out of that Spirit of Slumber, into which your Intoxication hath caſt you, and out of that pleaſant Dream in it, which hath ſo tickled your fancy, you would be aſhamed and confounded before God and Men, that ever you ſhould be ſo ſtrangely deluded, and prevailed upon as you have been, to trouble the World with your Whimſies and Fancies, and thereby to bring a Scandal upon the Chriſtian Religion, and make ſport for them that have no mind ſeriouſly to conſider the things of the Goſpel, and to encourage Romiſh Agents in their deſign againſt the Reformation.

Be perſuaded then by the Reaſon of the Matter it ſelf, to become modeſt and humble, and ſober-minded: And be not only content to receive your teaching from God by the Doctrine of the Holy Scriptures, as all good Chriſtians do, and ever ſince the Primitive Times have done, but count it alſo as a high Favour from him that he hath given us the Scriptures and ſent the Goſpel among us, when ſo great a part of the World are at this Day without it. Remember how the Pſalmiſt, when he was therein aſſiſted by the Spirit of God, was affected with a leſs Favour than that which you make little of, when he ſaid, *He ſheweth his Word unto Jacob, his Statutes and his Judgments unto Iſrael. He hath not dealt ſo with any Nation: And as for his Judgments, they have not known them. Praiſe ye the Lord*, Pſal. cxlvii. 19, 20. And if it be ſo great a Favour to us that have the Scriptures above what is vouchſafed to the Infidel and Pagan World which have them not; then you cannot but be guilty of high Ingratitude to God, whilſt you give the Precedency to that Light within, which you ſay every Man coming into the World hath, and ſo the Pagans themſelves; and ſpeak of the Scriptures as if they were but a Declaration of that which was in you and which you knew without them, and which you might have known if you had never heard of them. By all which you teach them that have ſo little Wit or Grace as to believe you, to have a low eſteem of the Scriptures, and to think that Men may as well be ſaved without them as with them. And how then can you poſſibly free your ſelves from that horrid Guilt which God charged upon the *Jews* of old, ſaying, *I have written to him* (Ephraim) *the great things of my Law, and they were eſteemed as a ſtrange thing*, Hoſ. viii. 12.

You have, no doubt, thought your ſelves more ſublime and ſpiritual than others, upon account of your new Notions and new affected Modes and Phraſes: And not only ſo, but there is great reaſon to think that an Affectation of being eſteemed ſo, did inſenſibly lead you, or at leaſt the Leaders among you, from one Novel Conceit to another; until you have exceeded all Bounds of Sobriety of Mind, and become perfectly drunk, though not with Wine as the Prophet ſpeaks. Whereas alas! The Spirituality of Chriſtians, doth not lie in high-flown Notions and Speculations, nor in uncouth Phraſes and Expreſſions different from what are common among Men, but in the inward Frame and Temper of their Spirits and Converſations, when theſe are conformable to the Doctrine of the Goſpel which is of and from the Holy Spirit, and thereby become Partakers of the ſpiritual and divine Nature or Likeneſs to *Chriſt Jeſus*, in Purity, in Lowlineſs, Humility, and Meekneſs, and in Love to God and Charity to Men, in Patience and Gentleneſs, in Contempt of the World, in Contentation, and Self-reſignation to God, in Zeal to honour God, and to do all the good we can in the World. Upon account of which Spiritual Qualifications, Chriſtians are ſaid to be *one Spirit* with Chriſt, and by this Spirit and Temper when given us, *We know that we dwell in him and he in us: And if any Man have not the Spirit of Chriſt*, in ſome meaſure, *he is none of his:* Such as in whom are found the Fruits of the Spirit, they are the ſpiritual Chriſtians; ſuch as is Love, Joy, Peace, Long-ſuffering, Gentleneſs, Goodneſs, Faith, Meekneſs, Temperance, as they are enumerated by St. *Paul* in *Gal.* v. 22, 23. And as theſe do more or leſs abound in Chriſtians in the Degree and Meaſure of them, ſo they are more or leſs Spiritual. And whoever they be that do eſtimate themſelves to be Spiritual Chriſtians upon account of any ſublime Notions, or Speculations, or affected Phraſes, or by their being for or againſt any Form, Way, or Party, or (which is more) by their being in the conſtant Uſe and Exerciſe of God's own Ordinances, farther than they are bettered in the Frame and Temper of their Spirits thereby, and made more like *Chriſt Jeſus*; they take wrong meaſures of their Spirituality.

And if there were nothing elſe to make us ſuſpect your new-taken-up way to be not ſpiritual, but carnal, this would do it, in that it hath according to common Obſervation, made you ſince you came into it, or were looking towards it, more ſelf-conceited, proud, and diſdainful, ſlighting and ſetting at naught all others that differ from you, and more deſperately cenſorious, and more bold and confident in reviling than you were before; which are no ſigns of Spirituality I am ſure. But if there were more of that ſpiritual Qualification in you, forementioned, by which Chriſtians are denominated Spiritual indeed, it would take down your high Conceits of your high Attainments, and rather make you ſay inwardly to your ſelves, and to your own Souls, I am leſs than the leaſt of all Saints, and make you afraid to think or ſpeak ill of others, leſt in doing ſo, you ſhould judge your ſelves, being perhaps not comparable to them in true Worth.

But if you would become ſpiritual Chriſtians indeed, and not in Fancy and Conceit only: Then let it be your care to obſerve and do theſe things. Firſt converſe conſtantly and intimately in your Thoughts with the Laws of Chriſt in their Spirituality, as reaching to the Government of the Thoughts and Motions of the Mind and Affections of the Soul, in reference to the various Objects, as God his Word, Worſhip and Works; Man as diverſly related to us; the things of this World, and pertaining to this preſent Life; and the things of the World which is to come. And in doing this, compare the bent, diſpoſition and operation of your Souls, in reference to theſe Objects, with thoſe Laws of Chriſt; thereby to diſcover not ſo much how far you have attained, as to know and diſcern what is wanting, and how far you fall ſhort of coming up cloſe to your Rule, Chriſt's Precepts and imitable Example: And if this were well done, it would make you little in your own Eyes, and to ſay with St. *Paul*, *Not as though I had attained, or were already perfect.*

Then next in the ſenſe of your defects, be diligent and conſtant in the uſe of God's appointed means for Spiritual growth, ſuch as is the Hearing and Reading of Chriſt's Holy Doctrine in the Scriptures, touching the great Motives as well as Directions to Obedience, accompanied with frequent Meditation and ſerious Conſideration of it, and of your own concern therein. And then, ſtill have in your Eye the End for which theſe and other Means are or ought to be uſed by you; and that is for the bettering the frame and temper of your Spirits, the Moral Habit and Conſtitution of your Souls; and never divide the Means from the End in your Intention, nor ſatisfie your ſelves in the uſe of the Means, but in reference to the End: And in all the Means be ſtill ſincerely endeavouring to mend that which is amiſs, and to fill up and ſupply what is lacking in the degrees of Grace, and all divine Vertue.

And then in and together with all this, do you in a due ſenſe of your own Weakneſs and Inſufficiency, and of the great need you have of the conſtant Aſſiſtance of God's Holy Spirit in all, make inſtant and importunate Supplication to God for it. And then, without all doubt, you ſhall be aſſiſted and enabled by that Spirit of his in the uſe of the aforeſaid Means, by degrees to become Spiritual Chriſtians indeed. For our faithful Lord *Jeſus* hath aſſured us, that *our Heavenly Father will give the Holy Spirit to thoſe that*, out of a ſenſe of its value and worth, and of their own want of it, do importunately *ask it of him*, Luke xi. 13.

§ XXII. I might yet farther ſhew you, that in all probability your great Uncharitableneſs towards other good Men againſt whom you had taken up undue Prejudices, had alſo a great hand in bringing you into this Wilderneſs of odd Conceits, wherein you have ſo wonderfully loſt your ſelves. For Prejudice againſt, and Uncharitableneſs towards Men, is a great Temptation upon them in whom it is, to differ and depart from them in Opinion, as well as in Affection, and to ſtudy Oppoſition againſt things they hold in an Uncharitable Oppoſition of thoſe that hold them. And ſo Truth, no doubt, hath many times ſuffered for the ſake of thoſe that have held it.

After you had entertain'd undue Prejudices againſt the Miniſters of the Goſpel upon one account or other, whom in Deriſion and Contempt you are wont to call *the Prieſts*; you were then ſoon induced to think it meet to differ from them in your Notions about Religion, leſt otherwiſe you ſhould not ſeem more Spiritual than thoſe whom you thus deſpiſed. And by this doubtleſs, among other things, were you led into your groſs Errors, under the Notion of higher Attainments and more Spirituality in the Chriſtian Profeſſion. For ſuch and ſo great was your Prejudice againſt the Miniſters, and thoſe that adhered to them, that you diſliked almoſt every thing they did, and the Notions they had of Evangelical Truths and Points of Doctrine. And therefore leſt you ſhould be thought too like them, you fell into differencing your ſelves from them in *Habit*, in *Modes of Speech*, and in your *Notions* of the parts of *revealed* and *inſtituted* Religion. And thereupon applyed your ſelves to Spiritualizing your Notions of Goſpel-Truths in your way of Spiritualizing, till you had made them, or many of them, quite other things than in truth and reality they are or were ever made by the Author of them. And if ever you recover your ſelves, it muſt be by coming to have better Thoughts of others, and meaner of your ſelves; a thing greatly neceſſary to Mens keeping in the way of Truth. For *he that loveth his Brother, abideth in the Light, and there is no occaſion of ſtumbling in him: But he that doth not, is in darkneſs and walketh in darkneſs, and knows not whither he goes, becauſe darkneſs hath blinded his eyes*, 1 John ii. 10, 11.

Beſides, Uncharitableneſs being a Sin ſo contrary to God's dealing with us in the New Covenant, and ſo contrary to the great and affecting Example of Chriſt's Love to us, and ſo contrary to the Scope and Deſign of the Goſpel (for the end of the Commandment is Charity) that it is a great and ſore Provocation to God to give up uncharitable Men to an injudicious Mind and ridiculous Conceits, and ſuch as ſhall render them ridiculous among all ſober and wiſe Men. Which is matter of good Caution to Men to take heed how they take up uncharitable Prejudices againſt good Men, upon account of their holding

ing or doing ſuch things which they diſlike, but not underſtanding, or not fairly weighing the grounds on which they hold and do them. But I have already ſo far exceeded the intended Bounds of an Epiſtle, that I ſhall not farther enlarge upon this, but ſhall draw toward a Concluſion, with a Word of Advice to ſuch as have already ſeen their Error, and are come off from you, and to others that ſhall follow them therein.

§ XXIII. I know 'tis a very hard thing for ſuch to get quite rid of all their confuſed and enthuſiaſtical Thoughts, Notions and Phraſes; but that ſome Relicks of their old Diſeaſe will ſtill hang on them, and cleave to them, and ſo encumber them, that they can very hardly come quickly to any clear and diſtinct Apprehenſions of Evangelical Verities. To ſuch I would give this ſhort advice, That laying aſide all Thoughts and Conceits of high Attainments in the things of God, they would repent and do their firſt Works, and begin as it were again at the firſt Principles of the Doctrine of Chriſt, and ſo lay their Foundation a-new in the beginning-Work of Chriſtians. Alſo, that they would frame their Notions and Apprehenſions of things abſolutely neceſſary to Salvation, according to that plainneſs in which they are expreſſed in Scripture, not affecting nor entertaining Myſtical Notions of them.

More particularly, That as they would furniſh their Minds with right Apprehenſions of the Perſon of Chriſt, as Son of God and Son of the Virgin *Mary*; and of the Nature of his Mediatory Office.

That as Prieſt he offered himſelf in Sacrifice to expiate Sin by his Death, and in vertue thereof makes continual Interceſſion for us. That as Prophet, he revealed and declared the New Covenant of Salvation.

That as King he hath given Laws to the World, and that he doth Rule and Govern his Church through his Spirit by thoſe Laws; and that at laſt he will try and judge all Men by them, that have lived under them; and that he will reward all with eternal Happineſs or endleſs Torments, according as they have been obedient or diſobedient to them.

That they be careful alſo, that their Notions of the New Covenant be according to the plain Doctrine of the Goſpel in the Scriptures.

Particularly;

That it conſiſts of two parts; of Promiſes, and of Conditions of thoſe Promiſes. Alſo that the Promiſes of it are made upon account, and for the ſake of Chriſt his Undertaking as Mediator.

That the great and ſpecial Promiſes of it, are Pardon of Sin, or Juſtification: The Aſſiſtance of God's Spirit in our endeavouring to perform the Condition; and Eternal Life.

That the Condition on which theſe Promiſes are made, are Faith in Chriſt, Repentance, ſincere Obedience, and the craving the Aſſiſtance of God's Spirit in the uſe of appointed Means, and our Endeavours to perform the Condition.

That they be careful alſo to form right Notions of the Nature of the Condition on our part on which the Promiſes of the New Covenant are made: As that no Faith ſhort of ſuch a Belief in Chriſt, and of his Doctrine, as worketh unfeigned Repentance and ſincere Obedience, is juſtifying and ſaving.

That no Repentance, ſhort of a Deſire, Reſolution and Endeavour to forſake all known Sin, is ſaving Repentance.

That no Obedience, ſhort of a Deſire, Reſolution, and a continued Endeavour to obſerve all the Laws of Chriſt, without baulking any one of them, when known to be ſuch, is ſincere.

That no Faith, no Repentance, no Obedience, ſhort of theſe, as thus deſcribed, is a fulfilling of the Condition of the Promiſes of Salvation in the Covenant of Grace.

As theſe great things of the Goſpel are in Scripture expreſſed in great plainneſs, ſo great care muſt be had to keep cloſe to, and to hold faſt the Form of ſound Words, according to which they are ſo declared, not affecting any Notion, Phraſe or Expreſſion, which makes them more hard to be underſtood by common Capacities, than they are by the very Letter of the Scriptures; but when other Expreſſions are uſed than what are in the Letter of the Text, as it's neceſſary there ſhould ſometimes, eſpecially in explaining *Metaphors*, and *Idioms of Speech*, proper to the Times and Places in which the Scriptures were written, they ſhould be ſuch, and ſo uſed, as may give a clearer inſight into the Nature of the Things themſelves, than without them can well be had; carefully avoiding to take words *properly*, which are ſpoken *metaphorically*, or to be led by the meer Sound of Words, but to take the meaſure of the Senſe of them, by the Scope and Deſign of the Author, ſince words of the ſame Sound are not always of the ſame Signification.

§ XXIV. And now after I have laid theſe things before you, which are very apt in their own Nature to rectifie you in one of your grand and fundamental Miſtakes eſpecially, if invincible Prejudice hinder not; I ſhould be very ſorry to think or ſuſpect, that what is done herein, ſhould turn to no better account than to be a Witneſs againſt you in that great Day in which every Man's Work will be tried of what ſort it is. And therefore to prevent that, I cannot for your ſakes, and for the longing I have after your Salvation, but earneſtly perſuade you to give things purpoſely prepared to ſerve you, a due Conſideration in your minds, and not to paſs over ſuch things ſlightly, as wherein your eternal Eſtate is much concern'd.

Remember that *Hereſie* is one of thoſe Works of the Fleſh, which ſhut Men out of the Kingdom of God, *Gal.* v. 20, 21. And conſidering the Nature and bad Influence of ſeveral of your Opinions, and with what Pertinaciouſneſs you perſiſt in them, its greatly feared, not to ſay confidently believed by ſuch as are jealous over you with a Godly Jealouſie, that many of you at leaſt, lie under no leſs Guilt than that of grand Hereſie. And do you not then owe all Serioufneſs of Conſideration to what is offered to reſcue you from ſo great a danger? Doubteſs you do. Let not then the height of your Confidence to the contrary deceive you: For it is not the Greatneſs of your Confidence, that will in the leaſt alter the Nature of things, or make them bend to your Humour. You are not the firſt that have been as confident as Confidence it ſelf could make them, that they had faſt hold of Truth, when all the while it hath been but a Lye they have had in their right hand. But the more confident you are in your way, you are like to be ſo much the more ſurprized with Amazement; when in another World you ſhall find your ſelves to have been miſtaken in that of which you are now ſo ſtrongly confident in this, if you ſhould be ſo unhappy as to carry ſuch miſtaken Confidence with you thither without a Pardon. Which that you may not, is I aſſure you all the hurt that is deſigned you in this Addreſs.

And therefore let me tell you again, that it will be your Wiſdom much rather to beſtow your Thoughts and Pains in labouring to find out whether you be not indeed under a Deluſion; than in darkning of Words without Knowledge, in labouring to obſcure to your ſelves and others, the Evidence of Truth offered, which clearly tends to your Conviction. Farewel.

POSTSCRIPT.

BEcauſe I have not ſo plainly repreſented the Nature of Faith, which is the Condition of the New Covenant, as I have the other parts of it, in my Advice touching a right Notion of the Nature of the Mediatory Office, and of the Covenant of Grace, I ſhall for theſe and other Reaſons, add a ſhort hint of the Help which the Scripture doth offer us herein.

When St. *John* ſaith, *Whoſoever believeth that Jeſus is the Chriſt, is born of God*, 1 John v. 1. And again, *Who is he that overcometh the World, but he that believeth that Jeſus is the Son of God*, v. 5. We muſt needs take this for a Deſcription of ſaving Faith; becauſe thoſe that are born of God and overcome the World, are the Children and ſo the Heirs of God. To the ſame purpoſe are thoſe words, *John* xx. 31. *Theſe are written that ye might believe that Jeſus is the Chriſt the Son of God, and that believing ye might have Life through his Name.*

And to this Deſcription of Faith, agrees the ſeveral Confeſſions of Faith we read of. Thus St. *Peter*'s Confeſſion runs: *Thou art the Chriſt the Son of the Living God*, Matth. xvi. 16. And again, *John* vi. 69. *We believe and are ſure that thou art that Chriſt the Son of the Living God.* Thus runs *Martha*'s, John xi. 27. *I believe that thou art Chriſt the Son of God, which ſhould come into the World.* And thus runs the Eunuch's alſo, *Acts* viii. 37. *I believe that Chriſt is the Son of God.*

But inaſmuch as we are aſſured by the ſame Authority of Scripture, that thoſe that repent not ſhall periſh, *Luke* xiii. 3. and that *thoſe that obey not the Goſpel ſhall be puniſhed with everlaſting Deſtruction*, 2 Theſſ. i. 7, 8. and that *except a Man be born again, he cannot ſee the Kingdom of God*, John iii. 3. nor *without Holineſs ſee God*, Heb. xii. 14. it follows of neceſſity that the Faith afore deſcribed, is ſuch a Belief that *Jeſus* is the *Chriſt* the Son of God, as doth effectually draw Men to believe his Doctrine and to obey his Laws; in doing of which they become New Creatures, and overcome the World.

For he that believes Chriſt to be the Son of God, and conſiders what he believes, muſt needs believe all his Sayings, and the whole of his Doctrine to be true, for it is impoſſible for God to lie: And he that believes his Doctrine to be true, and conſiders what he believes; muſt needs be under the Influence of the moſt powerful Motives imaginable to repent of a bad, and to lead a good Life; becauſe Chriſt hath expreſly declared from God, that the one ſhall be puniſhed with everlaſting Deſtruction, and the other rewarded with Life Eternal.

So that Faith works that Change in Men by which they become New Creatures, are born of God, and ſanctified, by way of Motive, as it doth *evidence* to the Soul, and bind upon the Mind, *the things not ſeen*, as thoſe wherein a Man is infinitely more concerned than in any, than in all the things which are ſeen; and therefore muſt needs be governed in the courſe of his Life by them, and not by the other, but in Subordination unto them.

For Faith, as it is a powerful Motive, is an operative Principle of a good and holy Life: And upon this account all the brave and heroick Acts of thoſe Worthies mentioned in *Heb.* xi. are ſaid to be done by their Faith, as that was to them the Subſtance of things hoped for, and the Evidence of things not ſeen, and as ſuch an *active Principle* of thoſe Effects. And thus *the Life* which St. *Paul lived in the Fleſh, he lived through the Faith of the Son of God*, as every good Chriſtian doth, as being thereby perſuaded thereto, *Gal.* ii. 20. And becauſe Faith is thus Motive-wiſe ſuch an operative Principle of a good and holy Life, therefore it is that Men of ſuch a Life are uſually deſcribed by it in the New Teſtament, and are ſtiled Believers. And when good Men are otherwiſe deſcribed by their Fear of God, and Love to him, as many times they are, eſpecially in the Old Teſtament, it is becauſe Fear and Love are alſo powerful Principles of Action, that govern Men in their way.

A true *Believer* then, according to the New Teſtament Dialect, is neither more nor leſs than a Diſciple of Chriſt, or a faithful Follower of him; one that frames his Belief and Life according to his Doctrine and Example. And the Faith of every ſuch one is ſuch in its Operation and Effects, as doth conſtitute and denominate him a good Man.

By all this it may eaſily be diſcerned, that when Men are ſaid to be juſtified or to be ſaved by Faith, it is not to be underſtood of the meer *Act* of believing abſtracted from its Effects and alone, but as it is an Active and Operative Principle, changing the Heart and reforming the Life. And accordingly Juſtification and Salvation, are in Scripture attributed to the *Effects* of Faith, as well as to the *Act* of believing, *Jam.* ii. And whenever they are attributed to believing indefinitely, it is not whithout reference to the Effects proper to it when it is of the right kind.

Now as Faith is deſcribed in the Scriptures fore-cited, by its Object, and by its acting upon its Object by aſſent; ſo it is in other Scriptures deſcribed by its Effects, which are produced by its actings upon its Object: And ſo a Believer is deſcribed by his *coming* to Chriſt, *John* vi. 35. *He that cometh to me ſhall never hunger, and he that believeth on me ſhall never Thirſt*, ſaith Chriſt. For Mens *coming* to Chriſt to learn of him what he hath done and will do for their Souls, and what they themſelves are to do that they may be ſaved, is the Effect of their believing him to be the Son of God, and ſent of God to bring Salvation unto Men, and to declare how and upon what Terms it is to be had.

And ſo when Believers are deſcribed by their receiving of Chriſt, as *John* i. 12. *As many as received him, to them he gave power to become the Sons of God, even to them that believe on his Name*, they are then deſcribed by the effect of their Faith alſo. For when they receive him for what indeed he is, Prieſt, Prophet and King, it is becauſe they believe that Evidence by which he appears to be ſo.

Farthermore, when *Believers* are deſcribed by their *Truſting* in Chriſt, or *Relying* on him, as in *Eph.* i. 12——*Who firſt truſted in Chriſt.* Their Faith is deſcribed by its *effect*. For Men will not venture their Souls in truſting in Chriſt and relying on him for the Expiation of their Sins by his Blood, for direction what to do that they may be ſaved, and for Pardon and eternal Life upon the condition upon which thoſe Benefits are promiſed, until they firſt believe him to be the *Meſſiah*, the Son of God and Saviour of the World, upon ſome Evidence they have that he is ſo.

But although the Holy Penmen of the Scriptures did not in every Deſcription of ſaving Faith, attend unto the Rules of Art, by taking in all the eſſential parts, but deſcribed it ſometimes by its aſſenting Act and Object, and ſometimes by its Fruits and Effects, as occaſions did occur: Yet we for our parts ſhall be beſt able to make a right Judgment of the true Nature of ſaving Faith, by that which reſults out of the ſeveral Deſcriptions of it in Scripture when compared together. And by comparing thoſe ſeveral Deſcriptions together, we may alſo perceive that when Faith as ſaving is deſcribed by its *Effects*, yet then the aſſenting Act of Faith upon its *Object* is ſtill implied, ſuppoſed, and ought to be underſtood, though it be not there expreſs'd: And ſo are the Effects too, when but only the Act and Object are mentioned.

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By all which we may learn, that thoſe are none of the beſt Definitions of ſaving Faith which Men make, when they define it by the Act and Object *alone*, or by any of the Effects *alone*.

THE
Myſtery of Iniquity
UNFOLDED:

OR,

The Falſe Apoſtles and Authors of Popery
COMPARED,

In their ſecular Deſign and Means of accompliſhing it, by corrupting the CHRISTIAN RELIGION, under pretence of promoting it.

BRITISH MUSEUM

THE PREFACE.

THE *Deſign of the following* Diſcourſe *is to ſhew, that* Popery *is founded in a like* worldly corrupt Intereſt *as the* way of the falſe Apoſtles *was*, and carried on by a like Art. *And if it ſhall appear to be ſo indeed, there will be no great cauſe to marvel, why the many worthy Endeavours of the* Advocates *of the* Proteſtant Cauſe *to convince the* Papiſts *of being guilty of* corrupting *the Chriſtian Religion, ſhould prevail no more upon them than they have done; for ſuch an* Intereſt *whilſt adhered to, doth obſtruct the Operation of all ſuch Truth on the Mind and Will, as tends to oppoſe or undermine it. So that upon the former Suppoſition, we may well conceive, that the reaſon why the Endeavours of the Perſons aforeſaid have prevailed no more upon the Gain-ſayers, is not the Weakneſs of their Cauſe, nor Weakneſs in their managing of it, nor yet the Strength of their Adverſaries Arguments in oppoſing them: But the true reaſon will be found to lie in the Prevalence of a* carnal, worldly corrupt Intereſt. *For that which was the reaſon why the Holy Apoſtles could not recover the* falſe Apoſtles *nor thoſe that ſtuck to them, from their* Errors *and* Corruptions, *we may well conceive to be the reaſon likewiſe, why the Advocates for Reformation have recovered no more than they have done of the* Papiſts *neither from* theirs, *which were introduced into the World, and perſiſted in upon the ſame or like carnal Reaſon and Motive, as the Corruptions of the falſe Apoſtles were.*

Now our Adverſaries themſelves cannot but grant that the reaſon why the Holy Apoſtles prevailed no more upon the falſe Apoſtles and their Followers than they did, in managing the Chriſtian Cauſe againſt them in corrupting the Chriſtian Religion, was neither the Badneſs of their own, *nor Goodneſs of their* Adverſaries Cauſe, *nor the Holy Apoſtles weak managing of their* Cauſe: *And if none of theſe were the reaſon, what elſe could it be in Probability, but the falſe Apoſtles Love of, cloſe Adherence to, and faſt holding of ſuch a* corrupt Intereſt, *as could not be* upheld *but by* corrupting *the Chriſtian Religion? And if the Holy Apoſtles, who were extraordinarily aſſiſted in delivering and ſpeaking Truth, and who had their Doctrine extraordinarily confirmed with Signs, and Wonders, and divers Miracles, could not for all that prevail with the falſe Apoſtles to confeſs and relinquiſh their Errors, ſo long as a Worldly Intereſt was upheld by thoſe Errors, and was dearer to them than the Truth it ſelf; 'tis then no wonder at all if our Proteſtant Advocates, who do not pretend to compare with the Apoſtles, have prevailed no more neither than they have done, (though their Cauſe be never ſo good, and ſo well managed) to bring Popiſh Guides to acknowledge and relinquiſh thoſe Errors of theirs, by which their corrupt Intereſt is ſupported and maintained, if that Intereſt is dearer to them alſo than that Truth that oppoſeth it, and fights againſt it, is, as there is too much ground to ſuſpect it is.*

Some perhaps may be under a Temptation, to have the more favourable Opinion of Popery, for that there have been Men of great Parts and Learning of that way; who upon that account may perhaps be thought as able as their Adverſaries to diſcern Truth from Error. But if thoſe, who ſo think, will but conſider, that thoſe Learned Men have ſtill had a ſtrong Byaſs of a corrupt Intereſt to draw them aſide; they may eaſily relieve themſelves againſt ſuch a Temptation. For the greater parts ſuch Men have, as have eſpouſed a corrupt Intereſt, and are ſtrongly bent to defend it, the leſs likely are they to be overcome meerly by Truth: Becauſe it hath always been too common with ſuch Men to employ all their Parts and Learning to the uttermoſt, not indifferently and impartially to ſeek Truth for Truth's ſake, but to make the beſt they can of the Cauſe they have undertaken, and with all poſſible Art to dreſs it up, that neither they, nor any of their Party may fall into diſlike of it. Which was the reaſon why the learned Scribes, Lawyers, Phariſees, and Rulers among the Jews, ſtood it out againſt Chriſt, when the more illiterate and meaner ſort that were not under ſuch a Temptation of a worldly Intereſt as the others were, nor had ſuch parts to ſtrengthen themſelves in their Oppoſition as the *others had, were ſooner brought to receive Chriſt and ſubmit to his Doctrine. Of ſuch as the former ſort our Saviour ſaid,* How can ye believe which ſeek Honour one of another, and ſeek not the Honour which comes from God only? *John* v. 44. *The Experience of ſuch a thing as this, doubtleſs occaſioned that ſaying of St.* Paul, 1 *Cor.* i. 26. You ſee your calling Brethren, how that not many wiſe Men after the Fleſh are called, nor many mighty, nor many noble.

Beſides, as the Love of a corrupt Intereſt in Men calls off their Thoughts from an impartial Enquiry after Truth, eſpecially ſuch Truth as oppoſeth it; ſo it corrupts the Mind and clouds the Underſtanding of Learned as well as Unlearned, in making a Judgment of what's Truth and what's Error, in thoſe things wherein ſuch an Intereſt is concerned. 'Tis ſaid a Gift blindeth the wiſe and perverteth the Judgment of the righteous, *Exod.* xxiii. 8. *It hinders a Man from inquiring impartially into the right of the others Cauſe againſt whom he hath received a Bribe: And cauſeth him with as much partiality to conſider his, from whom he hath received it, and is a Byaſs as well as a Cloud upon his Mind in forming a Judgment upon the Cauſe before him: By reaſon of all which he gives Judgment againſt the Truth and Equity of the Cauſe. And there is the ſame reaſon why a corrupt Intereſt otherwiſe, ſhould hinder a right Judgment and Determination in Matters wherein that Intereſt is ſtruck at, as there is, why the corrupt Intereſt of a Bribe ſhould hinder it, in a Man otherwiſe knowing and wiſe.*

Our Saviour ſaith, If thine Eye be evil, thy whole Body ſhall be full of Darkneſs: If therefore the Light that is in thee be Darkneſs, how great is that Darkneſs? *Matth.* vi. 23. *If the governing Principle in Man be corrupt, as it is when that which is predominant is Covetouſneſs or the Love of the World, (of which he there ſpeaks) the Iſſues of it can be no more pure than the Streams that flow from a corrupt Fountain: That corrupt governing Principle will ſtill be turning Men aſide in particular Actions of their Lives, and in making a Judgment of thoſe things wherein their corrupt Intereſt is oppoſed, or immediately or remotely ſtruck at.* For Men cannot ſerve God and Mammon *(as there it follows) they cannot be faithful to God and his Truth, where a Love to him and a Care to pleaſe him, do not bear a greater ſway than Love to* Mammon *or any other worldly concern doth.*

Add we yet to all this one Conſideration more, and that is, That Men have more Love for, and Pleaſure in Unrighteouſneſs, for worldly Advantage ſake, than Love to Truth for Truth's ſake, and what attends a ſincere receiving of it, the Scripture hath told us, That for that very Cauſe God ſhall ſend ſuch *(learned Men not excepted)* ſtrong Deluſions, that they ſhould believe a Lie; *to think and believe verily they have faſt hold of Truth, when yet* they have but a Lye in their right hand, 2 *Theſſ.* ii. 10, 11, 12. *God in juſt Judgment giving them up to an injudicious mind to call Evil Good and Good Evil.*

Theſe things ſhew how little in reaſon the Conſideration of the Learning and Parts of any of the Popiſh Party ought to weigh with thoſe, who upon the account of them are inclined to entertain any whit the more favourable Opinion of their way, when they conſider as they ought, that their Learning and Parts are in Conjunction with a corrupt Intereſt.

As for the Laity or Common People of the Popiſh Perſuaſion, I will not ſay, that a worldly corrupt Intereſt doth ſo much prevail on them immediately, *to be or to continue to be what they are in point of Popery, as it doth with their Clergy; but at the* ſecond hand *it doth prevail on them alſo. For they acting by an implicite* Faith, *believing as their Church-men believe, and ſeeing not with their own, but with their Eyes, and taking all on truſt from them, and giving up themſelves intirely to their Conduct; it follows neceſſarily, that if a corrupt Intereſt miſguide their Guides,* they *alſo muſt needs become ſeduced by means of it. So that what was ſaid to the People of* Iſrael *of old, is truly applicable unto them:* O my People, they which lead thee cauſe thee to err. *But that will be no excuſe to them who ſuffer themſelves to be ſo miſled:* For if the blind lead the blind, *you know who hath ſaid,* they both ſhall fall into the Ditch.

Now if Popery ſhall be found indeed to be founded in a like ſecular carnal corrupt Intereſt as the corrupt Doctrine and Practice of the falſe Apoſtles was, (and whether it be or no, I leave you to judge by what the following Diſcourſe offers you) then that alone would be enough to blaſt the Reputation of it for ever in the minds of all ſuch as have Judgment in ſpiritual things. For by this very thing did St. John *diſcriminate the falſe Teachers and degenerate Chriſtians and their way, from the Orthodox and Sincere, and* their *way.*

They *(ſaith he)* are of the World, therefore ſpeak they of the World, and the World heareth them, 1 *John* iv. 5, 6. They are of the World, i. e. *They were Men of Worldly Minds, and ſuch as chiefly deſigned a Worldly Intereſt, they were ſuch as did* mind Earthly Things, *as it is elſewhere expreſs'd,* Phil. iii. 18. *Therefore they* ſpeak of the World; i. e. *The Doctrine which they taught, ſo far as it was falſe, was calculated to promote a worldly corrupt Intereſt:* And the World heareth them, *that is, Earthly-minded Men, Pretenders to Religion, received their Doctrine as falling in with their Worldly Deſign. But* we, *ſaith St.* John, are of God; he that knoweth God, heareth us, i. e. *received their Doctrine, which drew Men off from the World to God:* He that is not of God, heareth not us: Hereby know we the Spirit of Truth, and the Spirit of Error. *Behold here a plain Diſcrimination of who, and whoſe way is of God, and whoſe is not, with whom the Spirit of Truth is found, and with whom the Spirit of Error.*

If the Authors of Popery then, and their Followers, have adopted into their Religion, as a part of it, any corrupt Doctrine or Practice, for Worldly Advantage ſake, as the falſe Teachers of old did; then they, *we ſee, as well as thoſe falſe Teachers, are mark'd out by St.* John, *as being not of God, but of the World, and as Men that are miſguided by a Spirit of Error. And although by wreſting the Scriptures, and corrupting the Word of God, they think to colour over and patronize their corrupt Doctrines and Practices, juſt as the falſe Apoſtles before them did; yet their Arguings thence, are but of the ſame nature with the Reaſonings of the falſe Apoſtles in like caſes, which were, as St.* Paul *calls them, but* perverſe diſputings of Men of corrupt Minds, deſtitute of the Truth, ſuppoſing that Gain is Godlineſs, 1 *Tim.* vi. 5.

I have in the following Papers ſhewed how St. Paul's *complying with the Jews in ſome Rites of the Jewiſh Worſhip, upon account of Expedience, was quite of a different Nature from the corrupt Complyances of the falſe Apoſtles and their Party. And from that prudential and expediential Complyance of his, I have in an* Appendix, *by Parity of Reaſon, argued the Expediency of yielding to the uſe of ſome things in or about the external form of God's Worſhip, which are neither directly commanded nor forbidden by God, when Circumſtances render ſuch a yielding neceſſary to prevent Diviſions in the Church, and the bad Conſequences of them, and to preſerve Peace and Charity in it, and the better to further the free courſe of the Goſpel. And this I have done the rather, leſt any ſhould think that ſuch a yielding, as aforeſaid, ſhould be of like nature with thoſe corrupt Complyances of the falſe Apoſtles and their* Party, *which are repreſented to view in the following Diſcourſe.*

As for thoſe who have hitherto eſcaped the Snares of Popery, the proper uſe of the enſuing Tract for them is to fortifie them againſt all Temptations of turning Papiſts, of what nature ſoever the Temptation may be: Always remembring, that ſuch as follow the falſe Apoſtles in corrupting the Chriſtian Religion to avoid Perſecution, or for any Worldly Advantage whatſoever, muſt expect to ſhare with them in their fate *alſo, of whom it is ſaid,* Their End ſhall be according to their Works, 2 *Cor.* xi. 15.

And ſince you will find by the proceſs of the Diſcourſe before you, that the Corruptions both in Faith *and* Practice, *firſt in the falſe Apoſtles and their Followers, and after them in the Papiſts, did ariſe and ſpring out of an inordinate Love of the World: The Conſideration thereof may ſerve as a Sea-mark to warn us to take heed of that Rock upon which ſo many Profeſſors of Chriſtianity have made ſhipwrack of it. This running into the Spirit of the World hath always been fatal to the Churches: As it laid waſte at laſt the once famous flouriſhing Churches of the Apoſtles own planting; ſo it hath ſince depreſs'd and kept many others very low in their Spiritual State, and is of ill abode as to their future ſtanding. And there is ſo much the more danger of falling into an undue and deſtructive Love of the things of this World, becauſe we have need of them, daily uſe them, familiarly converſe with them; and becauſe Men generally are very unable to diſcern the parting difference between a lawful and unlawful degree of Love to them, and ſo are very apt inſenſibly to paſs over from the one into the other. And therefore there is great reaſon to be jealous of our Affections in this reſpect, and diligent to obſerve their Motion and manner of Operation towards the World, and continually to be following them with Conſiderations, that all the things of this World are at beſt but Temporal, and uſeful only for a little ſeaſon, and that our main Concern lies in the things of another World that are for Eternity; in compariſon of which, the things of this World are of no weight, when a Judgment and eſtimate of both is rightly made. By the Knowledge, Belief, and practical Conſideration of this it was, that the holy Apoſtles,*

ſtles, and all ſincere Chriſtians then, did overcome the World, when their Worldly and Spiritual, their Temporal and Eternal Intereſt came in competition. This is the Victory that overcometh the World, even our Faith, *ſaith St.* John, 1 *Epiſt.* v. 4. And though our outward Man periſh, yet the inward Man is renewed day by day, while we look not at the things which are ſeen, but the things which are not ſeen; for the things which are ſeen are Temporal, but the things which are not ſeen are Eternal, *ſaith St.* Paul, 2 Cor. iv. 16, 18. *And it was by that* Faith *which is the* Subſtance or confident Expectation of things hoped for, and the Evidence of things not ſeen, *by which* Abraham, Moſes *and the reſt of thoſe Worthies in elder times, became ſuch famous Inſtances of overcoming the World as they were,* Heb. xi. *And our bleſſed Saviour,* for the Joy that was ſet before him, endured the Croſs and deſpiſed the Shame; *yea, and contemned the Grandeur of the World too, when he was tempted thereby to that which was incongruous to the end of his coming.*

If any ſhall think the publiſhing of theſe Papers might well be ſpared, conſidering the many tranſcending pieces againſt Popery which are already extant; I confeſs, I ſhould have thought ſo too, (eſpecially conſidering the Author) had it not been that the way of proceeding againſt Popery uſed therein, by comparing it with the corrupt Religion of the falſe Apoſtles, hath not, ſo far as I have obſerved, been much made uſe of by others, unleſs only in ſome Glances which look that way. And yet what can expoſe Popery more, to the diſlike even of every vulgar Apprehenſion, than to diſcover its likeneſs to the Religion of the falſe Apoſtles, who preached Chriſt indeed, as theſe of this way alſo do? but they did it not ſincerely, but added to, and mix'd with the Doctrine and Religion of Chriſt, and that as neceſſary to Salvation, things of quite a different Nature and contrary Tendency, even as theſe likewiſe do, Phil. i. 15, 16.

Beſides, as by diſcovering the true Nature of the corrupt Religion of the falſe Apoſtles and their Proſelytes, (a thing which is endeavoured in the following Diſcourſe) we may take meaſure of, and eſtimate the Nature of Popery, when we find, as we may, a likeneſs between them: So perhaps the Readers of more ordinary *Capacities may find ſuch farther benefit thereby, as to come to a better Underſtanding of many Places and Paſſages in the holy Apoſtles Epiſtles, relating to the way of falſe Teachers, as, without knowing in ſome meaſure what the corrupt Principles and Practices of the falſe Apoſtles were, and their ill effects in the Churches, can hardly be underſtood. And if that may, though nothing elſe ſhould, be gained thereby, yet that alone I hope would in ſome meaſure recompence the pains of* ſuch *Readers in peruſing the ſaid Diſcourſe: From which I ſhall detain them no longer, this being all I have to ſay by way of* Preface; *craving their Pardon for the length of it.*

THE
Myſtery of Iniquity
UNFOLDED.

BY a Collection of ſundry Paſſages ſcattered up and down in the Writings of the Holy Apoſtles of our Bleſſed Lord and Saviour Jeſus Chriſt, it may eaſily be diſcerned how and for what end, and under what Pretence the falſe Apoſtles in the Primitive Times corrupted the Chriſtian Religion. And by comparing herewith the Chriſtian Religion as now corrupted by Popery, together with its end and deſign, and the *pretence* under which it hath been managed by the Authors of it, and Guides of the People of that Perſuaſion, thoſe that halt between two Opinions in the Caſe to be enquired into, and that have any deſire to be led into the way of Truth on which hand ſoever it falls, may eaſily come to a clear Reſolution and full Satisfaction, who are in the Error, the Papiſts or the Proteſtants.

In order to the Compariſon thus to be made, and to the Satisfaction that is thereby to be attained, I muſt repreſent to you from the Scriptures theſe two things.

1. What the deſign of the falſe Apoſtles was in managing the Chriſtian Profeſſion to ſo ill purpoſe as they did.

2. In what way and by what means they carried on their deſign. After I have done this, I ſhall draw the Parallel between the falſe Apoſtles and Authors of Popery, and ſhew how the Authors of Popery have followed the falſe Apoſtles in both End and Means.

§ I. I ſhall begin with the firſt of theſe, and ſhew what the deſign of the falſe Apoſtles was in managing the Chriſtian Profeſſion ſo Unchriſtianly as they did. And to make way for the better underſtanding of that, I ſhall briefly touch upon the *Riſe* of them, and the occaſion of it. The ſincere Profeſſion of Chriſtianity being attended at the firſt, and for a long time after, with ſore Perſecution; there were ſome of that Profeſſion, and probably Teachers too, who being neither willing wholly to relinquiſh it, nor yet to ſuffer ſo much as a faithful and thorough Adherence to the Doctrine and Precepts of the Goſpel did expoſe Men to; did caſt about how they might retain a Profeſſion of the Goſpel, and yet avoid any great or conſiderable Suffering for it: And in concluſion reſolved upon this, *viz.* to *comply* with their Adverſaries in ſome things pertaining to the Religion and way which they profeſs'd (of which I ſhall ſpeak more particularly afterwards) whereby they took off the Keenneſs of their Oppoſition, and provided for their own Eaſe and Security. Some Pretences they found out for ſo doing, wherewith they endeavoured to ſatisfie themſelves, and others (as well as they could) whom they laboured to draw in to make a Party: Juſt as St. *Paul* foretold the Elders of the Church of *Epheſus*, ſaying: *Of your own ſelves ſhall Men ariſe, ſpeaking perverſe things, to draw away Diſciples after them*, Acts xx. 30.

And being oppoſed herein by the faithful Apoſtles, they uſed all the Art they could to defend and juſtifie what they had done, and had perſuaded others to do. And to render the Oppoſition they had herein from the holy Apoſtles the leſs available in the Eyes of others, they ſought by one means or another to diſparage them, and to undermine the Authority and Reputation they had in the Hearts of the Chriſtians. And by theſe means they corrupted and drew away many after them; and that not of the more ordinary Diſciples only, but probably many of thoſe alſo who were become Preachers of the Goſpel; whereof it may be *Demas* might be one, who as St. *Paul* ſaid, *had forſaken him and embraced this preſent World.* And indeed this Contagion ſpread ſo faſt, and prevailed ſo much, that St. *Paul* complained, ſaying, *all ſeek their own, and not the things of Jeſus Chriſt*, Phil. ii. 21.

Thus having given you an account of the Riſe of the falſe Teachers in the Apoſtles Days, I ſhall now give you a more particular and full account of their Deſign. And their *Deſign*, as I have already intimated, was *Worldly:* It was to *ſecure* and *procure a worldly corrupt Intereſt*. It is not unlikely but that at the firſt their deſign in complying ſo much as they did with the profeſs'd Enemies of Chriſtianity, was only to *avoid* thoſe Sufferings for the Goſpel ſake, which the ſincere Chriſtians were expoſed to and underwent, both in their Perſons and Eſtates. But afterwards, when they had carried away many by their Deceits, and were become the Head and Ring-leaders of a Party; a farther Worldly Advantage offered it ſelf and came in proſpect, (which we may well conceive they were not ſo dull as not to perceive, nor ſo careleſs and negligent as not to purſue) and that was an opportunity of *Gain*, of making *merchandize* of the ſeduced Chriſtians; (beſides the opportunity of gratifying their *Ambition* in becoming the Head of a Party.) As the falſe Prophets of old, and the corrupt Prieſts, when by propheſying and preaching pleaſing things to the People, they found no ſmall benefit in the liberal Gifts and Rewards that Courſe did procure, were encouraged to make a Trade of ſo doing (in which reſpect thoſe Prophets were ſaid *to divine for Money*, and thoſe Prieſts *to teach for Hire:)* even ſo the falſe Apoſtles alſo, perceiving that to be a thriving way, applyed themſelves to preach for Doctrine ſuch things as pleaſed the unſound and timorous Profeſſors of the Goſpel, and ſo made their carnal Ends on them: *They taught things which they ought not, for filthy lucre ſake*, as St. *Paul* ſaith, and thereby *ſubverted whole Houſes*, Tit. i. 11. They found that the Preaching ſuch looſe Doctrine, in point of Compliance, as tended to eaſe the Profeſſors of Chriſtianity of the Burthen of Perſecution, was very *gainful*; it gained them many Proſelytes, for they came in by *whole Houſholds*, we ſee; and it gained them much of filthy Lucre alſo. For their Proſelytes grew very kind to them for teaching them an eaſier and ſafer way of profeſſing Chriſtianity than they knew before. Yea, ſo it was that the poor deluded People became ſo much their Servants upon account of that Satisfaction they took in that new Diſcovery, that St. *Paul* upbraided ſome of them with it in theſe words: *Ye ſuffer if a Man bring you into bondage, if a Man devour you, if a Man take of you, if a Man exalt himſelf, if a Man ſmite you on the Face*, 2 Cor. xi. 20.

The Deſign of theſe Men to be a Worldly and Fleſhly Deſign, is plentifully as well plainly diſcovered in the Epiſtles of the Apoſtles. The ſincere Chriſtians indeed ventured all their Worldly Concerns, and ſacrificed all their Worldly Intereſt upon the Service of the Goſpel, their holy Profeſſion, and their own Souls: But theſe Men, as St. *Paul* characteriſeth them, were *Enemies to the Croſs of Chriſt*, they were ſuch as made *their Belly their God*, and *minded Earthly Things*, Phil. iii. 18, 19. They were Enemies to the great Duty of taking up the Croſs, and ſuffering for Chriſt, Earthly Things having more of their Hearts than he had. Theſe who by their pleaſing Doctrine aforeſaid, cauſed Diviſions and Offences among the Chriſtians, contrary to the Doctrine which they had learned from the true Apoſtles, were ſuch as *ſerved not the Lord Jeſus Chriſt*, whatever they pretended, *but their own Bellies*, Rom. xvi. 17, 18. And St. *Peter* deſcribing them, ſaith, *They had Hearts exerciſed with covetous Practices, having forſaken the right way, and going aſtray, followed the way of Balaam the Son of Boſor, who loved the Wages of Unrighteouſneſs*, 2 Pet. ii. 14, 15. *They ran greedily after the way of Balaam for Reward*, as St. *Jude* hath it, ver. 11. *And through Covetouſneſs with feigned words, they made merchandiſe of the People*, whom they deluded, 2 *Pet.* ii. 3.

Now in caſe of Perſecution, 'tis true indeed, that when Chriſt ſent forth his Diſciples as Sheep among Wolves, he adviſed them to *be wiſe as Serpents, but innocent as Doves:* To uſe as much Prudence for the avoiding of Perſecution as would conſiſt with Innocency, *Matth.* x. 16. And no doubt but that the ſincereſt Chriſtians were willing enough to make uſe of all the Prudence they had to ſhun Perſecution, ſo far as lawfully they might. But yet were ſtill careful to preſerve and maintain their own Innocency and Integrity in all they did in that kind, and not in the leaſt to betray the Cauſe of Chriſt: And therefore they could ſay in thoſe ſuffering times, *This is our rejoycing, the Teſtimony of our Conſcience, that in Simplicity and Godly Sincerity, not with Fleſhly Wiſdom* (as the falſe Apoſtles) *but by the Grace of God, we have had our Converſation in the World*, 2 Cor. i. 12. But the falſe Apoſtles and their Followers, uſed ſo much Subtilty and carnal Policy to avoid the Croſs, as that the Wiſdom of the Serpent did devour the Innocency of the Dove. They made themſelves *Friends of the World* indeed by unlawful Compliance, and by *adulterating* the Chriſtian Religion by impure Mixtures: But then they thereby made themſelves *Enemies to God*, as St. *James* ſaith, in betraying his Truth and Cauſe, *James* iv. 4.

By the way then we may ſee by what hath been ſaid, how dangerous a thing it is inordinately to deſire and love the Friendſhip of the World; and the Accommodations of this preſent Life: It is, we ſee, that which hath betrayed Multitudes, otherwiſe in a hopeful way of Salvation, into curſed and deſtructive Practices. *They that will be Rich fall into temptation and a ſnare, and into many fooliſh and hurtful luſts, which drown Men in Deſtruction and Perdition: For the love of Money is the root of all Evil: which while ſome coveted after, they have been ſeduced from the Faith, and pierced themſelves through with many Sorrows*, ſaith St. *Paul*, ſpeaking of thoſe corrupt Chriſtians, whoſe inordinate Love to the things of this World drew them into ſuch ſinful Compliances to preſerve them, as were inconſiſtent with Chriſtianity in the Truth and Power of it, 1 *Tim.* vi. 9, 10.

Love not the World, nor the things of the World, ſaith St. *John* to thoſe who were in danger of being corrupted by the falſe Apoſtles through Love to the World: *For if any Man love the World, the love of the Father is not in him. For all that is in the World, the Luſt of the Fleſh, the Luſt of the Eye, and the Pride of Life, is not of the Father, but is of the World*, 1 John ii. 15, 16. Here's a brief Deſcription of that Love of the World, which is diſallowed by God, and a Snare of Death to Men. The Luſt of the Eye is Covetouſneſs; which is a tranſgreſſion of the Rule of Righteouſneſs, or Moderation, in deſiring or getting; or the Rule of Piety or Charity, in keeping the things of this World. The Luſt of the Fleſh is a tranſgreſſing of the Laws of Sobriety, Temperance and Chaſtity, in uſing them: And the Pride of Life is a tranſgreſſion of the Laws of Modeſty and Humility in uſing undue means to draw Honour and Eſteem from Men. Now then when St. *John* ſaith, *If any Man love the World, the love of the Father is not in him*; his meaning ſeems to be this: That when any Man lives in the breach of any of God's Commandments, in Coveting, Getting, Keeping, or Uſing the things of this World; that's the Man that ſo loves the World, as that the love of the Father is not in him. For as the Love of God, according to this Apoſtle, conſiſteth in keeping his Commandments, as he ſaith, Chap. v. 3. *This is the Love of God, that we keep his Commandments:* So the not loving the Father, but the World, conſiſts in the Breach of his Commandments, in Coveting, Getting, Keeping, or Uſing the Friendſhip or the Things of the World. And thus the falſe Apoſtles were Lovers of the World: They were willing to be for God and the Goſpel, ſo long and ſo far as their being ſo did not deprive them of their Worldly Accommodations; but wherein it did, ſo that they could no longer *ſerve two Maſters, God* and *Mammon*, without faultering with one of them, then and in thoſe particular Caſes, when ſuch a Competition did occur, they were wont ſtill to cleave to their Worldly Intereſt, but to turn their back upon God and the Goſpel. For which cauſe they were compared to *Eſau*, and ſtiled *prophane Perſons* like him, *Heb.* xii. 16. For as *Eſau* preferred ſo inconſiderable a thing as a *Meſs of Pottage*, becauſe of the *preſentneſs* of the Satisfaction he expected thereby, before the far more deſirable Privileges and Benefits of Birthright and Heirſhip, becauſe they, for a great part at leaſt were not to be received till *afterwards:* So theſe Lovers of, and Deſigners for this preſent World, did chuſe Eaſe and other Worldly Accommodations, becauſe *preſent*, rather than the better Hope of Eternal Life, becauſe *abſent and to come.* This was the Root of Bitterneſs in the Perſons of Seducers; againſt the ſpringing up of which among the Chriſtians, the Author of this Epiſtle had cautioned them, ver. 15. At that time, when the caſe was ſo, that *all that would live Godly in Chriſt Jeſus muſt ſuffer Perſecution*, there was no way of retaining a Profeſſion of Chriſtianity, and their Worldly Eaſe and Enjoyments too, but by corrupting the Chriſtian Religion, and making it another thing than the Author of it had made it; which was the thing the falſe Apoſtles laboured to bring the Chriſtians to, under deluſive Pretences, that they might ſave themſelves from ſuffering: Which brings me to what is next to be diſcourſed, and that is to ſhew how unworthily theſe falſe Teachers corrupting the Chriſtian Religion to attain their worldly End and baſe Deſign.

§ II. The next thing then which, as I ſaid, I propoſed to ſhew, was how, in what way, and by what means the falſe Apoſtles carried on their Worldly Deſign, of which I have been ſpeaking: How in particular they ordered things in their Profeſſion of Chriſtianity, ſo as to ſecure their End, and to ſerve their Deſign for this World. In doing of which I ſhall ſhew, Firſt, that to this end they *corrupted* the Chriſtian Religion by their ſinful mixtures. Secondly, that they did this, and carried on their whole Deſign for the World under a *Religious Pretence.*

Firſt, They corrupted the Chriſtian Religion on purpoſe to ſerve their Deſign. They corrupted it partly by adding other things to it which were of a contrary nature; and partly by ſiniſter and corrupt Interpretations of the Chriſtian Doctrine, and of the Scriptures of the Old Teſtament, to countenance thoſe Additions, either as *lawful*, or as *ne-*

ceſſary. And thus they abuſed the Scriptures touching the uſe of the Law of *Moſes*, by miſconſtruction and miſapplication. They would be eſteemed for judicious *Teachers of the Law, when they underſtood not what they ſaid, nor whereof they affirmed*, 1 Tim. i. 7. They taught Circumciſion, and the Obſervation of other Rites of the Law of *Moſes* to be neceſſary to the Salvation of Chriſtian Gentiles, when their doing ſo ſerved their carnal Deſign, though otherwiſe they made no Conſcience of keeping the Law themſelves: *For neither they themſelves, who are circumciſed, keep the Law; but deſire to have you circumciſed, that they may glory in your Fleſh*, ſaid St. *Paul* of them, *Gal.* vi. 13. But more of this afterwards. St. *Peter* alſo tells us, that they wreſted things in St. *Paul's* Epiſtles, and other Scriptures to their own Deſtruction. *They walked in Craftineſs, and handled the Word deceitfully*, as St. *Paul* reflects it upon them in 2 *Cor.* iv. 2. And ſo he doth again, when he ſaith, *We are not as many which corrupt the Word of God*, 2 Cor. ii. 17. By an unkindly Violence which they offered to it, they made it ſeemingly, and in the Eyes of weak and injudicious and credulous Perſons, to countenance what they did in proſecution of their carnal Deſign. And although theſe falſe Appearances were but *ſlight*, and ſuch as had nothing ſatisfying in them to an unprejudiced and diſcerning Mind, yet they would ſerve for *Demonſtrations*, and paſs for good Proof with thoſe who were willing and deſirous to have thoſe things prove true, which the falſe Apoſtles pretended to be ſo. Like as when the falſe Prophets of old *propheſied falſly, the People loved to have it ſo*; becauſe it was for their carnal Intereſt to have that prove true which they propheſied. But this only in general.

But to come more particularly to the Buſineſs, and to ſhew how they corrupted the Chriſtian Religion to ſave them from ſuffering, and to compaſs their farther ends. The ſincere Chriſtians were in great danger of ſuffering the loſs of all the things of this World for Chriſt and the Goſpel ſake, from two ſorts of Enemies to Chriſtianity, the unbelieving *Jews*, and the unbelieving *Gentiles*. To avoid which, the falſe Apoſtles taught themſelves firſt, and others after, ſomewhat to *comply* with theſe Enemies of Chriſtianity, in *mixing* ſomewhat of their Rites and Uſages with it, on purpoſe to take off the edge of that Oppoſition and Perſecution they before ſuffer'd from them, and by degrees thereby to reconcile them to themſelves, and to their Religion.

This Device of theirs occaſion'd thoſe jealous Apprehenſions St. *Paul* had of the *Corinthians*, after the falſe Apoſtles got among them, which he thus expreſſeth, in 2 *Cor.* xi. 2, 3. *I am jealous over you with Godly Jealouſie: for I have eſpouſed you to one Huſband, that I may preſent you as a chaſte Virgin to Chriſt. But I fear leſt by any means, as the Serpent beguiled Eve through his ſubtilty, ſo your Minds ſhould be corrupted from the ſimplicity that is in Chriſt.*

§ III. Firſt, for the unbelieving *Jews*, They we know were fierce Enemies againſt all that profeſſed the Chriſtian Religion, labouring to raiſe Perſecution againſt them every where. To take off the edge of which, as I ſaid, the falſe Apoſtles became Factors for *Judaiſm*, and ſo fell to perſuade the believing *Gentiles* to mix and compound *Judaiſm* and *Chriſtianity* together, as an Expedient both to ſave themſelves from Perſecution, and to win their Adverſaries to a liking of Chriſtianity. Of this attempt we read in *Acts* xv. 1. *Certain Men which came down from Judea taught the Brethen, and ſaid, Except ye be circumciſed after the manner of Moſes, ye cannot be ſaved.* And again, *ver.* 5. *There aroſe certain of the Sect of the Phariſees which believed, ſaying, That it was needful to circumciſe them, and to command them to keep the Law of Moſes.* That ſuch a thing as this was done to avoid Perſecution from the *Jews*, appears from *Gal.* vi. 12, 13. *As many as make a fair ſhew in the Fleſh, they conſtrain you to be circumciſed, only leſt they ſhould ſuffer Perſecution for the Croſs of Chriſt.* That they did it not ſo much out of Conſcience, as for this politick End, appears by *ver.* 13. *For neither they themſelves who are circumciſed keep the Law, but deſire to have you circumciſed, that they may glory in your fleſh*, as having now made them as well Proſelytes to the *Jewiſh* way, as before they were to *Chriſtianity.*

That this way of compliance in the *Chriſtians* with the *Jews*, was effectual to ſecure them from Perſecution from the *Jews*, appears likewiſe from *Gal.* v. 11. *And I, Brethren, if I yet preach Circumciſion, then is the Offence of the Croſs ceaſed.* Upon this account doubtleſs it was, that ſome corrupt *Chriſtians* pretended themſelves to *be Jews, who were not, but were of the Synagogue of Satan*, as we read *Rev.* ii. 9. and iii. 9.

Now this way of joyning and commixing *Judaiſm* and *Chriſtianity* together, ſet on foot by falſe Teachers, under the Pretences aforeſaid, took dangerouſly among Profeſſors of *Chriſtianity*; which was the occaſion of thoſe large Diſcourſes touching Juſtification by Faith without the Works of the Law, which we have in St. *Paul's* Epiſtles both to the *Romans* and *Galatians.* The plain meaning of which was, That the Obſervation of the Law of *Moſes* in the *Jewiſh* way, was not neceſſary to Salvation in *Chriſtians*, as the falſe Apoſtles had taught it to be; and that it was unneceſſary for the *Gentile* Believers to be brought over to it; and that the Religion revealed and preſcribed in the Goſpel, called *The Faith*, and this alone, without adding *Judaiſm* to it, was both neceſſary and ſufficient to Salvation. And, by the way, thoſe that from the Apoſtle's Reaſoning hereabout, would oppoſe the Works of Evangelical Obedience to Faith, in the Point of Juſtification, do greatly miſtake the Apoſtle in his deſign and way of Reaſoning.

§ IV. Secondly, The falſe Teachers, to avoid Perſecution, and the loſs of all for the Goſpel's ſake, from the *Heathen* or unbelieving *Gentiles*, ſtruck in with them alſo in part, and taught the *Chriſtians*, That it was lawful for them to comply with their Idolatrous Neighbours, ſo far as to go with them to their Idol-feaſts, and to eat things ſacrificed to Idols, ſo long as they did not *intentionally*, and in their Minds, do it in any Honour to the Idol, but kept their Mind to God. Some ſuch as theſe were in the Church of *Pergamos*, Rev. ii. 14. *I have a few things againſt thee, becauſe thou haſt there them that hold the Doctrine of Balaam, who taught Balak to caſt a ſtumbling-block before the Children of Iſrael, to eat things ſacrificed to Idols, and to commit Fornication.* Such alſo were in the Church of *Thyatira*, ver. 20. *I have a few things againſt thee, becauſe thou ſuffereſt that woman Jezabel, which calleth her ſelf a Propheteſs, to teach and ſeduce my Servants to commit Fornication, and to eat things ſacrificed unto Idols.*

That this was taught and practiſed as lawful, ſo long as it was not done intentionally to honour or worſhip the Idol, as the Infidels did, I gather from St. *Paul*'s Diſcourſe in 1 *Cor.* viii. In *ver.* 1. he ſaith, *Now as touching things offered to Idols, we know that we all have knowledge.* Knowledge of what? This he delivers more expreſly in *ver.* 4. *We know that an Idol is nothing in the World, and that there is none other God but one.* This it ſeems was that which they pleaded in Juſtification of their Practice of going to the Idols Temple, and of eating of things ſacrificed to the Idols: They *knew* that the Idol was nothing, and therefore did not *intend* any Worſhip to it in what they did. The Apoſtle ſuppoſeth this to be true, and grants indeed that they, and all Perſons generally that owned the *Chriſtian Faith*, did know that an Idol is nothing, and that there is no other God but one; and that therefore probably ſuch could not be ſuppos'd to eat of the Idol-ſacrifice with intent to worſhip the Idol: But yet this Knowledge was not *univerſal*, among all without exception, that had begun to own *Chriſtianity*; as he ſhews in *ver.* 7. ſaying, *Howbeit there is not in every Man that knowledge: for ſome with Conſcience of the Idol unto this hour eat it as a thing offered unto an Idol, and their Conſcience being weak is defiled.* And ſo argues the Unlawfulneſs of their Practice, upon the account of *ſcandal* to weak Brethren, to the end of the Chapter. But in the tenth Chapter, where he re-aſſumes this Buſineſs again, he argues plainly, That whatever their Knowledge or Intention was, yet that by that Practice they had Communion with the Idol or Devils, to whom indeed the Offering was made. See from *ver.* 14. to *ver.* 22.

It was for this Seduction of falſe Teachers, that St. *Peter* and St. *Jude* do ſo earneſtly inveigh againſt them, as *following the way of Balaam for Reward*, 2 Pet. ii. 15. *Jude* 11. And *Balaam*'s way, we know, was to teach *Balak* to draw the *Iſraelites* to Idolatry and Whoredom, by enticing them to eat with the *Moabites* of their Idol-ſacrifices, *Numb.* xxv. 2. and xxxi. 16. And it was againſt this Seduction by falſe Teachers, that St. *John* admoniſhed the *Chriſtians*, when in the cloſe of his firſt Epiſtle he ſaid, *Little Children keep your ſelves from Idols.*

How far this Device of ſinſul Compliance with Unbelievers, both of *Jews* and *Gentiles*, did ſucceed to draw them over to them, to become ſuch *Chriſtians* as themſelves, I know not; which yet doubtleſs was one thing they promiſed themſelves in it: Yet it's very probable they found by Experience, that their complying with the *Heathen*, in going to their Idol-feaſts, did procure them much eaſe, as their compliance with the *Jews* had done, either in freeing them from, or greatly abating that Perſecution, which before they were expoſed unto by profeſſing the Goſpel; which was another thing they promiſed themſelves in it. And there are two things eſpecially which make this probable. The one is, in that this Device of Compliance took with the *Chriſtians*, and prevailed ſo much in the ſeveral Churches, as by the Scriptures already quoted we ſee it did. The other is, in that St. *Paul* brings in the *Corinthians* applauding themſelves in their happy Condition, ſince the time their new Teachers came among them, to teach them a more eaſie and ſafe way of profeſſing the Goſpel, than St. *Paul* had done, 1 *Cor.* iv. 8, 10. *Now ye are full, now ye are rich, ye have reigned as Kings without us: We are Fools for Chriſt's ſake, but ye are wiſe in Chriſt: We are weak, but ye are ſtrong: Ye are honourable, but we are deſpiſed: Even unto this preſent Hour, we both hunger, and thirſt, are naked, and buffeted*, &c. They had Halcyon Days now, as they thought, in compariſon of what they had before. And it appears, that this Church of *Corinth* eſpecially, was infected with this contagious Diſeaſe, in that St. *Paul* hath it ſo often up, arguing againſt it, warning them of it ſeveral times, and in both his Epiſtles to them. And the eaſe they found by it, was in all Likelihood, as I ſaid, the Temptation by which it prevail'd ſo much among them as it did.

§ V. Other things alſo they did, in *corrupting* the *Chriſtian* Religion, to *ingratiate* themſelves with the Enemies of it; whereof *worſhipping of Angels* I may name for one, againſt which the Apoſtle warned the *Chriſtians* in *Col.* ii. 18. ſaying, *Let no Man beguile you of your Reward, in a voluntarily Humility and worſhipping of Angels, intruding into thoſe things which he hath not ſeen, vainly puff'd up with his fleſhly Mind.* Whether this was done and taught in Compliance with thoſe *Heathens* who followed the way of *Platonick* Philoſophy in this, as ſome think; and St. *Paul* had ſaid before, in *ver.* 8. *Beware leſt any Man ſpoil you through Philoſophy and vain Deceit:* Or whether to draw near to the *Pagans*, who had their *Dæmons*, their *Baalims*, or Lords, to whom they addreſſed themſelves as Mediators to their ſuperiour Deities, I ſhall not determine: But I think there is little queſtion to be made, but that this their falling back to the Rudiments of the World, as well as other their Sophiſtications, was to ſerve themſelves in their worldly Deſign.

§ VI. Farthermore, They denied the *Reſurrection* of the Body, in Compliance with the Enemies of *Chriſtianity*. The *Pagans*, and likewiſe the *Sadduces*, which were a prevailing Sect among the *Jews*, held no Reſurrection of the Body after Death. And we find that this Heretical Opinion was ſet on foot in the Church of *Corinth*, by ſome among them, 1 *Cor.* xv. 12. *How ſay ſome among you, that there is no Reſurrection of the dead?* And we have little reaſon but to think, that thoſe who did put it on foot there, did ſo, the more to curry favour with the Oppoſers and Perſecutors of the *Chriſtians*, who profeſs'd a Belief of the Doctrine of the Reſurrection; becauſe that for the ſame reaſon they did unduly comply with them in other things, as I have ſhewed. And becauſe this was ſo manifeſtly contrary to the Goſpel, which yet they profeſs'd, that in denying that, they did in effect deny the Goſpel; therefore to bring themſelves off from this Self-contradiction in their Profeſſion, when they felt themſelves hard preſs'd with it, they fell to quibling with this Doctrine of the Reſurrection, and to put *myſtical* Interpretations upon it (as ſome in our days have done) *ſaying, That the Reſurrection was paſt already*, as *Hymeneus* and *Philetus* did, in 2 *Tim.* ii. 17,18. They taught it ſeems, That what is ſo oft affirmed in the Goſpel touching the Reſurrection, was to be underſtood of a Reſurrection then already paſt.

§ VII. Again, To *increaſe* their Party, and to *ſtrengthen* their Intereſt, they broached Doctrines of Libertiniſm and Licentiouſneſs, which is a courſe that uſually proves too ſucceſsful in drawing corrupt Men to be on the ſide of ſuch Teachers, and for the ſake thereof, to eſpouſe other of their Opinions. Such Men will run after ſuch Teachers, *heaping to themſelves*, as St. *Paul* ſaith, *Teachers after their own Luſts*, 2 Tim. iv. 3. St. *Peter* ſpeaking of this Courſe of theirs, in 2 *Pet.* ii. 18, 19, ſaith, *When they ſpeak great ſwelling words of Vanity, they allure through the Luſts of the Fleſh thoſe who were clean eſcaped from thoſe who live in Errour: While they promiſe them liberty, they themſelves are the Servants of Corruption.* As in the things before-mentioned they corrupted the *Chriſtian* Religion in point of *Worſhip*; ſo in this, under Conſideration, they corrupted it in point of *Manners*.

Fornication was held a thing lawful among the *Gentiles* (*Acts* xv. 29.) and the falſe Teachers, to make themſelves Friends of the World, taught the *Chriſtians* to eſteem it lawful too, *Rev.* ii. 20. *Thou ſuffereſt the Woman Jezabel, who calleth her ſelf a Propheteſs, to teach and to ſeduce my Servants to commit Fornication*, &c. And ſo again, in *ver.* 14, 15. *Thou haſt them that hold the Doctrine of Balaam*, &c. *ſo haſt thou alſo them that hold the Doctrine of the Nicolaitans, which thing I hate.* This ſort of Men *had eyes full of Adultery, beguiling unſtable Souls*, as St. *Peter* ſaith, 2 *Pet.* ii. 14. *They crept into Houſes, and led captive ſilly Women, laden with Sins, and led away with divers Luſts*, 2 Tim. iii. 6.

They taught it alſo to be lawful to caſt off *Obedience* and *Subjection* to Governours, both Maſtersan d Magiſtrates, under pretence of their *Chriſtian Liberty* by the Goſpel;

which was a Doctrine very taking with many, eſpecially *Jews*, many of whom were otherwiſe of themſelves, upon all occaſions, forward enough to caſt off the *Roman* Yoke. Upon this account theſe Seducers were ſaid to *deſpiſe Government, and to ſpeak Evil of Dignities*, 2 Pet. ii. 10. Jude xi. *And to periſh in the gainſaying of Core*, who, as we know, oppoſed *Moſes* and *Aaron* in their Government. Againſt this Seduction St. *Peter* cautions the *Chriſtians*, 1 *Pet*. ii. 16, 17. when he ſaith, *As free, and not uſing your Liberty as a Cloak of Maliciouſneſs, but as the Servants of God. Honour all Men. Love the Brotherhood. Fear God. Honour the King.* And ſo doth St. *Paul*, 1 Tim. vi. 1. *Let as many Servants as are under the Yoke, count their own Maſters worthy of all Honour, that the Name of God and his Doctrine be not blaſphemed.*

§ VIII. Farthermore, they grew to this at laſt, that if all their other Compliances would not ſecure them from ſuffering Perſecution for owning the Name of *Chriſt*, they taught, That then, in caſe of neceſſity, and before a Judge, it was lawful, and matter of Liberty, to *deny Chriſt in word*, provided they did but *inwardly* retain a Belief in him in their hearts. Of theſe St. *Peter* ſpeaks, ſaying, *There ſhall be falſe Teachers among you, who privily ſhall bring in damnable Hereſies, even denying the Lord that bought them*, 2 Pet. ii. 1. And St. *Jude* ſaith, *ver*. 4. *That there were certain Men crept in unawares, turning the Grace of God into Laſciviouſneſs, and denying the only Lord God, and our Lord Jeſus Chriſt.*

And thus we ſee how the falſe Apoſtles, and their Followers, by complying with the Unbelieving *Jews* on the one hand, and *Gentiles* on the other, corrupted the *Chriſtian* Religion, out of a carnal worldly deſign, quite contrary to the Doctrine and Practice of the true Apoſtles, whoſe Exhortation, as they ſaid, *was not of Deceit, nor of Uncleanneſs, nor in Guile*, as the others was; *but as they were allowed of God to be put in truſt with the Goſpel, even ſo they ſpake, not as pleaſing Men*, as the other did, *but God, which tried their Hearts. Neither at any time uſed they flattering words, nor a Cloak of Covetouſneſs*, as the other did, 1 *Theſſ*. ii. 3, 4, 5.

§ IX. But poſſibly this may riſe in the minds of ſome, as an Objection, That St. *Paul* himſelf did in many things *comply* both with the *Jews* and *Gentiles*. For doth not he himſelf ſay, *That unto the Jews I became as a Jew, that I might gain the Jews; to them that are under the Law, as under the Law, that I might gain them that are under the Law; to them that are without Law, as without Law, to gain them that are without Law; and that he became all things to all Men*, 1 Cor. ix. 20, 21? And if St. *Paul* were not to blame in doing ſo, how came the other to be ſo faulty by reaſon of their Compliances? But, in anſwer to this, let it be conſidered, that the difference between the Compliance of St. *Paul* and that of the falſe Apoſtles, was vaſtly great.

Firſt in the *end* of it, The governing end of the falſe Apoſtles in their Compliance, was *Earthly, Worldly, Carnal*, as I have ſhewed: But the end of St. *Paul* in his, was purely *ſpiritual*, it was for the Furtherance of the Goſpel and Mens Salvation thereby. This appears from that place, and thoſe very words from which the Objection is raiſed. When he became as a *Jew* to the *Jews*, *it was to gain the Jews*: And when he became as without Law to them that were without Law, *it was to gain them*: And, as it follows in the 22. and 23. Verſes, *I am made all things to all Men, that I might by all means ſave ſome: And this I do*, ſaith he, *for the Goſpel's ſake.*

Secondly, The difference was vaſtly great in the *nature* of their Compliance a ſwell as in the end. The falſe Apoſtles complied with the *Gentiles* in the Rites of their Worſhip and Corruption of Manners, to the apparent *Breach* of the Laws of God, the Doctrine of Chriſt, and Precepts of the Goſpel. But St. *Paul* in his Compliance with them went not at all *beyond thoſe holy Bounds*. For he ſaith, That when he was as without Law to them that were without Law, yet he was not therein *without Law to God, but under the Law to Chriſt*, ver. 21. It's true, the falſe Apoſtles or their Proſelytes, did report of St. *Paul* (and it's like it was from his Compliance for the Goſpel ſake that they did ſo) *that he ſhould ſay, Let us do evil that good may come*, but St. *Paul* rejected it as a *ſlanderous Report* of them whoſe Damnation is juſt, *Rom*. iii. 8. They really did it themſelves, but would have faſtened it upon him.

St. *Paul*'s being as without Law to the Gentiles which were without the Law of *Moſes*, was but his *encouraging* and *ſtrengthning* them in that Opinion, that there was no need that the Believing Gentiles ſhould be circumciſed or keep the Law of *Moſes*, as ſome would have had them: *And he blamed Peter as not walking uprightly according to the Truth of the Goſpel, when he did otherwiſe, and compelled the Gentiles to live as did the Jews*, Gal. ii. 14.

And then as for St. *Paul*'s becoming as a Jew to the Jews, that he might gain the Jews; it's true, when he ſaw that his indulging the uſe of the Jewiſh Rites only among the Jews, as things *lawful* but not *neceſſary*, would farther the Succeſs of the Goſpel in propagating the Chriſtian Religion among them, he *yielded* to them therein, as in *Acts* xxi. And for the ſame cauſe circumciſed *Timothy*: For his Mother being a Jeweſs, and St. *Paul* having a mind to have him go forth with him in the Work of the Goſpel, he took and circumciſed him becauſe of the Jews which were in thoſe quarters, who otherwiſe would probably have oppoſed that Undertaking, or at leaſt would not have accepted of his Service, *Acts* xvi. 3.

But the falſe Apoſtles to *pacifie* and to *gratifie* the Jews who raiſed Perſecution againſt St. *Paul*, and others, for taking in the Believing Gentiles into an Equality with the Believing Jews, without being circumciſed, did teach that it was *neceſſary* that the Believing Gentiles ſhould be circumciſed, and obſerve the Law of *Moſes*, and that they could not be ſaved without it, as I ſhewed before And in this St. *Paul* was ſo far from complying with the Jews, as the falſe Apoſtles did, that he ſtrenuouſly *oppoſed* them in it, teſtifying to thoſe believing Gentiles that were in this enſnared by the falſe Apoſtles, or in great danger of being ſo, ſaying, *Behold, I Paul ſay unto you, that if ye be circumciſed, Chriſt ſhall profit you nothing*, Gal. v. 2. And again, ver. 4. *Chriſt is become of none effect unto you, whoſoever of you are juſtified by the Law, ye are fallen from Grace.* And therefore when ſome of theſe *falſe Brethren were privily and unawares brought in to ſpie out the liberty* which was uſed in owning and receiving the Gentiles without Circumciſion, and to try if they could bring them into *Bondage* by procuring *Titus*, who was a *Greek*, to be circumciſed; St. *Paul* ſaith, *That to thoſe they did not give place no not for an hour, that the Truth of the Goſpel might continue with them*, Gal. ii. 3, 4, 5. Implying plainly, that ſuch a Compliance with the Jews in yielding *Titus* a Gentile to be circumciſed, conſidering the *Circumſtances* under which the falſe Apoſtles urged the Circumciſion of the Gentiles, would have tended to a *corrupting* of the Goſpel in the Minds of the Chriſtians, and have miniſtred an *Advantage* to the falſe Apoſtles.

And now, I ſuppoſe, it appears that the Compliance with St. *Paul* with the Jews and Gentiles, differed as much both in the nature and end of it from the Compliance of the falſe Apoſtles, as Vice and Virtue differ. And that they did differ, the falſe Apoſtles underſtood well enough, and therefore hated St. *Paul* and the ſincere Chriſtians as their Oppoſites, and joined with their Perſecutors in perſecuting of them; ſtill the more to ingratiate themſelves with them. Theſe were of thoſe, as I ſuppoſe, that St. *Paul* ſaid, *preached Chriſt of Envy and Strife, of Contention, and not ſincerely, ſuppoſing to add Affliction to his Bonds*, *Phil.* i. 15, 16. Of theſe it was, as I apprehend by the Scope of the place, that St. *Paul* ſaid; *But as then he that was born after the Fleſh, perſecuted him that was born after the Spirit, even ſo it is now*, Gal. iv. 29. Of theſe St. *John* ſpeaks, as I take it, when he ſaith, *He that ſaith he is in the Light, and hateth his Brother, is in Darkneſs until now*, 1 John ii. 9. and cautions the Brethren that they *be not as Cain*, as ſome falſe Chriſtians were, *who ſlew his Brother becauſe his own Works were evil and his Brother's righteous*, 1 John iii. 12.

§ X. Having ſhewed how the Chriſtian Religion was corrupted by the falſe Apoſtles on purpoſe to promote their ſecular deſign, I might now ſhew yet a little farther, how lamentably the Apoſtolical Churches were in a little time over-run with it, and many of the Members thereof ſowred with this Leaven, as St. *Paul* feared they would, when he ſaid in reference to thoſe Corrupters, *A little Leaven leaveneth the whole lump, and wiſh that they were cut off that troubled the Church*, Gal. v. 7, 8, 9. Probably this their being neither directly and wholly Chriſtian, nor Jew, nor Pagan, but a Mixture of all, to keep fair quarter with all, was the Crime of the Church of *Laodicea*, in being *neither hot nor cold*, neither Fiſh nor Fleſh, as we ſay, neither Chriſtian, Jew, nor Pagan, but a Compoſition of all together, and yet thought themſelves in a brave Condition, *rich and increaſed in Goods and had need of nothing*. Juſt as ſome of thoſe in the Church of *Corinth* upon the ſame account thought themſelves to be, as St. *Paul* repreſents it in 1 Cor. iv. 8. *Now ye are full, now ye are rich, ye have reigned as Kings without us.* They applauded themſelves in that they had found out, as they thought, a wiſer way of being Chriſtians, than the Apoſtles and others had done: For they, as they thought, could hold the Faith of the Goſpel, and their worldly Enjoyments too. Whereas others which they thought more imprudent in profeſſing the Goſpel, expoſed themſelves to the ſpoiling of their Goods, and the loſs of all things. To ſuch as theſe it was, I conceive, that St. *Paul* ſaith thus, in 1 *Cor.* iii. 18. *Let no Man deceive himſelf*

If any Man among you ſeemeth to be wiſe in this World, (mark that, wiſe in this World) *let him become a fool, that he may be wiſe:* That is, let him become ſuch a Chriſtian as thoſe, who by a faithful and cloſe adherence to the Doctrine and Precepts of the Goſpel, expoſed themſelves to the loſs of all in this World, and were counted Fools for ſo doing by the falſe Apoſtles and their Adherents; that he may be wiſe to purpoſe, wiſe for the World to come. So here in *Rev.* iii. 18. Chriſt in oppoſition to this carnal Conceit of the *Laodiceans* of their being *Rich*, counſels them to *buy of him Gold tryed in the Fire, that they might be Rich* indeed, and not in conceit only: That is, as I conceive, that they would not *ſhrink at the fiery Tryal*, as St. *Peter* calls it, which his faithful Followers patiently endured for his ſake, and which being endured would make them ſpiritually *Rich* indeed, *Rich* in the experimental Knowledge and Proof of their own Sincerity and Fidelity to Chriſt; and thereupon *rich* in their aſſurance of their Title to the Reward promiſed to thoſe that overcome; and conſequently *Rich* alſo in that Conſolation, Peace and Joy, which ſuch a Knowledge and Experience would furniſh them withal, far beyond all Mens Worldly Enjoyments could afford them when preſerved with their faultering and double dealing with Chriſt in their Profeſſion of his Religion. *For as the Sufferings of Chriſt abounded* in his faithful Followers, *ſo their Conſolation alſo abounded by him*, as thoſe who experienced it did teſtifie, 2 *Cor.* i. 5. Who therefore *gloried in Tribulations* of that kind, *Rom.* v. 3. And therefore well might St. *Peter* ſay, that this *Tryal of Faith*, this Proof of the goodneſs of Faith, this Spiritual Gold, by enduring the Fire, *is much more precious than that of Gold that periſheth, though it be tried with Fire*, 1 Pet. i. 7. And proportionably they are much more *Rich* that have abundance of that, than they that have abundance of this.

All this ſerves to demonſtrate the Wiſdom and Goodneſs of that Counſel of Chriſt to the *Laodiceans*, to *buy of him Gold tried in the Fire*, that they might be *Rich*; and not to decline doing ſo, that they might retain their Worldly Riches. And ſo doth that of buying of him *white Raiment to cover the ſhame of their Nakedneſs*. By which I underſtand ſuch an outward Converſation in Divine Worſhip and Manners, as is called by St. *James* a being *unſpotted of the World*, and as is oppoſed to ſuch an one as is deſcribed by *Garments ſpotted by the Fleſh*, in St. *Jude*, of which ſome profeſſing Chriſtianity were guilty by their Compliances with the Heathen in their evil Cuſtoms, to curry their Favours, as well as to gratifie their own Luſts. The other part of our Lord's Counſel to them was, to *anoint their Eyes with Eye-ſalve that they might ſee*; that is, make a right Judgment of the Nature of Chriſtianity, and *ſee* things *a-far off* in the other World, to govern themſelves by their Concernment in thoſe things, and not ſtill remain like thoſe who *are blind, and cannot ſee afar off*, as St. *Peter* deſcribes them, 2 *Pet.* i. 9. but govern themſelves only by the ſenſe they have of preſent things, nigh unto them and juſt before them, as brute Beaſts do, to which they are compared in that reſpect, when it's ſaid, *In what they know naturally as brute Beaſts, in thoſe things they corrupt themſelves*, Jude ver. 10. And by underſtanding the meaning of this Counſel of Chriſt to them, we may underſtand the Nature of their Diſeaſe to which this Counſel was applied by way of Remedy. Their great Diſtemper lay in two things: Firſt, in their *carnal Compliance* for fear of ſuffering; by reaſon of which Compliance they were neither hot nor cold, neither thorow Chriſtians, nor thorow Pagans, nor Jews, as I ſaid, but like *Ephraim* of old, *a Cake half baked, or a ſpeckled Bird* of ſeveral Colours, to which *Iſrael* was compared in their declined Condition. Secondly, in *applauding* themſelves in that they had by this means found out a way of being good Chriſtians, as they thought, without expoſing themſelves to ſuffering for it, and as if they had been in a happier Condition than others that had not done ſo: Whenas by that means, and for that very Reaſon, *they were miſerable, and poor, and blind, and naked*, and loathſome to Chriſt, and ready to be *ſpewed out of his mouth*; far from ſuch a happy Condition as they fancied themſelves to be in.

This alſo, probably, was the Condition of the Church of *Sardis*, Rev. iii. 1. except *the few Names in it that had not defiled their Garments* with thoſe Pollutions into which the falſe Teachers had enticed others. For though they had a *Name to live*, from that Profeſſion of the Goſpel which they made, yet were in a manner *dead*, by degenerating and going back again in part into *Gentiliſm* or *Judaiſm*, from which they had been delivered.

The *loſs of firſt Love* in the Church of *Epheſus* alſo, as it's very likely, befel them by the deceiving of the falſe Teachers we ſpeak of, that drove a Worldly Deſign in profeſſing the Goſpel, ſo as that it might not be too coſtly to them. This St. *Paul* had foretold, when he ſaid to the Elders of that Church, in *Acts* xx. 29, 30. *I know this, that* *after my departure ſhall grievous Wolves enter in among you, not ſparing the Flock: Alſo of your own ſelves ſhall Men ariſe, ſpeaking perverſe things, to draw away Diſciples after them.* And he admoniſhed them in his Epiſtle to them, Chap. iv. 14. *That they would be no more Children toſſed to and fro, and carried about with every wind of Doctrine, by the ſlight of Men and cunning Craftineſs, whereby they lay in wait to deceive.* And again, Chap. v. 6. *Let no Man deceive you with vain words*, &c. Meaning doubtleſs in all this, to arm them againſt, and take them off from the Inſinuations and Temptations of falſe Teachers, to draw them into ſinful Compliances to eſcape Perſecution.

Another hint of this Nature we have in the cloſe of his Epiſtle to them, Chap. vi. 24. where he ſaith, *Grace be with all them that love our Lord Jeſus Chriſt in ſincerity*, or with *incorruption*, as it is in the Margin: That is, without *mixing* his Religion with any thing foreign to it, or inconſiſtent with it, for worldly Ends, as ſome had done.

Our Saviour in *Rev.* ii. 3. commends them for that at firſt they *had born and had patience to ſuffer, and for his Name's ſake had laboured and had not fainted.* But then in Ver. 5. he calls upon them to *remember from whence they were fallen, and to repent and do their firſt works.* They were now fallen from that Love and Zeal for Chriſt, which at firſt they manifeſted to him in ſuffering for him, called here their *firſt Love*, which now they *had loſt*; and had now found out an eaſier way, but withal an impurer way of owning Chriſt and profeſſing his Goſpel. Which Change he admoniſheth them to repent of, and to return to their firſt Love and Zeal in keeping cloſe to the Truth and Purity of the Chriſtian Religion, whatever the Iſſue of it might be as to this World's Concerns: For theſe were their *firſt Works*, as appears by what was ſaid before of them in the third Verſe. And thoſe Chriſtians that kept to this whatever it coſt them, were ſuch as were ſaid to be *Virgins, Virgin Chriſtians*, that had not violated their Chaſtity to Chriſt, but *followed the Lamb* only *whitherſoever he went*, though he led them through Fire and Water, *Rev.* xiv. 3.

I the rather think that corrupt Compliances through fear of Suffering, were the faults of thoſe Five of theſe Seven Churches which came under reproof; becauſe that, for which the other Two of *Smyrna* and *Philadelphia* are commended, and not cenſured at all, was their Courage for, and Conſtancy in the Truth of the Goſpel, in the midſt of Danger, Impoveriſhing and Trouble, becauſe of it. *Rev.* ii. 9, 10. *I know thy Works, and Tribulation, and Poverty, but thou art Rich. Fear none of thoſe things which thou ſhalt ſuffer.* Rev. iii. 8, 10. *Thou haſt a little ſtrength, and haſt kept my Word, and haſt not denied my Name. Becauſe thou haſt kept the Word of my Patience, I alſo will keep thee from the hour of Temptation that ſhall come upon all the World to try them.* Beſides, the Promiſe in the cloſe of every one of the Seven Epiſtles, made *to him that overcometh*, together with the other Subject-matters of them, argues that the being overcome and prevailed with to do unworthily through fear of Suffering, was the Sin of ſome, and the Temptation dangerous to all of them.

§ XI. 2. Having ſhewed you how the falſe Apoſtles carried on their Deſign of ſecuring their Worldly Concerns in their Profeſſion of the Chriſtian Religion, by corrupting it: I ſhall now come to ſhew how they did it under a *ſhow and pretence* of Religion; which was the laſt thing I propoſed to inſiſt on concerning them and their ill deſign. This courſe taken by them, of ſetting off what they did herein with a ſhew and pretence of being very Religious in it, was nothing but what our Saviour had foretold would come to paſs, premoniſhing his Diſciples to take heed of being deceived hereby, when he ſaid, *Beware of falſe Prophets which come to you in Sheeps Cloathing, but inwardly they are ravening Wolves*, Matth. vii. 15. They could not carry on their deſign alone, without making a Party among them that profeſſed the Goſpel, nor that but under a Religious Pretence. And a Party they did make to joyn with them in it, by ſuch means as I ſhall now briefly inſtance in.

1. They did it by obtaining the *Reputation* among many, of being the *Miniſters of Chriſt*, yea, perhaps of being the *Apoſtles of Chriſt*, which indeed ſome of them pretended themſelves to be. Which was of great advantage to them; it being no hard matter for them to corrupt thoſe with whom they obtained ſuch a Reputation, and to draw them in to ſide with them in their deſign. For when once the People came to eſteem them the Miniſters and Meſſengers of Chriſt, as well as St. *Paul* and other Apoſtles; the falſe Apoſtles then came to have a great advantage thereby of drawing them off from thoſe that were the Miniſters of Chriſt indeed, and of bringing them under their own Conduct; becauſe their Doctrine tended to ſecure them from that Perſecution and loſs of

Worldly Enjoyments, which the Doctrine of the true Apoſtles, when followed, expoſed them to. And if the People could be brought to give as much credit to the Doctrine of the falſe Apoſtles as to that of the true, as they muſt if they believed them to be true Apoſtles, though they were not: Then they could be in no doubt which to follow, for they would then certainly follow them, who, as they believed, taught them how to keep this World, and yet obtain that which is to come too, rather than them who taught them to run almoſt a certain hazard of this, that they might obtain the next. And it was becauſe of this advantage, that they had the Perſons of the falſe Apoſtles in Admiration, *Jude* xvi. Now that they pretended themſelves to be the Miniſters of Chriſt, and not only ſo, but that they were eſteemed ſo to be by a Party, appears by that of St. *Paul*, where he ſaith in his own Vindication thus: *Are they Miniſters of Chriſt? I am more*, 2 Cor. xi. 23. They preached Chriſt indeed, as St. *Paul* ſaith; but it was of *Envy, Strife, and Contention, not ſincerely, ſuppoſing to add Affliction to my Bonds*, Phil. i. 15, 16. They envied him the Honour and Reſpect he had among the Chriſtians, by preaching Chriſt and Salvation by him to them; and ſo they preached Chriſt and Salvation by him too; but yet in a way of Oppoſition to St. *Paul*, by preaching Chriſt *inſincerely*, *mixing* other things with his Doctrine, that were more gratifying to the Fleſh, and thereby drawing off the Reſpect of the Chriſtians from St. *Paul* to themſelves, which if effected, muſt needs add Affliction to his Bonds. *They zealouſly affect you, but not well*, ſaith St. *Paul*, *yea they would exclude us that you might affect them*, Gal. iv. 17.

And that they might not be thought inferiour to the Apoſtles of Chriſt, who were extraordinarily ſent, and of a higher ſtanding than any other in the Evangelical Miniſtry; they alſo, ſome of them, pretended themſelves to be the *Apoſtles of Chriſt*, that they might put the more glorious colour upon their Deſign and Arts of deceiving. *Such are falſe Apoſtles, deceitful Workers*, ſaith St. *Paul*, *transforming themſelves into the Apoſtles of Chriſt*, 2 Cor. xi. 13. Nay, it ſhould ſeem ſome of them did not only pretend to an Equality with St. *Paul*, but alſo to a more unqueſtionable Apoſtolick Authority than was in him. For they called St. *Paul*'s Apoſtleſhip into queſtion, and ſought to undermine the Reputation of his Apoſtolical Authority. Upon this account, and for this cauſe it was, that St. *Paul* was conſtrained to vindicate his Apoſtleſhip to the *Corinthians*, as he did in 1 *Ep. Chap.* ix. *ver.* 1, 2. *Am I not an Apoſtle? Am I not free? Have not I ſeen the Lord? Are not you my Work in the Lord? If I be not an Apoſtle to others, yet doubtleſs I am to you, for the Seal of my Apoſtleſhip are ye in the Lord.* See farther for this, 2 *Cor.* x. 8. & xi. 5. & xii. 11, 12. & xiii. 3, 6. They inſinuated that St. *Paul* had not *ſeen Chriſt*, as thoſe that were truly his Apoſtles had, and that he had received the Goſpel which he preached, but *from Men* and not immediately from Chriſt, and that therefore he might be miſtaken. In Oppoſition to which, it was that St. *Paul* ſaid; *I certifie you Brethren, that the Goſpel which was preached of me, is not after Man: For I neither received it of Men, neither was I taught it, but by the Revelation of Jeſus Chriſt*, Gal. i. 11, 12.

But though too many were ſo weak as to be deceived with theſe Mens great ſwelling words, yet there were others that were too wiſe to be impoſed upon by their Pretenſions to Apoſtleſhip. And ſuch were thoſe of the Church of *Epheſus* for a while at leaſt, till they fell from their firſt Love. *Thou haſt tried them which ſay they are Apoſtles, and are not, and haſt found them Liars*, ſaith Chriſt to the Angel of that Church, *Rev.* ii. 2. As for ſuch as were deceived and did take them to be what they pretended themſelves to be, Apoſtles; and upon that account could give as much Credit to what they ſaid, as to what St. *Paul* ſaid: It was no marvel if they thought themſelves in a better condition by their coming among them, than they had been in by following St. *Paul*; inaſmuch as they taught them an eaſier and cheaper way of being Chriſtians, than he had done, as I have often ſaid. And that they did think themſelves in a happier condition, appears by that Repreſentation of their Thoughts which St. *Paul* made when he ſaid, *Now ye are rich, now ye are full, ye have reigned as Kings without us*, 1 Cor. iv. 10.

§ XII. 2. And to gain yet the more Credit among the Chriſtians, whom they laboured thereby to ſeduce, they pretended to *promote the ends of* the Goſpel, *Holineſs and Righteouſneſs*, in what they did and taught. For the Goſpel is ſo expreſs for theſe, that the Profeſſors of it could hardly be cheated and corrupted in their Profeſſion of it, but under a pretence of promoting theſe. And therefore there is no queſtion but that theſe falſe Apoſtles talked as high for Holineſs and Righteouſneſs, and made as great a noiſe about it in ſound of Words and name of the thing in general Terms (as Seducers uſe to do) as the true Apoſtles themſelves. And therefore St. *Paul* ſaith, *That they transformed themſelves as the Miniſters of Righteouſneſs*, 2 Cor. xi. 15. They were for *a Form of Godli-*

neſs in Profeſſion, though they *denied it in the Power* and Practice of it, 2 *Tim.* iii. 5. They *were Wells and Clouds without Water*, as St. *Peter* and St. *Jude* deſcribe them: They in Profeſſion promiſed the Furtherance of Religion and Vertue, as Wells promiſe Water and Clouds Rain: But they were but as empty and deceitful Wells and Clouds in this.

Nay, they did not only pretend to Holineſs and Righteouſneſs as well as the true Apoſtles, but they pretended to *more Strictneſs* in ſome things than the Apoſtles themſelves. They pretended to go farther in Mortification and Self-denial, than the Apoſtles did in impoſing upon themſelves and others Abſtinence from ſome Meats, and from Marriage: *Forbidding them to marry and commanding them to abſtain from ſome Meats*, was part of the Doctrine of theſe ſeducing Spirits, 1 *Tim.* iv. 18. *Touch not*, *taſt not*, *handle not*, ſaid they: *Which things*, ſaith St. *Paul*, *have indeed a ſhew of Wiſdom in Will-Worſhip and Humility, and neglecting of the Body, not in any Honour to the ſatisfying of the Fleſh*, Col. ii. 21, 23. They pretended that St. *Paul* and ſuch as he, walked but according to the Fleſh, in compariſon of themſelves who lived a more abſtemious and mortified Life, as they would have others to think.

I think to be bold, ſaith St. *Paul*, *againſt ſome, who think of us as if we walked according to the Fleſh*, 2 Cor. x. 2. *Let no Man judge you*, ſaith he, *in Meat or in Drink, or in reſpect of an Holy Day, or of the New Moon, or of the Sabbath Days*, Col. ii. 16. They were for judging the Chriſtians that followed St. *Paul*, as not ſo tender and conſcientious about theſe things, as they themſelves pretended to be. For that we ſee hath been and indeed ſtill is the manner of Seducers, to pretend to great Strictneſs in ſome little things which are not neceſſary in themſelves; thereby to gain a great Reputation among People of weak Minds, for Holineſs, Mortification and Strictneſs of living, when in the mean time they are deeply culpable in other things of moment, in the Eyes of thoſe of more diſcerning Spirits. Like the Phariſees, who were for tithing Mint, Aniſe and Cummin, and for divers Waſhings, when they omitted and paſſed over the weightier Matters of the Laws, *Judgment*, *Mercy, and the Love of God*; *yea and made void the Commandments of God, that they might eſtabliſh their own Traditions.*

By reaſon of theſe and other like Pretenſions, they came at laſt to Separation it ſelf, and withdrew themſelves from Communion with the Orthodox Chriſtians, as if they had not been ſpiritual enough for their Communion. *They went out from us*, ſaith St. *John*, 1 John ii. 19. *Theſe are they who ſeparate themſelves, ſenſual, not having the Spirit*, ſaith St. *Jude*, ver. 19. And yet in this ſtate of Separation, they were ſo far from becoming a more pure and ſpiritual Community, as that they were indeed the *Synagogue of Satan*, as they are ſtiled, *Rev.* ii. 9. as being moſt impure, both in Principle and Practice; and were really *Spots* in the Chriſtian Feaſts of Charity, before they ſeparated, *Jude* xii. And therefore it ſeems ſomewhat ſtrange that they ſhould fanſie themſelves to be more ſpiritual than the Orthodox Chriſtians. But it ſeems they eſteemed themſelves more knowing than others in Evangelical Myſteries, and valued themſelves by that Knowledge, and ſo came to arrogate to themſelves the Title of *Gnoſticks*, or the *Knowing Men*. For they to reconcile that which was indeed their corrupting the Chriſtian Religion with that Religion it ſelf, would needs underſtand the Chriſtian Doctrine in a more myſtical Senſe than the Apoſtles and Orthodox Chriſtians did. By which, and by wreſting the Scriptures of the Old Teſtament to an undue Senſe, they *perverted the Goſpel of Chriſt*, making it another thing, *another Goſpel* (as St. *Paul* phraſeth it) than it was in it ſelf, *Gal.* i. 6. And by reaſon of theſe Myſtical Speculations (which they eſteemed for Divine Illuminations) they conceited themſelves to have Fellowſhip with God, even then, when in point of Practice they walked in ways of Darkneſs; as we may perceive by what St. *John* ſuggeſteth concerning them, when he ſaith, *If we ſay we have Fellowſhip with him*, God, *and walk in Darkneſs* (as they did) *we lie and do not the Truth*, 1 John i. 6. Which plainly intimates, that they grounded this Perſuaſion of their having Fellowſhip with God, upon ſomewhat abſtracted from a good and holy Life, (which is the proper end and uſe of Divine Knowledge, without which it will do them that have it no more good than it doth the Devils when they have it) and what could that be but an Opinion that their bare Knowledge and Belief of things, inveſted them with that Privilege? As too many in like manner now-a-days hope to enjoy Partnerſhip or Fellowſhip in the Righteouſneſs of Chriſt, meerly upon account of their Belief or Orthodox Opinion, though of impure Lives. And truly well might St. *Paul* ſay in reference to theſe *Gnoſticks*, and in this very reſpect; *If any Man think that he knoweth any thing* (and values himſelf by that Knowledge) *he knoweth nothing yet as he ought to know*, 1 Cor. viii. 2. Theſe myſtical and unintelligible Speculations, they called

Science, though falſly, as St. *Paul* ſaith: And theſe they oppoſed to the plain and intelligible Doctrine of the Apoſtles, (as the Quakers in like manner do theirs) in doing of which they erred from the Faith, as we are told in 1 *Tim.* vi. 20, 21,—*Avoiding profane and vain Babling, and Oppoſitions of Science, falſly ſo called: which ſome profeſſing, have erred concerning the Faith.*

Now when they had obtained a Reputation among ſimple People, of being the Miniſters of Chriſt, the Apoſtles of Chriſt, and of being for Holineſs and Righteouſneſs, and more ſtrict and abſtemious in ſome things than the true Apoſtles were, and more ſublime and ſpiritual: How eaſie a matter was it then for them to mould the poor ſimple and deluded People into what form they pleaſed, eſpecially in things that tended to their eaſe in the Fleſh?

And no doubt but as they pretended to Apoſtolical Authority, and to greater ſtrictneſs of Life in ſome things, than they would acknowledge in the holy Apoſtles themſelves: So they would pretend likewiſe that ſuch Compliances with the Jews on the one hand, and with the Gentiles on the other, as they adviſed to and practiſed, did tend to the *propagating* of the Chriſtian Religion; and that by ſuch Compliances they might *gain* upon their Neighbours and Friends to come more eaſily over to them in the acknowledgment of Chriſt and Profeſſion of the Chriſtian Religion. And therefore, as it ſeems, they taxed St. *Paul* with *imprudence* in Preaching the Goſpel, and managing his Miniſtry in ſo blunt a manner as they thought he did, to the exaſperating of all ſorts againſt him. For St. *Paul* repreſented the Thoughts that ſuch had of him, as had been corrupted by the falſe Apoſtles, when he ſaid, *We are fools for Chriſt's ſake, but ye are wiſe in Chriſt, i. e.* in profeſſing Chriſt or the Goſpel of Chriſt, 1 *Cor.* iv. 8. They thought it ſeems that he had not been ſo prudent in managing the Chriſtian Cauſe, as their new Teachers had taught them to be. For ſince they had met with thoſe wiſer methods, as they were taught to eſteem them to be, they had reigned as Kings, free from thoſe Diſturbances, Oppoſitions and Sufferings, which St. *Paul*'s way of profeſſing the Goſpel had expoſed them to. And thus *by good Words and fair Speeches they deceived the Hearts of the Simple, and cauſed Diviſions and Offences contrary to the Doctrine they had once learned*, Rom. xvi. 17, 18.

§ XIII. 3. When they had gained the Reputation aforeſaid among the ſimple and carnal-minded Profeſſors of the Goſpel, they could by virtue thereof eaſily incline them, without any great Scruple, to do any thing they would have them to procure fair quarter from the Unbelievers among whom they lived. And therefore to give themſelves and their ſeduced Adherents the greater liberty and eaſe in their Minds to do ſuch things as they did in proſecution of their Worldly Deſign, without any great Scruple, they broached among them the *Doctrine of Licentiouſneſs* under the notion of *Chriſtian Liberty: They turned the Grace of God into Laſciviouſneſs*, as St. *Jude* ſpeaks, *ver.* 4. Of theſe, and the courſe they took in this kind, St. *Peter* likewiſe ſpeaks thus, in 2 Pet. ii. 19. *While they promiſe them Liberty, they themſelves are the Servants of Corruption.*

By theſe and other Scriptures it ſhould ſeem, they ſpread ſome ſuch Doctrine as this: That the Grace of God in Chriſt was ſo *large*, that if Men did but believe in Chriſt, they were in no danger of Damnation, though they uſed a greater Liberty than ſuch as St. *Paul* would allow of. They thought, it ſeems, that *Faith without Works* would have ſaved them: A conceit which St. *James* oppoſed them in, ſaying, *What doth it profit, my Brethren, though a Man ſay he hath Faith, and hath not Works? Can Faith ſave him?* Jam. ii. 14. And St. *Paul* gives this Character of thoſe falſe Teachers who did reſiſt the Truth preached by the Apoſtles, juſt as *Jannes* and *Jambres* withſtood *Moſes*, *viz.* that they were *Men of corrupt Minds, reprobate concerning the Faith*, 2 Tim. iii. 8. They held and taught corrupt Notions concerning the Doctrine of being ſaved by Faith in Chriſt.

And when once they perſuaded the People to believe ſuch a Doctrine as tended to Liberty and Licentiouſneſs, and yet undertook to ſecure them of Salvation all the while, upon account of a Notional Faith in Chriſt; what would they ſtick at, and what would they not do, under the Notion of furthering and promoting the Chriſtian, the *Catholick Cauſe*, either to ſecure or procure their Worldly Enjoyments, and to gratifie their various Luſts? Many when they perceived that by the Doctrine of Faith in Chriſt, Men were *freed* from the Law of *Moſes*, in many of thoſe things which before Faith came, the Jews were bound to obſerve, they were willing to underſtand, that this Doctrine of the Faith of the Goſpel gave them a greater Latitude in other things alſo than indeed it did. And this Opinion, as we may well ſuppoſe, occaſioned ſuch Cautions as theſe:

Brethren, ye have been called unto Liberty, only uſe not Liberty as an occaſion to the Fleſh, Gal. v. 13. *As free, and not uſing your Liberty as a Cloak of Maliciouſneſs*, 1 Pet. ii. 16.

Nay, ſome it ſeems went ſo far as to think they might do things in their own nature evil, ſo long as they did them for good ends; *to ſin that Grace might abound:* And would have fathered this Opinion on the Apoſtles alſo, *Rom.* iii. 8. *As we be ſlanderouſly reported*, ſaith St. *Paul, and as ſome affirm that we ſay, let us do evil that good may come.*

From ſuch Libertine Doctrines as theſe falſe Apoſtles broached under the Notion of *Evangelical Privileges*; and to procure the more Converts to the Chriſtian Profeſſion, ſprang, as it is very probable, thoſe curſed Practices which turned to the Reproach of Chriſtianity, and to the hindrance of its Progreſs, of which we read in 2 *Ep.* of St. *Peter*, and in the *Ep.* of *Jude* and other places.

It's true they were not probably ſo bad at firſt as they were at laſt, but were led from one Error to another, till they arrived at laſt to monſtrous heights of Wickedneſs: As we have alſo ſeen ſome in our Days have done, who began but in Antinomianiſm at firſt; *Evil Men and Seducers*, ſaith St. *Paul*, (ſpeaking of thoſe falſe Teachers,) *ſhall wax worſe and worſe, deceiving and being deceived*, 2 Tim. iii. 13. 2 Theſſ. ii. 10, 11.

§ XIV. Shall I now need after all that I have ſaid touching the deſign the falſe Apoſtles drove and the manner how, to ſay any thing farther to unfold *the working of the Myſtery of Iniquity* in the Apoſtles Days? Seeing all upon the matter, which I have hitherto ſaid, tends, as I apprehend it, to ſhew what we are to underſtand by thoſe words of St. *Paul* in the 2 *Theſſ.* ii. 7. *For the Myſtery of Iniquity doth already work.* However take this farther account briefly; in a Myſtery there is one thing hid under another: So that the inward and more ſecret part, is hardly diſcernable but to conſidering Men. So it was here in the Buſineſs before us: The Worldly Deſign of the falſe Apoſtles and their corrupting the Chriſtian Religion to accompliſh it, were obſcured and hid under a Show and Profeſſion of Chriſtianity and Religious Pretences, as that the Goſpel did *allow* of what they did, and *ſtood in need* of ſome things they did, to promote it.

Before the Goſpel came, the Iniquity of the Gentiles, abominable Idolatries and groſs Impurities both in Worſhip and Manners, was openly profeſs'd and practis'd. But when the Goſpel by coming among them had prevailed againſt theſe things, *and had turned them from dumb Idols to ſerve the living God:* Then *Satan*, who as St. *Paul* ſaith, *can transform himſelf into an Angel of Light*, did by his Miniſters labour to corrupt and *entangle again, thoſe who were once clean eſcaped from them who lived in Errour*, the Errour of Gentiliſm: But not ſo as to profeſs Gentiliſm again, but under a *Show* of Chriſtianity to return to it in part. The Devil was too ſubtile to appear ſo openly as to tempt them to return to downright Gentiliſm again in the groſſeſt kind. For the Goſpel had come among them with ſuch Demonſtration and Power, by the Signs and Wonders, and mighty Deeds which did accompany it, and by that means had ſo triumph'd over the Religion of the Gentiles, that the Devil could have little hope of prevailing with them to return to downright Gentiliſm again, who had been but lately ſo convinced of the Truth and Excellency of the Chriſtian Religion, as to be brought to renounce Gentiliſm and to profeſs Chriſtianity. But he thought it beſt as the caſe ſtood, to go another way to work with them, and to put them upon corrupting the Chriſtian Profeſſion by degrees, by mixing ſomething of Gentiliſm with it under the Notion of being conſiſtent with it; yea as tending to promote it, by reconciling the Heathen to it by meeting them half way. And that wherewith the Devil, in Temptations of this kind, baited his Hook, was by inſinuating that by this means they might keep fair quarter with their Infidel Neighbours, render themſelves in ſome ſort Friends to the World, ſtave off Perſecution, and retain their Worldly Poſſeſſions, together with their Chriſtianity. This I apprehend to be the Myſtery of Iniquity, of which the Apoſtle ſpeaks, as then already working.

But when the Apoſtle ſaith, the Myſtery of Iniquity doth *already work*, referring to the time then *preſent*, he implies that the ſpreading and more eminent prevailing of it, was to be expected *afterwards* in time then to come: And to this agrees the Scope of the place as well as the form of words and manner of ſpeaking there uſed. For when he ſaith, *only he who now letteth will let, until he be taken out of the way*; it's evident that the more general ſpreading and prevailing of this Myſtery, was for the preſent hindred by that which in time would be removed, and that then it ſhould get up to its height. I will not undertake poſitively to determine who or what is meant by the *he* which the Apoſtle ſaith *now letteth*. But this I ſay, that if the falſe Apoſtles corrupting

ing the Chriſtian Religion for Worldly Advantage, under pretence of that Religion, was not a Myſtery of Iniquity, and ſuch a Myſtery of Iniquity as was then working, then I confeſs I cannot imagine what was. But if it were, then that which then hindred all ſuch as profeſs'd the Chriſtian Religion (as the corrupt Chriſtians did) from riſing to any conſiderable Greatneſs in the World, muſt in all probability be it which did then lett or hinder that myſterious Deſign, managed under pretence of that Profeſſion from coming to that growth which afterwards it came to, when that Impediment was removed out of the way. And what did or could ſo much hinder ſuch as profeſs'd Chriſtianity from riſing to Worldly Greatneſs, as the then Roman Power as *Heathen?* Which was ſo far from preferring Men for the Chriſtian Profeſſion ſake, that it did depreſs and keep them under upon that very account. And if that were it which did lett (and you ſee what reaſon there is to think it was) Then the firſt Biſhop of *Rome*, as Popiſh, and thoſe that ſucceeded him, (who when the Roman Power as Heathen was removed, and now become Chriſtian, did by advantage of that, and by corrupt Arts under Religious Pretences, riſe to that Greatneſs in the World, as to cauſe the World to wander after them) do fairly ſeem to be Prophetically pointed at by the Apoſtle, as thoſe which ſhould carry on the Myſtery of Iniquity to a greater height and prevalence, when that which hindred was taken out of the way, than it could reach to in the Apoſtles days.

But I need not lay the ſtreſs of proving the Authors of Popery to be the *Actors* of the *ſecond part* of the Myſtery of Iniquity, upon this Contexture of Scripture I have been beating upon: For the thing, I ſuppoſe, will appear evident enough of it ſelf, if there had been no ſuch thing written as what we have in 2 *Theſſ.* ii. For if they out of a Worldly Deſign have corrupted the Chriſtian Religion, under pretence of Religion, as the falſe Apoſtles did, then they muſt needs be found Workers of Iniquity in a Myſtery as well as they. And whether they have or no, comes next to be enquired into: Which brings me to the ſecond part of what I was to diſcourſe, and that is to *juſtifie my comparing* the Authors of Popery with the falſe Apoſtles, in managing a carnal and worldly Deſign in corrupting the Chriſtian Religion under pretence of practiſing and promoting it.

§ XV. To prepare my way to this, I ſhall premiſe for our better underſtanding, That tho' the Deſign and Practice of the falſe Apoſtles and the Authors of Popery, agree in the general Nature of them; yet they differ in ſome Circumſtances. But then that, wherein they do differ, does not tend to extenuate, but to aggravate the Iniquity of the Deſign of the Authors of Popery, and to render it more criminal than the ſame Deſign was, whiles, and as it was managed by the falſe Apoſtles. The falſe Apoſtles acting their part in times of open Oppoſition againſt Chriſtianity, and of Perſecution for ſo much as but confeſſing the Name of Chriſt, were under a ſore Temptation of doing what they did at the firſt, only to ſave their Lives, and to preſerve and get a Livelihood in the World. Whereas thoſe that gave the firſt riſe to Popery, taking their turn in the World in *Halcyon* Days and Peaceable Times, when Perſecution for confeſſing Chriſt was not only ceaſed, but then when the Profeſſion of Chriſtianity was grown into honourable Requeſt with High and Low, they were under no ſuch Temptation of doing what they did in the way of their Deſign, either to ſave their Lives or Livelihood, or to obtain an honourable Eſtate, becoming Biſhops of the Churches of Chriſt, being therein prevented by the Bounty of Chriſtian Emperors. But their Deſign and the Means uſed to effect it, was founded in an exceſſive Thirſt and exorbitant Deſire after Greatneſs and Worldly Domination, exceeding all Bounds of Moderation. And this difference renders the Iniquity of the Worldly Deſign in the falſe Apoſtles but little in compariſon of what it was in the Authors of Popery. *Solomon* ſaith, *Men do not deſpiſe a Thief, if he ſteal to ſatisfie his Soul when he is hungry*, Prov. vi. 30. They pity ſuch as through a kind of ſeeming neceſſity are drawn to do that which yet is no wiſe juſtifiable under ſuch a Circumſtance, when the ſame thing done by another under no ſuch Temptation, is look'd upon with Indignation.

To acquaint you then with the firſt *Riſe* of Popery, as founded in a Worldly Deſign, as at the firſt I acquainted you with the Riſe of the falſe Apoſtles, and their corrupting the Chriſtian Religion founded in a deſign for this World: I muſt firſt repreſent to you the ill uſe which ſome of the Biſhops made of that Peace and Proſperity which the Church of God at laſt came to enjoy, when the Emperors and Rulers of the World became Chriſtians themſelves, and employed their Power and Greatneſs to encourage and farther the Profeſſion and Practice of Chriſtianity. For when the Biſhops of the Churches came not only to be protected in the diſcharge of their Function by publick Authority, but alſo to be greatly honoured, and highly advanced for their Profeſſion and Function ſake; ſome of them were not able to ſtand under ſo great a weight of Honour as was caſt upon them, without being puff'd up and tranſported with Pride and Ambition. And this Pride and Ambition put them upon ſtriving and contending for Precedency, Preheminence, and Superiority of Juriſdiction, which ſettled at laſt in a Claim of *Supremacy*, made by the Biſhop of *Rome* in arrogating to himſelf the Title of *Univerſal Biſhop*, over all Biſhops and Churches in the World. And out of this pretended Headſhip grew by degrees, the whole Body of Popery, by which the Chriſtian Religion hath been corrupted.

This exorbitant Power, claimed by the Biſhop of *Rome*, could not be upheld and maintained without the Aſſiſtance of ſuch other Biſhops and Presbyters as were willing to own and defend this Headſhip. Nor could that be expected without their ſharing in the Worldly Advantages to be obtained thereby: Nor could that Grandeur which they deſigned for themſelves, be maintained without a ſuitable Revenue: Nor ſuch a Revenue be raiſed, had the plain, honeſt, and moderate Methods of Chriſtianity been obſerved in it. For if thoſe Methods could have been obſerved, and their turn ſerved thereby, they would never have been at the trouble of inventing and defending new ones.

That theſe ends deſigned therefore might be ſerved, certain *Additions* to, and *Corruptions* of the Scriptures and Chriſtian Religion, were pitch'd upon as the likelieſt means to obtain them: But yet to be managed ſo, as that the People might be perſuaded that thoſe *Additions* and *Corruptions* were either *parts* of Chriſtian Religion, or neceſſary *means* to promote it. And theſe *Additions* and *Corruptions* are the things which we call *Popery*, and not any other things though held and done by Papiſts, which yet are agreeable to the Scriptures, and which other Chriſtians hold and do as well as they. I do not ſay, nor indeed think that the firſt Authors and Beginners of Popery, had in Proſpect, or did practiſe all the Additions and Corruptions which afterward were found out by their Succeſſors, as neceſſary to ſecure and uphold the uſurped Power and Greatneſs. No more did their Predeceſſors the falſe Apoſtles begin with all the evil Devices which they were afterwards led to, to carry on their Deſign.

I ſhall now therefore come to inſtance in ſome of thoſe *Additions*, and to ſhew how they fall in with this Worldly Deſign projected by the Authors of Popery, and how like they look to what was deſigned and done by the falſe Apoſtles. It may be every one of thoſe Additions in difference between Proteſtants and Papiſts, may not directly tend to promote their Worldly Deſign, though many of them do *remotely*, which do not *immediately*: But yet that will afford them no relief though ſo it ſhould be: Becauſe when Men invent ſome Errors, for no other reaſon but becauſe they are ſerviceable to them in their carnal and corrupt Deſigns; it is not unuſual for God then to give up ſuch Men to other abſurd Opinions and Practices, though not ſerviceable to them in any ſuch way. *Becauſe they received not the Love of the Truth that they might be ſaved*, (but the Love of ſome Errors, inſtead and under pretence of Truth, that they might compaſs and bring about their Worldly Deſign) *therefore*, and for this cauſe, *God ſhall ſend them ſtrong Deluſions that they ſhould believe a Lye, that they all might be damned, who believed not the Truth, but had pleaſure in Unrighteouſneſs*, ſaith St. *Paul*, 2 *Theſſ* ii. 10, 11, 12.

I intend not to diſpute the ſeveral Points in difference between Papiſts and Proteſtants, or to prove them to be ſuch Additions and Corruptions as I term them to be: For that hath been done many a time over ſufficiently and abundantly already by reformed Authors. But methinks it ſhould go as far and ſignifie as much with the Popiſh *Laity*, if not much more, as a juſt and full Confutation of thoſe Additions as erroneous would do, when they ſhall come to ſee how they have been abuſed and impoſed upon by their *Leaders* and *Guides*, and made to believe and do ſuch things for the ſaving of their Souls, as have no ſuch Tendency, but the contrary: And by dancing after their Pipe have been made uſe of as Engines, meerly to work their ends and to ſerve their carnal Deſign by them: To ſqueeze and drain them to fill themſelves: Or as Men make uſe of Horſes to carry them out of the Dirt, and to eaſe themſelves by their Labour. Which puts me in mind of the *Woman that ſate upon the Beaſt, having upon her Forehead a Name written, Myſtery Babylon the great*, &c. Rev. xvii. 3, 5. All that I would deſire of the *Laity* is, that they would ſee with their own Eyes, and uſe their own reaſon in the things I ſhall now lay before them, and not ſuffer their *Clergy* to blow out the Candle, or to hoodwink them, while they play Tricks and pick their Pockets.

In giving Inſtances of the Popiſh Corruptions, by which the Deſign of Domination and Worldly Greatneſs hath been begun and carried on by the Romiſh Biſhops and their Seconds and Aſſiſtance, under a Religious Pretence, I ſhall begin with that which was laid as the Foundation of the Papal Fabrick.

§ XVI. Firſt then they would bear the World in hand that the Biſhops of *Rome* ſucceſſively, are St. *Peter*'s Succeſſors, and as ſuch are inveſted with a kind of Apoſtolical Authority, and their See the Apoſtolical See; and that as St. *Peter* was ſuperior to all Biſhops and Presbyters in Juriſdiction; ſo they, as his Succeſſors, are ſo too: Yea, that the Biſhop of *Rome*, for the time being, is Chriſt's Vicar on Earth, and viſible Head of the Church.

Which Claim of theirs puts me in mind of thoſe who *ſaid they were Apoſtles but were not, but were found Lyars*, Rev. ii. 2. And if it ſhall be affirmed that the Biſhops of *Rome* are Succeſſors of theſe in their Deſign and Pretence; they themſelves have given a more cogent Proof of it, than ever they did of being St. *Peter*'s Succeſſors in ſuch Headſhip and Power as they pretend to.

But as the falſe Apoſtles by pretending to be Apoſtles indeed, when they were nothing leſs, did procure to themſelves ſuch a Reputation with thoſe that were deluded by them, as did greatly advantage them in that Worldly Deſign which they undiſcernedly carried on under that pretence; juſt ſo have the Popes, by making their deluded Adherents believe that they are St. *Peter*'s Succeſſors, Chriſt's Vicars and Head of the Church, raiſed to themſelves ſuch a Reputation as is greatly advantageous to them alſo in the like but greater Worldly Deſign of theirs.

For as the Proſelytes of the falſe Apoſtles were by their deluſive Perſuaſion, made not only pliant, but even zealouſly active in ſerving them in their Deſign; ſo have the deluded Adherents of the Popes been in like manner, in ſerving them in theirs. Into what Mould may not ſuch Men caſt the People, when they have inſinuated themſelves into their Opinion, to be ſuch marvellous Men as they pretend themſelves to be? The *Galatians* though after the falſe Apoſtles had corrupted them, began to look upon St. *Paul* with a jealous Eye, as if he had been their Enemy, by expoſing them to that Trouble in profeſſing the Goſpel, which the other taught them how to avoid: Yet ſo long as they retained that Veneration for him which ſometime they had while they eſteemed him the undoubted Apoſtle of Chriſt; *they could if it had been poſſible, have pluckt out their very Eyes to have given him*, as he ſaith, *Gal.* iv. 15, 16. And when the falſe Apoſtles were taken for true ones, they had ſuch an Intereſt in the deluded People thereby, as that they did even what they would with them. Which made St. *Paul* ſay, *Ye ſuffer if a Man bring you into Bondage, if a Man devour you, if a Man take of you, if a Man exalt himſelf*, 2 Cor. xi. 20. Words doubtleſs applicable to the Popiſh *Laity* upon as great Reaſon, as ever they were to the deluded *Corinthians*: So great is the Power of falſe Opinion, when Men, whether falſe Apoſtles or Popes, are taken to be what they leaſt are.

Beſides, as this lofty Claim and high Pretence of *Supremacy and Headſhip* over the whole Chriſtian World, prepared the Popes way for commanding and doing what he pleaſed among them that received and owned him in that Capacity: So it was the direct road to the higheſt pitch of Vain-glory; that is, of being eſteemed and honoured for what he is not; ſince all Men are wont to proportion the Honour they give to Men, according to what they eſteem them to be. And Honey is not ſweeter to the Mouth, than Honour and Glory is to ambitious Minds. And therefore if *Diotrephes loved to have the preheminence*, and the falſe Apoſtles thought it a Prize worth ſtriving for, to be counted the Head of a ſmall Party, when but low and kept under in the World; how was his Holineſs's Fancy tickled, may we think, with the Contemplation of being *Univerſal Head* of the whole Chriſtian World! And what would not ambitious Men give or do for ſuch a Purchaſe, and to keep it when they have it? *Simon Magus* we know would have purchaſed the Power of working Miracles as the Apoſtles did, with Money: But for what end? But that he might not be out-done by the Apoſtles, and ſo loſe that high Eſteem he had among the People whom he had deceived with his Magick, as if he had been *the great Power of God*, even as the Popes have done by their Arts. I appeal to the Papiſts themſelves: Is it not apparent that Honour from Men was a great part of the Prize for which the Biſhop of *Rome* ran, when he firſt laid his Deſign for Univerſal Biſhop, and to bring all others under him? And hath it not been a ſweet Morſel to his Succeſſors for the time being, to be adored by the People as St. *Peter*'s Succeſſor, as Chriſt's Vicar and viſible Head of his Church, and to be ſaluted with the Appellation of *The moſt Holy Lord the Pope*, and to have Kings do homage and kneel to them, yea, and to kiſs their very Feet? That Pope underſtood well enough what he ſaid, *What need of the Net when the Fiſh is caught?* Certainly this ſeeking and receiving Honour from Men at this rate by the Popes, hath been no very good Argument to prove themſelves St. *Peter*'s Succeſſors, who was ſo ſhy, as we know, of being worſhipped by *Cornelius*, and of receiving too much Honour from Men when he had wrought a Miracle indeed: For he ſaid, *Ye Men of Iſrael, why marvel ye at this? or why look ye ſo earneſtly on us, as though we by our own Power or Holineſs had done this?* Acts iii. 12.

Unity in Religion indeed hath been pretended as the Reaſon of the Neceſſity of ſuch an univerſal viſible Headſhip as the Biſhops of *Rome* have claimed: But *Unity* of *Conſent*, and Endeavour in the People to *honour* them as ſuch, and to maintain them in that Magnificence which hath followed that Pretence and Claim, hath doubtleſs been at the bottom, when the other hath been at the top; as is viſible in the Effects of it. If this were not ſo, they would never ſo patiently endure thoſe many Differences and bitter Conteſts about Religion as they do, which are among the ſeveral Orders of Men under their Government, provided they do but all agree in owning the Pope, and his Claim of Succeſſion, Supremacy, and Univerſal Headſhip: Whereas let any but whiſper any thing againſt this, and he ſhall quickly find a watchful Eye over him, and a heavy Hand upon him. So that 'tis *Self-intereſt* which is the White aimed at, that ſtill governs in the uſe of what Power and Preheminence is obtained, though other things, to cover the Deſign, are pretended.

§ XVII. 2. Another of their Corruptions, is a pretence to an *Infallibility* in the Popes, in their *Decrees*, *Canons*, *Conſtitutions* and *Determinations*, derived from St. *Peter*, by virtue of their ſucceeding him. Not that it can be reaſonably thought that they can in earneſt believe any ſuch thing concerning themſelves: For ſeveral things uttered and done by them, or ſome of them, have bewrayed their own Miſgivings as to this, as I could ſhew: However they think fit to ſet a good face on't outwardly to the World, as being a thing neceſſary and uſeful for the carrying on of their Worldly Deſign. For by perſuading the People to believe ſuch a thing concerning them, they get a great advantage to make them become perfectly their *Creatures*. For if the People be made to believe that the Popes are infallible, and cannot err in the things aforeſaid, then they can have no pretence to diſpute any thing impoſed upon them by them, but according to their own Belief muſt become perfectly Vaſſals, and yield abſolute Obedience to them: A thing, than which what could be more cunningly contrived by the Popes and their Confederates, to ſerve their Ends upon the People?

§ XVIII. 3. And becauſe ſeveral Religious Orders of Men were thought as neceſſary to ſupport this Eccleſiaſtical Monarchy, as the *Janizaries* and *Baſſa's* are to ſupport the *Turkiſh*; therefore ſome things likewiſe were thought neceſſary to procure *Reverence* and *Reſpect* to the Pope's Dependants in their ſeveral Orders and Degrees, to the end the People might ſtand the more in awe of them, and be the more ready to yield Obedience to them in Execution of the ſeveral Offices and Orders they have received from the Pope their Head. One of which is a power of *Abſolution* and *Forgiveneſs* of Sins, veſted in their Prieſts. Another is a power of making a God for the People to worſhip, by Tranſubſtantiating the Bread and Wine in the Sacrament, into the Real Body and Blood of Chriſt: And who would not be glad of the favour of ſuch wonderful Men, and do any thing to pleaſe them? And by *Auricular Confeſſion* to a Prieſt, another of their Corruptions, they lay the People under their Mercy, being thereby Maſters of their Secrets, beſides the advantage of giving intelligence in ſpecial Caſes, which muſt needs keep them in a continual Awe of them. And by their receiving the Sacrament in both kinds, when the *Laity* are ſuffer'd to receive it but in one, (another of their Corruptions) a great and ſacred Difference forſooth is put between the *Clergy* and *Laity*. And beſides, the effect of the Peoples publick Devotions is made to depend upon the *Intention* of the Prieſt, another Corruption; and therefore no need of having their Divine Service in the *Vulgar Tongue*, another Corruption likewiſe added to that: All ſtill tending to make the People the more *dependant* upon the Clergy, and the more *governable* by them in all things, while they live, and to be in the better diſpoſition to be directed and prevailed upon by them in diſpoſing of a good part of their Eſtates to the uſe of the Church, when they die.

§ XIX. 4. Although the Scripture ſaith, *That every one ſhall bear his own Burthen, and give an account of himſelf to God:* And tho' Chriſt hath ſaid, *Search the Scriptures*, and the *Bereans* for doing ſo were highly commended; yet in contradiction hereto, the Doctrine of *implicit Faith* is ſet on foot; by which Men are taught to *believe as the Church believes*, *i. e.* as their Prieſts believe, they believing what the Pope, or the Pope and a General Council of their own, have defined for matter of Faith: And this alſo is one of their Corruptions; and the *forbidding the Laity to read the Scrip-*

tures without Licenſe from their Biſhop, is another; and ſo is their Tenet that *Ignorance is the Mother of Devotion*. And what is their end in theſe things? *Unity in the Faith*, and to *keep People from running into Hereſie*, is pretended: (And is not putting out a Man's own Eyes, that he may be led by another, a good Expedient not to miſs his way?) But their End is to *ſecure* their corrupt Principles and fraudulent Arts from being *enquired* into by the People; and that the *Laity* may depend upon them as infallible Oracles, even in thoſe things which are impoſed upon them under one Religious Pretence or other, when in truth it is but to ſerve the Pope and his Clergy's Intereſt, and to work their ends upon them undiſcovered. It is that the People might intirely and tamely reſign up themſelves to them, and be wholly at their diſpoſe in what they would have them believe and do, though otherwiſe it ſhould ſeem to them never ſo unreaſonable. And therefore *Bellarmine* (*de Rom. pontif. l.* 4. *c.* 5. *fin.*) was not aſhamed to affirm, *That if the Pope ſhould err in forbidding Virtues, and commanding Vices, yet the Church were bound to believe Vices to be good, and Virtues bad, unleſs ſhe ſhould ſin againſt Conſcience. But when the Blind that are led, and the Blind that lead, are both in the Ditch*, it is not their ſaying they were led thither, will help them out.

§ XX. 5. Farthermore, although Chriſt upon occaſion of the two Diſciples deſiring of him that they might ſit, the one on his right hand, and the other on his left, in that Temporal Kingdom they fancied he was to have, ſaid to St. *Peter* and all the Apoſtles, *Ye know that the Princes of the Gentiles exerciſe Dominion over them, and they that are great exerciſe Authority upon them; but it ſhall not be ſo among you:* I ſay, though this be ſo expreſs as you ſee, yet notwithſtanding the Pope, as pretended Succeſſor to St. *Peter*, claims a Supremacy *over Kings*, and a Privilege to be *appealed to* as the laſt and higheſt Tribunal upon Earth. And in caſe any Kings turn Hereticks to him, in denying his Claim, and caſting off his Yoke, he takes upon him a Power to Chaſtiſe them, to Excommunicate them, and then to Depoſe and Dethrone them, and to diſpoſe of their Kingdoms, and to abſolve their Subjects from the Duty of their Allegiance to their Natural Prince.

And for what Reaſon is this ſwelling Power of overtopping Kings aſſumed? The pretence is, that the Pope, as Head of the Church, being Superiour to all Chriſtian Kings, as being but Members of that Body whereof he is Head, they upon that account are under his Conduct and Government in uſing their ſecular Power for the Intereſt of the Chriſtian Religion and Catholick Cauſe, and for the Chaſtiſing of ſuch as are Heretical, or Undutiful and Diſobedient. This is the Pretence: But the true Deſign is to render the Pope the more *magnificent* and *venerable*, the more *awful* and *terrible* in the Eyes of all, and to *lift him up* to the *higheſt Pinnacle* of Worldly Pomp and Greatneſs attainable in this World, and to uſe the Power and Intereſt of ſuch Kings to *ſupport* and *ſecure* him in his pontifical Chair of State, and as *Executioners* of his Wrath and Diſpleaſure againſt all that ſhall but peep and mutter any thing againſt him, or any of his Decrees or Orders, or give him the leaſt Diſturbance.

That this is the Deſign, though the other be pretended, appears in that the *Pope* is well enough contented that theſe Kings ſhould *tolerate* or *connive* at any Wickedneſs in their Dominions, though never ſo diſhonourable to Chriſt and Chriſtianity, and deſtructive to his Religion in the power of it, provided they be but tender of *his* Intereſt, and will not connive at any Affronts put upon his Government as Papal. *Men may do what they will, provided they meddle not with the Pope's Crown, or the Monks Bellies*, was the ſaying of *Eraſmus*.

§ XXI. 6. Again, as the Popes do claim a Supremacy over Temporal Princes for *themſelves*, ſo they do a *Privilege* and *Exemption* for their *ſubordinate Clergy* from the *Temporal Power*; as holding immediately under their Eccleſiaſtical Head, the *Pope:* Which is another Device to ſtrengthen their Intereſt. For hereby all his Clergy are the *faſter tied* and engaged to their grand Maſter the *Pope*, and at the greater liberty to *act* ſecurely in abetting his Intereſt, and ſerving his Deſigns, as Occaſion and Opportunity ſerves.

Concil. Trid. Seſſ. 25.

§ XXII. 7. As the falſe Apoſtles broached Doctrines tending to Licentiouſneſs, to increaſe their Party and ſtrengthen their Intereſt: So the Authors and Founders of *Popery* have ſet on foot certain corrupt *Doctrines*, good for nothing but to *increaſe their Party* and *Wealth* thereby, and to *ſtrengthen* their Intereſt. Such is that of a pretended Power veſted in the *Pope*, and from him derived to every *Prieſt*, of *abſolving* Men, and *forgiving* their Sins upon ſuch *eaſie terms*, as the confeſſing them to the Prieſt, and doing ſuch ſlight Penances, as he out of his Indulgence to them, if they pleaſe him, is pleaſed to appoint.

And which is yet worſe, if worſe can be, *viz.* the Doctrine of the Pope's Power, not only of granting Indulgences for ſins paſt, but alſo Diſpenſations to commit them for time to come. And that ſuch a Power is pretended to, we learn from Authors of their own. *Eſpenſeus* hath told us, That *they* allow not only the *Laity*, but alſo *their very Clergy-men to dwell with Whores and Harlots, and to beget Baſtards, for a certain Tax.* Comment. on Tit. p. 478, 479. *Alſo*, De Continentia Lib. 2. Cap. 7. And *the Princes of the Roman Empire aſſembled at* Noremberg, *in the Years* 1522, 1523. complained *that the Popes ſucked the Marrow of the Peoples Eſtates by Indulgences, and that they heightened the Impoſture by their hireling Criers and Preachers, and that Chriſtian Piety was baniſhed, while to advance their Market, they cried up their Wares, for the granting of wonderful Pardons, not only ſins already committed, but of ſins that ſhall be committed. So that by the Sale of theſe Wares, as they ſaid, together with being ſpoiled of their Money, Chriſtian Piety is extinguiſhed; while any one may promiſe himſelf Impunity, upon paying the rate that is ſet upon the Sin he hath a mind to commit,* Faſciculus rerum expetendarum, *fol.* 177, 178. And if the People can believe that the Pope hath power by his Diſpenſations to bear them out for Money in ſuch Immoralities, they may as well believe alſo that he hath power to diſpenſe with their taking of ſuch Oaths, and entring into ſuch Obligations which they never intend to keep, or to do any other thing as bad, eſpecially if it any way tend to the advancing of the Catholick Cauſe. And if ſo, by what *Teſt* can they be diſcovered to be really what they are, when they have a Mind to conceal it? Or what Security can ſuch Oaths or other Obligations be to Proteſtant Princes, of their true Allegiance to them?

And what is ſaid in this is the more conſiderable, if we add thereto thoſe other two looſe Doctrines of theirs, the one touching the Lawfulneſs of their breaking Faith with Hereticks, ſuch as they eſteem Proteſtants to be, and the other the Jeſuitical Doctrine of Equivocation with mental Reſerves. Wherein alſo they exactly follow their Leaders, the *falſe Apoſtles.* For they, as I have ſhewed, thought, or at leaſt *taught*, that in ſome caſes they might deny Chriſt in word, ſo they did but retain a Belief in him in their Hearts; and partake with Idolaters in their Idol Sacrifices, ſo they did but retain in their minds a Belief that there were no other Gods but one, and intended not any Honour to the Idol.

The very Complexion of theſe, and ſuch like Doctrines, ſhews them to be calculated, not to promote Religion and Virtue, but to hook in filthy Lucre, to gratifie any that will but be for them, in giving ſcope to their Luſts, and to ſet Men free from all Ties of Religion and Conſcience, when they ſtand in the way of their Cauſe and Intereſt. That which the Prophet of old from the Lord charged upon the Prieſts then, when he ſaid, *They eat up the ſin of my People, and ſet their heart on their Iniquity,* Hoſ. iv. 8. falls upon theſe Men. For as thoſe were deſirous to have the People ſin that they might have the more Sin-Offerings: So theſe are willing, we ſee, that the People ſhould have Liberty allowed them to ſin, provided they will but buy the more Indulgences and Diſpenſations.

And ſuch likewiſe is their Doctrine of *aſſuring Men of Pardon* when they are going out of the World, tho' they have lived never ſuch wicked and vicious Lives before, upon condition of *Contrition and Confeſſion to a Prieſt:* Yea upon condition of that Confeſſion and *Attrition* alone: Which, as they define it, is *a Grief for ſin ariſing only from a fear of Hell.* And I ſhould think no wicked Man that believes or fears that there is a Hell, can lightly be without ſuch a Sorrow at laſt. And if Men could be made to believe or hope that they may keep their ſins and yet be pardoned, at leaſt upon ſuch eaſie Terms as we ſee they are taught to believe they may, it would then be matter of Wonder that there is no more, rather than that there are ſo many Papiſts in the World.

Such Doctrine as this is, doubtleſs, the reaſon, why now and then ſome profligate Perſons, and ſo many Thieves and Murtherers, when condemned to die, turn Papiſts, that were no better than practical Atheiſts before.

§ XXIII. 8. And yet leſt their looſe Principles and Practices ſhould render them too much ſuſpected for irreligious, they, juſt as the *falſe Apoſtles* before them, would *ſeem* to be even more devout in ſome things than the purer Chriſtians that oppoſe them in their carnal Deſigns. And therefore they have impoſed upon themſelves and their Votaries certain things, as parts of Religion, which God hath not made ſo, and are more careful to obſerve them, than what God hath commanded; as the Phariſees before them were, in reference to their Traditions. Such is their abſtaining from ſome ſorts of Meats upon ſuch and ſuch Days; not upon a *Civil* account, which may lawfully be done, but upon a *Religious* account. And it's well if, at leaſt, many of them do not make more Conſcience of eating Fleſh on a *Friday*, than to ſwear or lye. The exerciſing certain Severities upon their own Bodies at certain ſet times of the Year by way of Penance: The reſtraining thoſe that are in Religious Orders from Marriage: The Vows of Poverty and ſingle Life, are alſo things of like nature with thoſe which the falſe Teachers in the Apoſtles times impoſed upon their Proſelytes, as I have ſhewed. And ſo was the worſhipping of Angels, a thing which theſe Popiſh Chriſtians alſo teach. Nay, they pretend to make ſhow of ſuch great Love to Chriſt more than others do, as that for his ſake they worſhip ſuch as are related to him, as the Bleſſed Virgin *Mary* and other Saints: And not only ſo, but to worſhip his very Picture, and to have in ſacred Eſteem the very Reliques of his Servants, or thoſe which they eſteem to be ſo: Like the Phariſees of old, who *builded the Tombs of the dead Prophets, and garniſhed the Sepulchres of the righteous* that were dead; when at the ſame time they perſecuted thoſe that were living, as theſe alſo have done.

By ſuch Arts as theſe they have made a covering, ſuch as it is, for their irreligious Deſigns, by which they have deluded People of groſs Minds that are influenced by Senſe in the way of Religious Worſhip, as ſuperſtitious and idolatrous Perſons always have been, but have Miſapprehenſions of the Nature of God, and of that Spiritual Worſhip which is agreeable to his Nature and acceptable to him. Which alſo makes them think that the eating of Chriſt's Fleſh and the drinking of his Blood in the Sacrament in a natural and proper Senſe, is that which is available: Like the *Capernamites*, who ſaid, *How can this Man give us his Fleſh to eat?* Underſtanding him in a groſs Senſe, when he had ſaid to them, *The Bread that I will give is my Fleſh, which I will give for the Life of the World: And except ye eat the Fleſh of the Son of Man, and drink his Blood, ye have no Life in you*, John vi.

Moreover, to raiſe yet the greater Opinion in the People of the Goodneſs of their way, they ingroſs the whole of true Chriſtianity to themſelves, ſtiling thoſe and thoſe only of their way, the *Catholick Church*; denying Salvation to belong to thoſe that are not of it, accounting them Hereticks. Herein likewiſe following the Guiſe of the falſe Apoſtles and their Diſciples, who laboured to ingroſs to themſelves the Nam eand Reputation of the moſt Knowing and moſt Spiritual, ſeparating from the reſt of Chriſtians, as if they themſelves only had been the true Church, thereby to put the better colour upon their corrupting the Chriſtian Religion, and the Worldly End for which they did it.

§ XXIV. 9. And then to fill the Churches Treaſuries, and to draw to themſelves the Wealth of the World, and thereby to ſupport all their Glory and Grandeur, and to glut themſelves with ſenſual Pleaſures and Delights, they have uſed other Methods and Arts alſo. One of which is the Doctrine of the *Merit* of good Works: For when the People are made to believe that they may by good Works, Almſdeeds, and Donations to pious Uſes, make *Satisfaction* to God, procure *Exemption* from Purgatory, and *merit* Heaven; and by abounding in them may *ſupererogate*; and not only merit enough for themſelves, but have to ſpare for others; then it is no hard matter to perſuade them to be very liberal and kind to their Ghoſtly Fathers while they live, being to them in God's ſtead to pardon them, and to leave a conſiderable part of their Eſtates to the Church, when they die.

The forbidding Marriage to the Clergy ſerves to the ſame end alſo; which may be one reaſon of that reſtraint. For when they, eſpecially thoſe of the higher degree that have great Eſtates, can leave no Children lawfully begotten to inherit; who is likelier to be their Heir than the Church? Eſpecially conſidering that the Canon Law allows not regular Biſhops to diſpoſe of their Eſtates by Will.

Another Device to get Money, is the *Tax of the Apoſtolick Chancery*; a Grant by ſeveral Popes of Pardons, ſuch and ſuch a Price for thouſands of Years, though their ſins be of a deep Die. It is true, there are, I muſt needs ſay, very good Peny-worths to be had, if the Ware be not counterfeit: One may have that for 18 Pence, 2 Shillings, or half a Crown, that a Man would give all he is worth for, be it never ſo much, were he ſure he ſhould not be cheated in his purchaſe. But as for all thoſe that have Faith enough to believe the Infallibility of the Popes, in aſſuring them of Pardons at ſuch *cheap* rates, (and if they queſtion it in this, they may queſtion it in all the reſt) methinks there ſhould not one of them fail to buy one of theſe Pardons that can go to the price of them:

And

And who cannot? And if ſo, who can count the vaſt Sum of Money which we may reaſonably conceive this Device will bring into the Pope's Exchequer from Age to Age?

Another Engine for the ſame purpoſe, is *Shrine Oblations:* That is, the Offerings which the People make when they go on Pilgrimage to viſit the Shrine of ſuch or ſuch a Saint, whether voluntarily, or in a way of penance. And the Treaſuries of the Shrines of ſome eminent Saints are upon this account ſo Rich, as that it's ſaid they may vie it with the Treaſuries of great Princes.

Another Screw is, *Commutation of Penances*; that is, the buying off the doing of ſuch or ſuch Penance for ſo much Money, as the Confeſſor or Ghoſtly Father ſhall be pleaſed to excuſe them for: And he knows well enough how to put the Price according to the ability of the Purchaſer; and ſo he doth alſo how to make the Penance greater or leſſer as he pleaſes. And this falls out ſo often, and with ſo many in all Popiſh Countries, that the Income thereby muſt needs be very great, beſides the ordinary Tithes they receive.

The fictitious *Doctrine of Purgatory*, to name no more, is, I aſſure my ſelf, none of the leaſt of the Artifices of the Founders of Popery, to accumulate a prodigious Maſs of Wealth: Of which Doctrine and Device, take this brief account. Firſt, The People are made to believe, that though God pardons Mortal Sins to the truly penitent, ſo as to free them from Eternal Torments: Yet ſince they have much Venial Sin and Corruption, in which oft-times they die, not having made ſufficient Satisfaction by Penances enjoyned them here, they muſt expiate theſe, and ſatisfie for them, by ſuffering the pains of Purgatory. And farther, they muſt believe alſo, that the Church hath a Treaſure or *Stock of Merits* ariſing out of Works of Supererogation done by ſuch as have merited more than enough for themſelves, the *over-plus* ſtill running into the *common Stock:* And that the Pope, and Prieſts from him, have the power of *diſpoſing* and *applying* theſe out of the common Stock to particular Perſons that need them. And farther, they are taught to believe that this Treaſure of the Church is not drawn out and diſtributed but by *Indulgences:* And that ſince theſe Indulgences are for the Relief of the Church's *Indigencies*, they are not to be obtained without being *purchaſed.* Now when the poor deluded People are made to believe all theſe idle Fictions for real Truths, and come to have their Conſciences awaken'd on their Death-Beds; what will they not give to obtain theſe Indulgences, and for Maſſes to be ſaid, and Prayers to be made, that they might be delivered from *Purgatory*, a place of Torment little leſs than Hell. *Skin for Skin, and all that a Man hath, will he give for his Life*; how much more for his *Soul!* So that the fruit and effect of this Device, as we may well conceive, is no ſmall or inconſiderable thing. And therefore it was no leſs truly than wittily ſaid, *The Fire of Purgatory keeps the Pope's Kitchin warm, and makes his Pot to boil.*

I ſhall inſtance in no more: But theſe I have named are ſome of the Arts, and part of the Craft in the Myſtery of Iniquity, by which, *Demetrius*-like, *they get their Wealth.* And truly ſo vaſtly great hath been the Annual Income of the Court of *Rome* from all Nations of their Communion, that according to the account given from amongſt themſelves, by *Matthew Paris* for one, (*M. Par. Hiſt. An.* 1252.) its Yearly Revenue from *England* alone, by one way and another, more than I have named, amounted to no leſs heretofore, than twice ſo much as the then King's Revenue. "No marvel then if the Biſhops of *Rome*, and their Cardinals, formerly poor Prieſts and Deacons, are now become Illuſtrious, and for Pomp and Magnificence able to vie it with great Princes, and to raiſe their Families, Nephews and Nieces, to Dignities and Fortunes very great, as is well known to the World.

§ XXV. And now, I having made this Compariſon between the *falſe Apoſtles* and *Founders of Popery*, in their worldly Deſign and curſed Means of accompliſhing it; all that I ſhall deſire of the *Lay Catholicks*, as they call themſelves, is, that they would but beſtow ſo much *Conſideration* upon what is here offered, as by which they may come to make an impartial Judgment, whether or no I have wronged the latter, by comparing them to the former. And if I have not, as I doubt not but they will find I have not, if Prejudice and Prepoſſeſſion do not make them err in Judgment, as too frequently it is wont to do; Then methinks I ſhould not need to uſe one word to perſuade them to deſiſt from following their Guides any longer blindfold by an implicit Faith; for their own Intereſt, both Spiritual and Temporal, which uſeth to be moſt prevalent with Men, will prompt them to this. Can they poſſibly think it ſafe for them to commit themſelves to the Conduct of thoſe, who directly follow the Track, and tread in the Steps of the *falſe Apoſtles*, who for Self-ends and Worldly Advantage, Avarice and Ambition, betrayed the Religion of the holy Jeſus, and the Souls of Men? *Solomon* ſays, *In vain is the Net ſpread in the ſight of any Bird.* And will they be more ſilly than the Fowles of the Air, in not endeavouring to make their eſcape when the *Snare* is diſcovered to them? *Remember this, and ſhew your ſelves Men*, may be ſaid of them, as once it was by the Prophet to others.

But we know the manner of theſe Mens *Guides*; either they will not ſuffer them to read Diſcourſes which detect their Fraud: Or if they happen to hear or ſee any thing of that nature, they can, as they would have them think, blow off all with one blaſt of their Mouth. I do therefore heartily wiſh, that the *Laicks* I ſpeak of would at laſt be ſo wiſe for their Souls, as to conſider, That when their *Clergy*, whom they follow by an Implicit Faith, do make their defence againſt us in what we charge them with, they are then *concerned* in point of a carnal Self-intereſt: And where that rules, and is predominant, it ſtill obliges Men to put the faireſt colour they poſſibly can upon their Cauſe, though never ſo bad, *without* regard to Truth; *that* not being the thing they ſtrive for, but their *Selfiſh Intereſt*. And it is the manner of ſuch Men, when they have done ſo, to glory over their Adverſaries from the Teeth outward, as if they had laid them dead at their Feet: When at the ſame time inwardly they feel themſelves ſtruck to the very Heart, by the clear Evidence and unreſiſtable Force of their Adverſaries Reaſonings. And the Reaſon of their doing ſo is, becauſe they find that thereby they can preſerve their Intereſt among the People that have given up themſelves to them, and pinn'd their Faith upon their Sleeves; this courſe of theirs ſerving their End as effectually as a real Confutation would do.

And herein alſo they as evidently follow the ſteps of the *falſe Apoſtles*, as in any of thoſe other things I have inſtanced in. For although they, the *falſe Apoſtles*, could not ſtand before the powerful Conviction of the faithful Apoſtles, but found their Hearts to ſink within them, as to the Cauſe they maintained, as knowing in their Conſciences they were not able by the Strength of Truth to defend it againſt the Aſſaults of the holy Apoſtles: Yet then they would in face and outward appearance, glory and boaſt, as if they had the Victory, and all becauſe they had no other way to hold their Party to them, and to carry on their Deſign, which they were reſolved to ſtick to, whatever was ſaid againſt it: And alſo becauſe they found that this Courſe of theirs would do them as much ſervice as a Demonſtration would do among their credulous Followers, who hung upon their Lips, and were willing to take all they ſaid upon *truſt*, as ſuiting moſt with what they liked beſt: See for this the 2 *Cor.* v. 12. *We commend not our ſelves again unto you*, ſaith St. *Paul*, *but give you occaſion to glory on our behalf, that you may have ſomewhat to anſwer them which glory in appearance, and not in Heart:* Meaning the falſe Apoſtles.

All that I ſhall add is only to obſerve from what was laſt delivered, That the *falſe Apoſtles*, even then, when they ſet the beſt face upon their Cauſe, and gloried over their Oppoſers, and carried it outwardly with never ſo great Confidence and Boaſting; yet ſince their own corrupt *Intereſt* was concerned in the *Conteſt*, there was juſt cauſe for their Followers to ſuſpect what they pleaded in their own defence, and that it was Wiſdom in them that did ſo, and Folly and Unhappineſs in thoſe that ſuffered themſelves to be impoſed upon and deluded thereby, without looking more narrowly into the matter themſelves, as thoſe did who *tryed them that ſaid they were Apoſtles, but were not, and found them liars*, Rev. ii. 2. And if ſo; then in as much as a corrupt Self-intereſt of Popiſh Guides is alſo concerned in and depends upon the Cauſe they labour to defend, as I have ſhewed; thoſe who have committed themſelves to their Conduct, have no more reaſon to be confident of the Goodneſs of their Cauſe, upon the account of the Confidence and Boaſting of thoſe who undertake to defend it, than the Followers of the falſe Apoſtles had in reference to *their* Cauſe: But in point of greateſt Prudence are concerned to look upon all they ſay with a jealous Eye, and with the greateſt Care and Diligence to ſcan the matter themſelves, and to ſearch the Scriptures themſelves, and impartially to conſider as well what is ſaid againſt them and their Cauſe, as what is ſaid for it and them, and not careleſly or deſperately to *venture* their Souls upon ſuch Mens confident pretences, whoſe corrupt *Intereſt* it is to *deceive* them.

APPENDIX.

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From what hath been ſaid in the foreſaid Section touching St. *Paul*'s Compliances, ſomewhat may be obſerved which may be of good uſe to Chriſtians in many dubious Caſes. There I have ſhewed how that St. *Paul* ſometimes withſtood the uſe of Circumciſion, and ſometimes yielded to it.

The reaſon of which did ariſe from the different Circumſtances that did attend the uſe of the ſame thing upon different occaſions. When it was urged upon the Gentiles as neceſſary to their Salvation, St. *Paul* withſtood it: But to avoid ſtumbling in the believing Jews, who were not as yet ſatisfied touching its Ceſſation, and to prevent a Breach in the Church, and to gain the more upon ſuch as were inclinable to Chriſtianity, he yielded to the uſe of that and other like things among them.

I think we may ſafely ſuppoſe that St. *Paul* knew well enough when he did ſo, that Circumciſion was not in it ſelf, or by poſitive Command neceſſary to the Jews under the Goſpel, by the taking place of which it was aboliſhed; for he ſaid, *Circumciſion is nothing*, 1 Cor. vii. 19. Nor was it ſimply unlawful in it ſelf; for if it had, no Circumſtance could have ſanctified it or made it lawful. So that when he yielded to it, it was upon account of *Expediency* by reaſon of Circumſtances attending it, which made it expedient; ſuch as was the Peace of the Church, and the better Propagation of the Goſpel. And yet when he yielded to it upon the account of Expediency, we may well ſuppoſe it was not wholly and altogether expedient without any Inexpediency at all, but only *more* expedient than inexpedient. For otherwiſe it may well be thought, that his yielding to the uſe of it ſomewhat tended to nouriſh the Opinion the *Jews* had of its Perpetuity under the Goſpel, and to miniſter ſome advantage to thoſe who taught a neceſſity of it unto Salvation, and could not be very grateful to the believing Gentiles who oppoſed it, nor to St. *Paul* himſelf neither. So that in ſome reſpect it was inexpedient to yield to it when he did yield to it, but in other reſpects *more* inexpedient to withſtand it and not to yield to it.

From all which we may obſerve, that when two Inexpediencies come in Competition, the one attending the doing, the other the not doing of the ſame thing, ſo that there is a neceſſity to yield to one of them in doing or not doing of it, then that which is *leaſt* inexpedient, is to be yielded to. Or which is the ſame; that when all Circumſtances are conſidered, then that which hath *more* of Expediency than Inexpediency in it, is to be choſen. Juſt as on the other hand, when two Precepts, the one moral the other but poſitive, come in Competition, the leſs is to give place to the greater.

To fit theſe general Rules to particular caſes requires ſome Skill: But if theſe things were well conſidered and practiſed, it would go a great way towards the leſſening thoſe undue diſtances which are among us. As for inſtance: Suppoſe ſome Circumſtances in the external form of our Publick Worſhip, eſtabliſh'd by Law, were ſo *inexpedient* as ſome deem them to be; yet if they would but lay aſide Prejudice, Partiality, Paſſion, and Intereſt of Parties in making a Judgment of things, by what hath been fairly argued from Scripture by many, to ſatisfie doubtful minds concerning them, I am very confident they might eaſily come to plenary Satiſfaction in their own minds touching this one thing, *viz.* That to *bear* with thoſe things for the Peace of the Church, and the Intereſt of Religion in general, *is not ſo inexpedient* as it is by dividing the Church, by forſaking that Worſhip, to *expoſe* our Religion to the Scorn and Contempt of Atheiſts, Infidels, and Papiſts, and to occaſion, alas, too many others to become ſuch: And as it is, to confound and unſettle the Minds of well-meaning, but injudicious People, and to betray them into the hands of Seducers: And as it is to divert Mens minds from the ſerious Conſideration, Study, and Practice of the weightier Matters of Religion, and to engage them in contentious Janglings, and uncharitable Revilings and Cenſurings, to the Deſtruction of true Piety, and placing Religion much in Opinion, and in being of a different Form and Party: And laſtly, as it is, to expoſe us all to the danger of the breaking in of Popery, by ſtrengthning their hands who are of that way, and by weakning our own, and by encouraging them in hopes of Succeſs by our Diviſions, to practiſe upon us, and by all their Arts to improve the advantage we put into their hands by our Diſtractions: And yet theſe, and ſuch like, have been the effects of dividing our Church.

And if to *bear* with thoſe external Circumſtances of Worſhip, for the ſake of the Peace and Edification of the Church, and ſecuring to us our Religion, be not *ſo* inexpedient, as it is to *draw* on us the foreſaid bad Effects of our Diviſions by withdrawing from the Worſhip it ſelf, for the ſake of thoſe Circumſtances; then the Rule before laid down, and according to which St. *Paul* acted, ſhews which of theſe *Inexpediencies* (in caſe both ſhould be ſuch) is to be yielded to, and born with, that the other may be avoided.

Now that to *bear* with the foreſaid Circumſtances of Worſhip, is not ſo inexpedient, as it is to cauſe Diviſions and the Conſequents of them by forſaking the Worſhip for their ſake, will eaſily appear by this, *viz.* In that the Lord hath not declared himſelf againſt the former, as he hath done againſt the latter. Although God hath expreſsly appointed the ſubſtantial parts of his Worſhip, as the Miniſtration of the Word, Prayer, and Sacraments, yet he hath not ſo expreſsly appointed the external Form, Method, Manner and Circumſtances of Adminiſtration, as whether it ſhall or ſhall not be adminiſtred according to the external Circumſtances required in our Liturgy; but hath left things of that nature to be ordered by general Rules of Education, Comelineſs, and Order, according to the beſt Skill and Prudence they have, into whoſe hands the Providence of God hath put the ordering of Affairs of that nature. And although the external Form of Adminiſtration of God's publick Worſhip may be comparatively *better* in one Nation or Church than in another (when but all one in *Subſtance*) as it would be in particular Congregations alſo, if all Miniſters were left to their own Liberty therein; yet the *meaneſt* of them would not be *unlawful*, ſo long as nothing is done in *Oppoſition* to any divine Precept, or to the *defeating* of the end of the external Adminiſtration of God's publick Worſhip. But God hath not left Men to any ſuch Latitude to cauſe or not to cauſe Diviſions and Offences in the Church, as he hath for them to uſe different Forms and Circumſtances of Forms in his publick Worſhip: And therefore here cannot be the like reaſon to pretend Inexpediency in ſubmitting to them, as there is in cauſing Diviſions and Offences in the Church by forſaking the publick Worſhip upon account of them. If the Honour of God and Good of Men had been as much concerned in the external Form of his Worſhip, in not having it in this way but in that, s they are in Mens keeping the *Unity of the Spirit in the Bond of Peace*, we have all eaſon on our ſide to think he would then have been as particular and expreſs for this orm and againſt that, as he hath been for the Peace, Unity, and Charity of the hurch, and againſt their Contraries and their contrary Effects, which yet he hath ot been.

What God ſaid to the *Jews*, when he found them hot for Sacrifices, but cold and areleſs in the *moral* part of Religion, may with a little Variation be very aptly apply-d to our caſe in hand. *I ſpake not unto your Fathers, nor commanded them in the day hat I brought them out of the Land of Egypt, concerning burnt Offerings or Sacrifices. ut this thing commanded I them, ſaying, obey my Voice*, &c. *but they hearkened not*, &c. r. vii. 22, 23, 24. For when our Lord Chriſt ſees us more nice about Forms of Wor- ip, and more zealous for this and againſt that, than we are for Peace and Charity, d the Honour and Safety of our Religion, and the Good of other Mens Souls, which e greatly wronged and endangered by our Diviſions, may he not as truly ſay, *When ave forth the Goſpel, ſpake I a word to my Diſciples to be hot for that external Form Worſhip you contend for in Oppoſition to that you contend againſt? But this I ſaid, ve Salt in your ſelves and Peace one with another: Let all your things be done in arity, endeavouring to keep the Unity of the Spirit in the Bond of Peace: That no an put a ſtumbling Block or an occaſion to fall in his Brothers way, that none occaſion given to the Adverſary to ſpeak reproachfully*; and wo to the World becauſe *of Of- ces, and wo to him by whom the Offence cometh: And yet you have not been curious,*

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And if to *bear* with thoſe external Circumſtances of Worſhip, for the ſake of the Peace and Edification of the Church, and ſecuring to us our Religion, be not *ſo* inexpedient, as it is to *draw* on us the foreſaid bad Effects of our Diviſions by withdrawing from the Worſhip it ſelf, for the ſake of thoſe Circumſtances; then the Rule before laid down, and according to which St. *Paul* acted, ſhews which of theſe *Inexpediencies* (in caſe both ſhould be ſuch) is to be yielded to, and born with, that the other may be avoided.

Now that to *bear* with the foreſaid Circumſtances of Worſhip, is not ſo inexpedient, as it is to cauſe Diviſions and the Conſequents of them by forſaking the Worſhip for their ſake, will eaſily appear by this, *viz.* In that the Lord hath not declared himſelf againſt the former, as he hath done againſt the latter. Although God hath expreſsly appointed the ſubſtantial parts of his Worſhip, as the Miniſtration of the Word, Prayer, and Sacraments, yet he hath not ſo expreſsly appointed the external Form, Method, Manner and Circumſtances of Adminiſtration, as whether it ſhall or ſhall not be adminiſtred according to the external Circumſtances required in our Liturgy; but hath left things of that nature to be ordered by general Rules of Education, Comelineſs, and Order, according to the beſt Skill and Prudence they have, into whoſe hands the Providence of God hath put the ordering of Affairs of that nature. And although the external Form of Adminiſtration of God's publick Worſhip may be comparatively *better* in one Nation or Church than in another (when but all one in *Subſtance*) as it would be in particular Congregations alſo, if all Miniſters were left to their own Liberty therein; yet the *meaneſt* of them would not be *unlawful*, ſo long as nothing is done in *Oppoſition* to any divine Precept, or to the *defeating* of the end of the external Adminiſtration of God's publick Worſhip. But God hath not left Men to any ſuch Latitude to cauſe or not to cauſe Diviſions and Offences in the Church, as he hath for them to uſe different Forms and Circumſtances of Forms in his publick Worſhip: And therefore there cannot be the like reaſon to pretend Inexpediency in ſubmitting to them, as there is in cauſing Diviſions and Offences in the Church by forſaking the publick Worſhip upon account of them. If the Honour of God and Good of Men had been as much concerned in the external Form of his Worſhip, in not having it in this way but in that, as they are in Mens keeping the *Unity of the Spirit in the Bond of Peace*, we have all reaſon on our ſide to think he would then have been as particular and expreſs for this Form and againſt that, as he hath been for the Peace, Unity, and Charity of the Church, and againſt their Contraries and their contrary Effects, which yet he hath not been.

What God ſaid to the *Jews*, when he found them hot for Sacrifices, but cold and careleſs in the *moral* part of Religion, may with a little Variation be very aptly applyed to our caſe in hand. *I ſpake not unto your Fathers, nor commanded them in the day that I brought them out of the Land of Egypt, concerning burnt Offerings or Sacrifices. But this thing commanded I them, ſaying, obey my Voice,* &c. *but they hearkened not,* &c. Jer. vii. 22, 23, 24. For when our Lord Chriſt ſees us more nice about Forms of Worſhip, and more zealous for this and againſt that, than we are for Peace and Charity, and the Honour and Safety of our Religion, and the Good of other Mens Souls, which are greatly wronged and endangered by our Diviſions, may he not as truly ſay, *When I gave forth the Goſpel, ſpake I a word to my Diſciples to be hot for that external Form of Worſhip you contend for in Oppoſition to that you contend againſt? But this I ſaid, Have Salt in your ſelves and Peace one with another: Let all your things be done in Charity, endeavouring to keep the Unity of the Spirit in the Bond of Peace: That no Man put a ſtumbling Block or an occaſion to fall in his Brothers way, that none occaſion be given to the Adverſary to ſpeak reproachfully*; and wo to the World becauſe *of Offences, and wo to him by whom the Offence cometh: And yet you have not been curious,* *nice and cautious in theſe, as you have been about the other.* Which if true, what account can be given for our breaking the Church in pieces, and expoſing our Selves, our Religion, and the Spiritual and Eternal Concerns of others, to ſuch Damage, Perils and Hazards as have been mentioned, and all for the ſake of that which he commanded not? I ſay, commanded not, *definitively*.

For doubleſs they have been under a very great Miſtake, who have aſſerted, that nothing is to be done in the Worſhip of God which he hath not commanded, if they mean it not only of the intrinſick Matter and Subſtance of his Worſhip, but alſo of all External Circumſtances of Adminiſtration; as appears, I ſuppoſe, by what I have already ſaid, and by a due Conſideration of thoſe very Scriptures upon which that Opinion is ſuppoſed to be founded. Such as *Deut.* xvii. 3. *Jer.* vii. 31. and xix. 5. and xxxii. 35. *Levit.* x. 1. compared with Chap. xvi. 12 and Chap. vi. 12, 13. Where, when ſome have been cenſured by God for doing what he commanded them not, it was in reference to falſe Worſhip in the *Subſtance* of it, done in oppoſition to what he had otherwiſe expreſly appointed and commanded, but never in reference to undetermined Circumſtances of the Adminiſtration of the true Worſhip. And therefore theſe Scriptures, when duly conſidered, are without any colour of Reaſon or Truth alledged againſt the lawful uſe of undetermined Circumſtances of Adminiſtration of the Subſtance of God's Worſhip. An Opinion doubtleſs it is no leſs dangerous than falſe. For ſince it cannot be conceived (as I ſuppoſe) how the publick Worſhip, other than the uſe of the Lord's Prayer, and the reading the Scriptures, and the reciting ſome words of Scripture in the Adminiſtration of Baptiſm and the Lord's Supper, (if ſo much) can poſſibly be managed without doing ſomething therein in reference to external Adminiſtration, which is not particularly determined and commanded in the New Teſtament, ſuch a Poſition as that muſt needs tend not only to fill Mens Minds with endleſs Scruples, and their Mouths with endleſs Diſputes, but alſo to interrupt and put a ſtop to the Adminiſtration of God's publick Worſhip, ſhould it be admitted.

Even under the *Moſaical* Diſpenſation, when things pertaining to the Worſhip of God were far more minutely determined than they are under the Goſpel, many things were done of a Religious Nature, and ſome of them more immediately reſpecting the Worſhip of God, which yet were neither commanded by God, nor the doing of them cenſured by him, ſo far as appears, ſo long as any thing commanded by him was thereby neither oppoſed nor juſtled out, nor any thing done in the name, or under pretence of things appointed by him, which were not ſo, as the Phariſees did, when *they taught for Doctrine the Commandments of Men.*

Of things of this nature, theſe following are Inſtances: The rearing of an *Altar* by the two Tribes and half, for a ſign or *witneſs* that they and their Poſterity were People of the God of *Iſrael*, and to prevent Apoſtaſie in their Poſterity, *Joſh.* xxii. 25, 34. The erecting of a Stone by *Joſhua* for ſomewhat a like purpoſe, *Joſh.* xxiv. 26, 27. *Solomon*'s hallowing the middle part of the Temple for Sacrifices, 1 *Kings* viii. 64. The keeping of the Paſſoever *fourteen days*, by order of King *Hezekiah*, and with the advice of the Heads of the People, though God had appointed but *ſeven*; as alſo the Levites then helping the Prieſt in the Prieſts appropriate Work, 2 *Chron.* xxx. The Obſervation of the Days of *Purim*: The Anniverſary Faſts of the fourth, fifth, ſeventh, and tenth Month: The building of Synagogues for publick Worſhip, and appointing Governours therein, and the ordering what Prayers ſhould be made, and how and after what manner the Law and Prophets ſhould be improved to common benefit by Reading and Exhortation, and what Diſcipline ſhould be uſed therein: The determinate Hours of Prayer in the Temple, *Acts* iii. 1. The altering the Geſture and ſome other things, in eating the Paſſover, from what was uſed in the firſt Inſtitution, and conformed to by Chriſt himſelf under that alteration: The Feaſt of Dedication, which Chriſt graced with his own preſence: The admitting of Proſelytes by Baptiſm, as well as by Circumciſion; a Practice which our Saviour was ſo far from teſtifying his diſlike of, as a Humane Invention, that he choſe the ſame Rite by which to initiate his Diſciples.

Theſe things, with what was ſaid before, if there were no more to be ſaid in the caſe, would be enough to ſhew that it's no juſt Exception againſt our external Form of publick Worſhip, in that it is not expreſly and particularly commanded in Scripture; for if it were, it would be a juſt Exception againſt every external Form of publick Worſhip whatſoever; becauſe there is no one in particular commanded with excluſion of all the reſt. Which ſtill plainly renders it a thing more inexpedient (yea, and much more than ſo) to be *acceſſary*, by rending from the Communion of the Church, to the bringing on us all thoſe ſad effects of our Diviſions, which every good Man is ſenſible of, than it is or can be to *bear* with what does not ſo well pleaſe them in our Form of Worſhip, as ſomewhat elſe different therefrom would do.

Methinks it ſhould make ſuch as are more conſidering Men among thoſe that divide the Church, by withdrawing from her Communion, to be very *jealous* of the Expediency of their Practice, when they conſider that before Men took this liberty, there was little of the ſad Effects forementioned viſible among us; but ſince that, thoſe bad Effects are grown notorious and formidable; and that's no honour to Separation that it hath brought forth ſuch fruit: They may know what it is by what it hath done, *by its fruits ye ſhall know it.*

And therefore ſuch as would be loth to lie under the Guilt, unrepented of, of being *acceſſary* to the drawing on us the ſad Events we ſpeak of, had need to examine again and again, whether the grounds upon which they have made or encouraged thoſe Diviſions, which have been the cauſe of them, be ſuch as will abide the Trial before God: And whether they have any ground to think, that what they contend for, in caſe they could obtain it, would ever countervail or compenſate the Damage which Religion in its Reputation, and the Souls of Men have already ſuſtained, and are like farther to ſuffer, by the courſe they have taken to effect it.

And when ever they do enter into ſuch Conſideration, it will doubtleſs be their Wiſdom not to flatter themſelves with conceit (as I fear ſome do) as if they are not, nor can be *acceſſary* to the bringing on us theſe ſad Effects of our Diviſions, but that they are wholly owing and imputable to our Governour, who, as they perhaps ſuppoſe, have given them juſt occaſion of withdrawing from Communion in the publick Worſhip by making the Terms of it ſo difficult and unſatisfactory as they have done. For tho' that which they ſurmiſe ſhould be ſo far true, *viz.* That the Conditions of Communion are made more uneaſie unto ſome than they need to be, yet it will not follow but that though the Governours in ſome reſpect do ill in doing ſo, the People may do very well in ſubmitting to them, tho' leſs pleaſing to themſelves, rather than by cauſing Diviſions, by not ſubmitting to them, to draw on ſuch things as may well diſpleaſe them much more than the uneaſie Terms of Communion need to do, as long as they are but only *leſs deſirable*, and not *abſolutely ſinful* in themſelves, as doubtleſs thoſe in queſtion are not: For if they were, it would be wonderful that ſo many wiſe, inquiſitive and good Men, as well of the old Nonconformiſts as others, as ſince the Reformation, have ſubmitted to them, ſhould not be ſenſible of it: No not after all that could be ſaid to work ſuch a ſenſe in them by ſuch as have turned every Stone to do it. And it is not altogether inconſiderable to remember, that however the caſe is now, yet in the Apoſtles days they were ſuch Chriſtians as were *leſs knowing* in the right uſe of their Chriſtian Liberty, that cauſed Troubles in the Church about things indifferent in their own nature, *Rom.* xiv.

Theſe things I have noted upon this occaſion, for no worſe end than to ſatisfie the Scrupulous, That although they ſhould not or could not be perſuaded that our external Form of publick Worſhip is beſt in it ſelf, yet that to conform to the uſe of it under preſent Circumſtances is not only lawful, but alſo very *much better* than to be *acceſſary* to all the evil Effects and Conſequences of our Diviſions and cauſleſs Separations; and that there is upon account of the danger of being ſo, *much more cauſe* to ſcruple *Nonconformity*, than Conformity to our form of publick Worſhip. But if all the Arguings and Reaſonings which have been uſed by many, ſhall ſtill fall ſhort of their deſired Effects to cloſe up our unhappy Breaches, and to heal our Diviſions; the Conſequences of them are ſo dreadful, that I could then heartily wiſh, that if the Higher Powers think it fit, and rather than the Wounds of our Church ſhould be ſtill kept bleeding, to the exhauſting of her Strength, and the endangering her very Life and Being, that a *Sacrifice* be made of ſome ſuch things as can leaſt be born with, and beſt ſpar'd, to the publick Peace and Tranquillity of the Church, if that might procure it; Peace and Edification being the Ends unto which all External Circumſtances of Order are to be accommodated by way of Means.

Thus much I thought good to add touching the point of Expediency from St. *Paul's* Example.

24 MA 56

OF THE
State of the Church
IN
FUTURE AGES:
OR, AN
Inſpection into the Divine Prophecies,
Touching the
State of the Church in the latter Ages of the World.

Zzzz 2

BRITISH MUSEUM

THE PREFACE.

READER,

THESE *Papers were drawn up at firſt, but as an Eſſay upon this Subject: Nor had they been now made publick, but by advice. And I am not inſenſible but that in following that advice, I run the hazard of a Cenſure from ſome; but I hope not from* all *judicious Men. But as for bending my* Thoughts *to enquire after the State of the Church in future Ages, by looking into the Divine Prophecies, I think that of the* Pſalmiſt *will well bear me out in it,* The Works of the Lord are great, ſought out of all them that have pleaſure therein. *For an Enquiry into theſe Prophecies, is but to ſearch and ſeek out the great Works of God, which he has declared he will accompliſh in the latter days. As the holy* Hiſtory *of Scripture acquaints us with the great Works of God which are* paſt; *ſo the ſacred* Prophecies *inform us touching thoſe which are yet to* come. *And both the one and the other* were written afore-time for our learning, that we through patience and comfort of the Scriptures might have hope. *The* obſcurity *of the Prophecies is no ſufficient Exception againſt exerciſing our ſelves in the ſtudy of them, but only calls for the more labour and diligence.* St. John's *Book of Prophecies is as abſtruſe, if not much more obſcure, than any other Book of Prophecies: And yet our bleſſed Lord and Saviour encourageth and commendeth a diligent Enquiry into the Prophecies of that Book, ſaying,* Bleſſed is he that readeth, and they that hear the words of this Prophecy, and keep thoſe things which are written therein, *Rev.* i. 3.

There are no Works of God which are yet to be done before the end of the World, that are greater than thoſe by which the Kingdom of Chriſt will be enlarged far and near throughout the World. They ſhall ſpeak of the Glory of thy Kingdom, and talk of thy Power: To make known to the Sons of Men his mighty Acts, and the glorious Majeſty of thy Kingdom, *Pſal.* cxlv. 11, 12. *Not only the acts of his* Providential *Kingdom, and* abſolute *Dominion over all, bad as well as good, enemies as well as friends; but eſpecially of the mighty Acts relating to the enlargement of the Church, by which he will bring down all the Powers of the World, which have ſtood in his way, and hindred the ſpreading of his Kingdom throughout the World, as that ſignifies the owning of him as King of all Kings, and his Laws as ſuperiour to, and as the Rule of all Laws in the Kingdoms of Men. When his viſible Church, which is his Kingdom, ſhall be near as extenſive as the Dimenſions and Confines of the World.*

And as the Divine Prophecies beſpeak it, that thus it ſhall be at laſt; ſo the very Reaſon of the thing ſtrengthens the Credibility of it. For it is but reaſonable to think, that Chriſt will put down and caſt out Satan the great Uſurper, *and reſcue the Nations of the World out of his hand, over which he hath ſo long tyrannized. The Devil is, we know, ſometimes in Scripture ſtiled* the God of this World: *Not by Right, but by* Uſurpation, *as having deceived the whole World in a manner, and by his Wiles prevailed with them as much to own and ſubmit to his Laws in the idolatrous Worſhip, of which he is Author, as if he had been God indeed. And although our bleſſed Saviour hath (not for want of Power to hinder, but for wiſe Reaſons) ſuffer'd the Devil for a time to uſurp Power and Dominion over the World, for the moſt part of it, as if the Rule and Government of it did belong to him, rather than to the Son of the moſt High: Yet it is not reaſonable to think, that he will ſuffer this during the whole time of his Kingdom and Reign; but that a time will come in which he will think fit to apprehend the Uſurper, and caſt him into Priſon, as the Prophecy foretels that he will, and that for a thouſand Years, that he ſhould deceive the Nations no more during that time, as he had done formerly,* Rev. xx 3. *And it is no leſs rational to think, that then he will bring thoſe other Enemies of his under his feet, who have been the great Inſtruments and Agents of the Devil, both to ſeduce the World into a Rebellion againſt Chriſt and* *his Government, and to make Laws oppoſite to his Laws, and to exact Obedience to them, and to perſecute and deſtroy thoſe who out of true Loyalty to their Sovereign Lord and King Chriſt Jeſus, could not ſubmit themſelves to them. And it is ſtill but reaſonable to think, that when Chriſt Jeſus, who is rightful King of all the Earth, hath taken unto himſelf his great power to reign and rule, he will then by that power of his, in conjunction with his Wiſdom and Goodneſs, undeceive the Inhabitants of the World, and reduce them ſo as to become obedient unto him, and conformable to his better Government.*

And when all this ſhall be done, we may well expect a new Heaven and a new Earth, as that ſignifies a new Face and Appearance of things, throughout the World: Such Rulers every where both in Church and State, as ſhall and will uſe their power and intereſt to ſecure unto God the Honour due to his Name, and unto Men their juſt Rights from one another in their ſeveral ranks and degrees. And when the Face of the covering ſhall be deſtroy'd, *as then it will,* which was caſt over all People, and the Veil which had been ſpread over all Nations; *then the* Earth will be filled with the Knowledge of the Lord, as the Waters cover the Sea: *And then Righteouſneſs will be in favour among Men, and abound every where. And when Righteouſneſs ſhall abound in the Earth, there muſt needs be abundance of Peace alſo.*

And when the moral Diſtempers of the World in general ſhall be removed, and the moral Conſtitution of it, brought to Health and Soundneſs; it can be no unreaſonable and difficult thing to think it very poſſible, that then Almighty God, to ſhew his Love to, and readineſs to reward Goodneſs, if the World would but be perſuaded to become good, ſhould then in a great meaſure remove thoſe Diſtempers in the Natural World, *which Mens univerſal Wickedneſs had brought upon it: And to heal the Barrenneſs of the Earth, and the Diſeaſedneſs of Mens Bodies by a more benign Influence of the Heavenly Bodies; and to take off from Brutes in a great meaſure, that Hurtfulneſs of their Nature, which the Wickedneſs of Men, as a puniſhment from God brought into them. It is not at all unlikely, but agreeable to the Scriptures in many places, that the Heavens and the Earth with their Furniture, ſhould by the Author of them, be made to* rejoyce and ſing in their way, *at the happy Reign of Chriſt, when he ſhall be acknowledged King in all the Earth, and for the bleſſed Alteration and Change which ſhall be made in the World thereby.*

Theſe things in their relation to, and dependance upon one another, ſeem ſo agreeable to right reaſon; that it cannot but facilitate a belief of thoſe Prophecies which relate to them. And not only the Jewiſh Nation, but the Church of God in general, yea and the whole World are ſo much more concerned in the Jews deliverance out of their ſixteen hundred years Captivity, and in the Concomitants, and Conſequents of it, than they were in their deliverance out of their ſeventy years Captivity, or from the Aſſyrian Invaſion, or in their unſetled Reſettlement in their own Land, after their firſt Captivity, that it is incredible that we ſhould have ſo many Prophecies as are in Scripture about the latter, and none touching the former.

But the Truth is, the Prophetical Stile and Phraſe touching the Glory and Greatneſs of the Deliverance of that People and Nation, (the Jews I mean) is very often ſo rich and lofty in Sound and Signification, that one would rather think thoſe leſſer Deliverances of theirs to be leſs intended and pointed at thereby; than to be the adequate ſenſe and meaning of the Prophetical Words and Sentences: And their greater and more famous Deliverance and Reſtauration yet to come, to be chiefly intended in them. And to make what the Jews enjoyed in their own Land after their return out of their Babyloniſh Captivity; which was mixt with much trouble from Enemies, by which they were kept but in a low condition, and with much Corruption in things of their Religion long before the Incarnation of our bleſſed Saviour: I ſay, to make this and the cleaving of a few Strangers to them to be all that was meant by thoſe Prophecies which ſpeak of the glorious State of the Church after the Deliverance and Reſtauration of the Jews, and of the great Acceſſion of the Gentiles to it, is to make thoſe Prophecies in their Interpretation to be but dilute, jejune, and very inſipid and flat things.

And altho' we ſhould underſtand thoſe Prophecies as Predictions of ſpiritual Benefits to be conferr'd on the Church under the Goſpel, as Expoſitors generally do concerning ſuch of them whoſe ſound is too high and magnificent to be limited and reſtrained to what the Jews received and enjoyed at any time between their coming out of their Babyloniſh Captivity, and the coming of Chriſt into the World; yet that ſenſe of them does not croſs or contradict that more comprehenſive ſenſe of them which takes in the external *Glory of the Church as well as the* internal, *but excludes neither. For when we under-*

ſtand ſuch Prophecies to ſpeak directly and properly of the external *Glory and Splendor of the Church, yet the* internal *Glory is ſtill to be ſuppoſed; becauſe the promiſe of that which is external, is not made but upon the account, and for the ſake of the internal Glory and Beauty of the Church: It is* Godlineſs that hath the Promiſe of this Life, as well as of that to come.

Indeed there is a mixture of Prophecies which relate to the latter Ages, ſome containing Promiſes of internal *Benefits, and ſome of* external, *as we find plentifully expreſs'd in Scripture. But then we muſt no more underſtand and interpret thoſe which in the Letter ſpeak of external Benefits, to be meant* only, *or chiefly of thoſe that are internal and ſpiritual, than we do the Prophecies of ſpiritual and internal Benefits, to be meant only or chiefly of thoſe which are external.*

The Chriſtian Church in the former Ages of it, being kept low as concerning its outward Eſtate, and in a ſuffering Condition for the moſt part; the Scriptures of the New-Teſtament relating thereto, treat moſtly of the ſpiritual and internal Glory of the Church: *But the Prophecies of the Prophets in Old-Teſtament-times relating moſtly to the State of the Jewiſh Church, are more taken up about the* external *State thereof; and of its viciſſitudinary Condition, ſometimes in Captivity, as being almoſt caſt off: And ſometimes again in a reſtored State, as taken into favour again; ſometimes of a Deportation of that Nation for a ſhorter time, and ſometimes of their Diſperſion for a longer; and of a well ſettled laſting and flouriſhing Condition after all, no more to return into a ſuffering State. The Chriſtian Church in her firſt Eſtate, was* all glorious within, *but of a deſpicable Aſpect* without. *But in her latter Eſtate ſhe will be glorious within and without too; when that ſaying of the Pſalmiſt ſhall be verified in her:* The King's Daughter is all glorious within; her clothing alſo is of wrought Gold. *To this laſt State and Condition of the Church, and to the means of her being brought into it, the Prophets, I doubt not, had much reſpect in very many of their Prophecies.*

The Greatneſs of the things which according to many Prophecies are to be brought to paſs in future Ages, conſidering the preſent State and Circumſtances of the Church, and of the World in general, may it's like ſeem ſtrange, and perhaps incredible to many: And ſo it ſeems did the great things which God by his Prophets Zachary *and* Haggai *had told the Jews in their low condition after their return out of Captivity, that he would do for them. But thoſe whoſe Faith ſeems to be overſet with the Wonderfulneſs and amazing Greatneſs of many of the things which the Prophets foretel will be wrought by God, and brought to paſs in this World; let them attend to what God has ſaid to the Jews in ſomewhat alike caſe,* Zach. viii. 6, 7. Thus ſaith the Lord of Hoſts, if it be marvellous in the Eyes of the Remnant of this People in theſe days, ſhould it alſo be marvellous in mine Eyes, ſaith the Lord of Hoſts. Thus ſaith the Lord of Hoſts, behold I will ſave my People from the Eaſt Country, and from the Weſt Country, and I will bring them, and they ſhall dwell in the midſt of Jeruſalem, &c. *This Prophecy was after the two Tribes return out of Captivity.*

Now as touching the Uſefulneſs *of our underſtanding the Prophecies which relate to the State of the Church in the latter Ages of the World, theſe things may be conſidered.*

1. *We may thereby come to have a more full and compleat proſpect of the great end and deſign of Chriſt's coming into the World, and of the ſetting up his Kingdom in it, and of the glorious and happy effects thereof, than without the underſtanding of them we can have. St.* John *hath told us that* for this purpoſe was the Son of God manifeſted, that he might deſtroy the Works of the Devil, 1 *John* iii. 8. *Now if we ſhould eſtimate the Glory and Excellency of this Deſign and Undertaking of his, only by what of this kind is already accompliſhed in the World, though great in it ſelf, yet it would appear little to us in compariſon of what its appearance will be when we have taken a right view of it by ſuch help as the Divine Prophecies do afford us. When we conſider how great a part of the World is under the power and deluſion of* Mahometiſm, Paganiſm *and* Popery, *to ſay nothing of* Judaiſm; *we may eaſily perceive how great a part of the Works of the Devil, are yet undeſtroy'd in the World, and how far the Deſign of Chriſt to reform the World, and reſcue it out of the hands of the Devil, does yet fall ſhort of being accompliſhed, and how far his Enemies as yet are from being* put under his Feet. *But if we look into the* Prophecies, *and inform our ſelves by them what great things are yet to be done by Chriſt in the World, by deſtroying Idolatry, falſe Worſhip, and Infidelity out of it, and by binding, impriſoning and chaining up the Devil from deceiving the Nations any more for a thouſand Years, and by ſetting up and eſtabliſhing the Chriſtian Faith, Worſhip and Government in all places, and by cauſing Righteouſneſs and Peace to abound in the Earth, as much as Wickedneſs and Trouble had done before:*

Then we ſhall have greater, more adoring and more affecting Apprehenſions of the deſign of Chriſt's coming into the World to reform it, and to ſet up his Kingdom and Government in it, than without the Foreſight of theſe things by the divine Prophecies, we can have. And this I take to be no ſmall benefit which comes by underſtanding the Prophecies which concern the State of the Church in the laſt times. For it tends to the Honour and Exaltation of our Lord Chriſt Jeſus in our thoughts, and of the Glory and Greatneſs of his undertaking for the general Good of the World, and Happineſs of the Church for a long time in this *World, as well as for their eternal Happineſs in* that which is to come.

2. *Another Benefit which comes by the ſame means, is the fortifying and ſtrengthning of us againſt Temptations to Compliance with the Enemies of Chriſt's Kingdom and Government, out of Fear, becauſe of their Terror and Greatneſs; or out of hope of ſharing with them in their worldly Proſperity and Glory. For by the divine Prophecies we may have a Foreſight that e're long all that Terror and Greatneſs in the Enemies of Chriſt's Kingdom and Government, which made Men tremble, will be abaſed and brought low enough; and all that Pomp and Glory of theirs which dazled Mens Eyes ſo that they could not ſee that Impiety and Wickedneſs in their way and doings which makes Chriſt their Enemy, and expoſes them to his ſore Diſpleaſure, will all be made to diſappear and to vaniſh like Smoke. And the foreſight of this, is of excellent uſe to* Antidote *Men againſt* partaking *with them in their* Sin, *as knowing that if they do, they ſhall be ſure to* ſhare *with them in their* Plagues. *By theſe Prophecies they foreſee,* that he that leadeth into Captivity, ſhall go into Captivity, and that he that killeth with the Sword muſt be killed by the Sword: Here is the Patience and Faith of the Saints. *This ſeems to have been the principal Benefit deſigned to the Church by putting into her hands the Book of* Revelations *by* S. John, *and which makes it ſo* bleſſed a thing, *as he ſays it is, to* read, hear, and keep in mind the words of that Prophecy, *Rev.* i. 3.

3. *When we underſtand by the divine Prophecies what admirable Effects the Kingly Government of Chriſt by his Laws will produce in the World at* laſt, *when it ſhall have its free Courſe; and how unſpeakably happy the World will be made thereby; it has an excellent Tendency to raiſe our eſteem of his Laws and Government in the mean time to a great height, as knowing what the natural Tendency of them is, and what Happineſs they would produce, if they might take place and be duly obſerved.*

4. *Diſcourſes of this Nature, if ſolid, are uſeful to retrieve the Reputation of the Doctrine of the ancient Church touching the* Millennium. *Mr.* Mede *hath told us that this* Dogma of the thouſand Years *Regnum*, was the general Opinion of all Orthodox Chriſtians in the Age immediately after the Apoſtles, if *Juſtin Martyr* ſays true, and none known to deny it then but Hereticks, and ſuch as deny'd the Reſurrection, *l.* 3. *p.* 602. *But there being then ſome other Heterodox Men who though they did not deny this thouſand Years Reign, yet did maintain ſuch carnal and intolerable Conceits about it, as weakned the Reputation of it in After-times; even as the extravagant Opinions and Practices of ſome called* Fifth-Monarchy *Men have likewiſe done in this preſent Age. And therefore if this Doctrine be of* God, *and founded on the Scriptures, it is but reaſonable and in ſome ſort neceſſary, by ſober and well grounded Diſcourſes to revive its primitive Reputation in order to its deſigned Uſefulneſs in the Church.*

5. *This Doctrine touching the Univerſal Kingdom of Chriſt on Earth yet to come, is the true reaſon and ground of our Church her uſing thoſe Prayers* in Faith and Hope of being heard, *and of obtaining in due time, when we ſay as in the Liturgy,* We humbly beſeech thee for all ſorts and conditions of Men, that thou wouldſt be pleaſed to make thy ways known unto them, thy ſaving Health unto all Nations. *And again,* That it may pleaſe thee to give to all Nations, Unity, Peace and Concord. *The granting of which will doubtleſs bring in the bleſſed* Millennium, *or that happy State of the World which is meant thereby. And why ſhould we pray thus? If God had not given us ſome ground to hope that one time or other, all Nations ſhall come to know God's ſaving Health, and enjoy Unity, Peace and Concord? Or how elſe could we ask theſe things in Faith?*

6. *The Proſpect which by the divine Prophecies may be had, of the happy State of the World under the Reign of Chriſt in its utmoſt extent, cannot but be matter of great Satisfaction and Pleaſure to the Minds of good Men, though they know they are not likely to live to ſee it themſelves. For good Men being Lovers of Mankind (or they could not be good Men) it's matter of Sadneſs to them, and that which abates much of the Pleaſure of their Lives to ſee how unhappy the World makes it ſelf by the many naughty things that are done in it; and undergone and ſuffered by it upon that account. To ſuch it is not a little Eaſe which it brings to their minds when they can foreſee the day approaching,*

ing, and not far off, when this Unhappineſs, and the cauſe of it, ſhall be removed and taken off to a great degree, by the happy Reign and Government of Chriſt in the World yet to come. Abraham *rejoyced to ſee the* Day *of Chriſt though* a-far off, *and at a great diſtance, in whom and in which he believed all the Nations of the Earth would be bleſſed, becauſe* God *had told him ſo; though he could have no expectation to live to ſee that day himſelf. And it may well be thought that ſuch as are Children of* Abraham *in Faith, and the goodneſs of their Minds, will rejoyce likewiſe, and be glad to ſee* this Day *of Chriſt, though at ſome diſtance now, when it is much nearer than it was to him; in which all the Nations of the Earth in general will be much happier than ever they were before, though they themſelves expect it not in their days, any more than* Abraham *did in his.*

7. *To which I might add in the laſt place, That the true Notion and Perſuaſion touching the great Enlargement of Chriſt's Kingdom on Earth in times yet to come, and of the great Work of God without which it cannot, or is not likely to be brought to paſs, is of great uſe for our better underſtanding of the holy Scriptures in very many of its Prophecies. For want of which ſome* Expoſitors *have turned many Prophecies into Allegories and Myſteries, as if nothing elſe were meant by them but ſuch a ſpiritual Victory over Sin and Satan, as has always been wont to be wrought in Men by the Goſpel-Miniſtration: Whenas no ſuch thing could be drawn from them without an unnatural force, but they have plainly foretold thoſe great Works of God for his Church and againſt their Enemies, by which that happy Change which ſhall be in the World at laſt, ſhall be brought to paſs. Neither, as it is likely, would they ever have faſtned ſuch a ſenſe upon them, if they could otherwiſe have told what to have done with them. But when they have found Prophecies of that nature which they could not well apply to any events of Providence in favour of the* Jews *which have hitherto happened, nor had any foreſight of ſuch as ſhall be wrought for them hereafter; they have had recourſe to ſome ſuch myſtical ſenſe as aforeſaid. And for the ſame reaſon, they have ſometimes again applied Prophecies to* mean *events comparatively, which are already* paſt, *which properly relate to and concern far* greater *and more famous* Events *yet* to come. *Though it is true that external and temporal Benefits vouchſafed the Church in Old-Teſtament-times, are as Types, or by way of Alluſion ſometimes accommodated and applied in the New-Teſtament to ſpiritual Benefits under the Goſpel; and then they carry a double ſenſe, the one* Hiſtorical *of what is paſt, the other* Typical *of what was to come. But then I do not ſee how this can be any ground to interpret Prophecies under the Old-Teſtament of external and temporal Events, which received* no *Accompliſhment in thoſe times, to be meant only of internal and ſpiritual Benefits under the Goſpel. It is true likewiſe, that external and temporal Deliverances and other Benefits of the Church, eſpecially in the Book of* Revelations *by St.* John, *are ſometimes propheſied of and foretold in a myſterious way, and by an excellent Art of Concealment from the Churches Enemies. But the Interpretation of them, is ſtill to be governed by the intrinſick and proper nature of the Prophecies, whether they concern external, or internal and ſpiritual Events.*

Now as touching this Eſſay, *Reader, which I have made, of enquiring into the State of the Church in future Ages by the Divine Prophecies, though it may ſeem a bold Undertaking in me; yet I hope I may ſay I have uſed that Modeſty therein as becomes me, both with reſpect to my own Deficiency, and to the Difficulty and Abſtruſeneſs of the Subject; and have choſen rather to* propoſe *things to Conſideration as probable, than poſitively to* aſſert *them; eſpecially where things are not very evident and clear.*

OF THE State of the Church IN FUTURE AGES.

The INTRODUCTION.

MY preſent deſign is to enquire into the State of the Church, or of the Kingdom of God here on Earth, in the latter Ages of the World, by conſulting the Predictions of the Prophets relating thereto. To make way for the better underſtanding of which, it may be convenient to conſider the Nature of the Kingdom of Chriſt in general, as it refers to the firſt Ages of the Church as Chriſtian, as well as to the latter.

Our Lord Jeſus Chriſt as *King*, and Chriſtians as his *Subjects*, and the *Laws* by which he governs them, make up this Spiritual Kingdom. This People, who are the Subjects of this Heavenly King, do own and acknowledge his Authority, Power and Empire to be, as indeed it is, paramount to and over all the Authority and Power of Kings and Potentates on Earth, and his Laws ſuperiour unto theirs. And although this Heavenly King is no Enemy to Earthly Kings and Potentates, farther than they make him ſo, by being Enemies to Him and his Government, but would have all his Subjects live in due obedience to them, ſo far as their Laws do not croſs his; yet if they do, he does not allow any to break his Laws, to obey theirs; but would have them patiently to ſuffer the Penalties of their Laws, rather than prove diſloyal to him, and will in concluſion richly reward them for ſuch Suffering.

The Time from which this Kingdom of Chriſt did commence, was chiefly from the time of his glorious Exaltation at the right Hand of God his Father, after his Reſurrection and Aſcenſion. It is true, he was acknowledged, and did own himſelf to be King before his Suffering and Aſcenſion, and gave Laws alſo then, which were to be obſerved as the Laws of his Kingdom; for the Goſpel which he preached, is ſtiled, *The Goſpel of the Kingdom*, Mark i. 14. But the ſolemn Inauguration into his Royal Throne and Kingdom, was not till his Aſcenſion into Heaven, and Seſſion at the right Hand of the Majeſty on high, far above all Principalities and Powers, and every Name that is named, not only in this World, but alſo of that which is to come. For our Saviour, in his Preaching and Parables, ſpake of this Kingdom as being but then nigh at hand. *Repent, for the Kingdom of Heaven is at hand*, Matth. iv. 17. And the Prophet *Daniel* had propheſied of the time of the Erection of the Kingdom of the *Meſſias*, ſaying, *In the days of theſe Kings ſhall the God of Heaven ſet up a Kingdom which ſhall never be deſtroyed*, Dan. ii. 44. Which came to paſs in the days of the laſt of the four Monarchies, of which the Prophet was ſpeaking, to wit, the *Roman* Monarchy; for in that time our bleſſed Saviour was born, ſuffered, and was exalted.

Now this Kingdom of Chriſt, though it be but One from firſt to laſt, yet the way and method by which it was erected, and in the firſt Ages of it increaſed, differ'd much in ſome reſpect from that way and method by which it will be advanced and carried on, to a far greater amplitude and height in the latter Ages of the World, than it hath been in the former times of this Kingdom. In the former Ages of the Chriſtian Church, this Kingdom was upheld and increaſed, as by other means, ſo by the patient Suffering of the Chriſtians under the cruel and barbarous Uſage they met with from the Rulers of the World, and from others through their connivance and encouragement. But in the latter Ages of the World, this Kingdom will get up to a far greater height and glory, and be far more over-ſpreading than ever it was before, as by other means, ſo *by bringing them under, who had been utter Enemies to this Kingdom of Chriſt*, in its Laws and Government, and to the People of it, for their faithful Adherence to it, and Obſervance of it, and conſequently to Chriſt as Head and Founder of it.

In the former Ages of the Chriſtian Church, the Kingdom of Chriſt here on Earth, was preſerved and maintained, yea, and greatly enlarged too, by the patient and courageous ſuffering of the Chriſtians, for their Faithfulneſs to Chriſt, and to his Laws and Government. The Dragon and his Angels fought againſt *Michael* and his Angels, to withſtand the ſetting up of the Kingdom of Chriſt in the World. But *Michael* and his Followers, prevailed againſt the Dragon and his Followers, and in ſpight of them the Kingdom of Chriſt got up, and his Government by the Goſpel took root, and ſpread it ſelf over a great part of the World in a few Years. But how? Not by force of Arms, as the Kingdoms of *Antichriſt* and *Mahomet* got up; but they *overcame* the Dragon and his General and Soldiers, *By the Blood of the Lamb, and by the Word of their Teſtimony, and they loved not their Lives unto the Death*, Rev. xii. 11.

But perhaps ſome will ſay, how did they overcome when they loſt their Lives in the Conteſt, and were in that reſpect overcome themſelves? But for all that, they did overcome their Adverſaries as touching the main Deſign. That which the Enemy deſigned in taking away the Lives of the Chriſtians, was to root out Chriſtianity by deſtroying the Chriſtians. But the Chriſtian's Deſign was to uphold and maintain the Chriſtian Cauſe in the World, and the Reputation of it, whatever it coſt them, and to let the World ſee that the Chriſtian Religion, and the Benefits that accrue to the faithful Obſervers of it, are of far greater value than their Lives. And the Chriſtians by their patient ſuffering for their Religion, did obtain their own Deſign, and alſo defeat and diſappoint their Enemies in theirs. For the Perſecutors of the Chriſtians were ſo far from ſuppreſſing the Chriſtian Religion by their cruel Uſage of Chriſtians, as that Chriſtianity was the more ſpread and propagated in the World, by their patient ſuffering the worſt their Enemies could do to them, rather than make the leaſt ſhow of renouncing it.

For when it was obſerved that the Chriſtians valued their Religion more than their Lives, and that they would ſooner part with them than that; it cauſed many others that heard of it and ſaw it, the more to enquire into the Nature of that Religion, and the reaſons and grounds of it, which thus made Men of ſober Minds and innocent Lives, willing to forſake all other things in the World, rather than part with that. And when upon ſuch Enquiry they found upon good Evidence, that to believe and live according to the Chriſtian Doctrine, is indeed the certain way to everlaſting Happineſs, and to refuſe to do ſo, the undoubted way to everlaſting Deſtruction both of Body and Soul, they became Chriſtians too. And in this way, together with Inſtruction by Chriſtian Preachers and Profeſſors, the Chriſtian Religion prevailed and got ground more and more in the World, notwithſtanding the fierceſt Oppoſition of its Perſecutors. For though Multitudes were cut down by the hand of Violence for their Faith in Chriſt, yet this did but increaſe the Numbers of thoſe that ſtood up in their room. And thus the Blood of the Martyrs was from time to time the Seed of the Church. *I would ye ſhould underſtand Brethren* (ſaith St. *Paul*) *that the things which happened to me, have fallen out to the furtherance of the Goſpel: So that my Bonds for Chriſt are manifeſt in* Cæſar's *Court, and in all other places: And many of the Brethren in the Lord waxing confident by my Bonds, were much more bold to ſpeak the Word without Fear*, Phil. i. 12, 13, 14. This, no doubt, was contrary to the Adverſaries Expectation, who queſtionleſs thought by their cruel Uſage of St. *Paul*, to have cooled the Chriſtians Courage, and to have daunted others from appearing in the ſame Cauſe, and not to have found them made much more bold thereby to ſpeak the word without Fear. But we ſee it fell out then between the Chriſtians and their Perſecutors, as it had formerly done between the *Iſraelites* and their Oppreſſors in *Egypt*. The new King of *Egypt* ſaid, *Come on, let us deal wiſely with them, leſt they multiply*, Exod. i. 10. *But the more they afflicted them, the more they multiplied and grew*, ſaith the Text, *ver.* 12. Juſt ſo did the Chriſtians, who after all Endeavours had been uſed to ſuppreſs them, yet grew ſo greatly, that they filled all places of the *Roman* Empire with their Numbers, as *Tertullian* told the *Roman* Governours.

And the Chriſtians by thus overcoming, and advancing the Kingdom and Dominion of Chriſt by their patient ſuffering, did but follow their Lord and Maſter Chriſt Jeſus in what he had begun. The Devil and the Rulers among the *Jews* thought by putting Chriſt to Death, to put a ſtop to Mens running after him, and to any farther ſpreading of his Doctrine: But it wrought the quite contrary effect, as our Saviour foretold it would, when he ſaid, *and I, if I am lifted up from the Earth, will draw all Men unto me, ſignifying thereby what Death he ſhould die*, Joh xii. 32. For by that, he ſpoiled Principalities and Powers, deveſted them of the Power they had in the World, ſilenced their Oracles, threw them out of their Temples, and triumphed over them by that Croſs by which they thought to have put an end to his deſign, *Col.* ii. 15. And thus, and by this means he in a little time ſetled himſelf a Church and Kingdom far and near, up and down in the World, in ſpight of all the Powers of Darkneſs, and all the Power and Terror of Men on Earth that ſet themſelves againſt him and his Followers.

And thus by the patient ſuffering of Chriſt and Chriſtians for the Goſpel ſake, was the Kingdom of our Lord and Saviour begun and carried on during all that time in which Chriſtianity had no National or Sovereign Power in the World to own and defend it; which was until *Conſtantine* became the firſt Chriſtian Emperour. And then indeed the Sovereign Power of the Empire as veſted in him and ſome other Emperours ſucceeding him, was uſed and employed in farthering the Kingdom and Government of Jeſus Chriſt in the World by the Goſpel, and in defending and encouraging the Subjects of that Heavenly King in the courſe of their Loyalty and Duty. Upon account whereof the Church is brought in by St. *John*, ſaying, *Now is come Salvation and Strength, the Kingdom of our God and the Power of his Chriſt*, Rev. xii.

But this Kingdom and Government of Chriſt was not long upheld and carried on in this way, before the Defection into Popery took place, with which in proceſs of time, Perſecution returned again upon the Orthodox and ſincere Chriſtians. For by that Defection, Idolatry and Superſtition were again reſtored in the Empire under publick Patronage, though not the Worſhip of the ſame Idols: And together herewith, under the Reign of the Apocalyptick Beaſt, Perſecution returned upon the Chriſtians, who could not be drawn into a compliance in the ſame Defection. Though the ſame Idols were not by Papal Conſtitution to be worſhipped under this Defection, which had been before worſhipped while the Conſtitution of the Empire was *Pagan*, yet by that *Papal* Conſtitution Religious Worſhip has been required to be given to other Objects of Worſhip than the only true God, and by other Mediators than the only Mediator Chriſt Jeſus, and other Doctrines urged as neceſſary to Salvation, than he ever taught. And for a faithful Adherence of the Orthodox Chriſtians to Chriſt's Kingdom and Government by the Goſpel, in point of Faith and Worſhip, in Oppoſition to the aforeſaid intolerable Corruptions, the Civil Powers of the Empire as influenced and corrupted by the Eccleſiaſtical, became engaged and armed againſt the Orthodox Chriſtians, ſo as by all manner of Cruelties to endeavour if poſſible to root them out from the Face of the Earth. Which proceeding of theirs came to paſs, juſt as St. *John* foretold it would, when he ſaid, The Beaſt with ſeven Heads and ten Horns, would make war with the Saints, and overcome them, as he did in one ſenſe indeed, *Rev.* xiii. 7. But in another ſenſe, that Party ſignified by the Beaſt, could not overcome them; for altho' they bereft vaſt numbers of them of their Lives, yet they could not with all their Power and Malice effect their end, which was utterly to extirpate them: But ſtill as they mowed down ſome, others grew up in their room. So that the Kingdom and Government of Chriſt in his Church, was ſtill preſerved in being, through the Patience and couragious ſuffering of his faithful Servants, during all that long and dark Night of Popery, though the Church was then indeed driven into the Wilderneſs, remaining in ſomewhat an obſcure condition.

But at laſt the *Morning Star* appeared, as Chriſt had promiſed it ſhould to thoſe, who in the time of the *Thyatirian* Interval of the Church, ſhould *overcome* all Temptations, *and keep his Works unto the end*; yea, and to *give them power over Nations alſo*, Rev. ii. 26, 28. even as it came to paſs when ſeveral National Reformations took place. For by thoſe National Reformations which were brought to paſs in ſeveral Nations, that ſort of Men which then were Adherents to Chriſt's Kingdom and Government in Oppoſition to Popery, and which had been before perſecuted and kept under, came then to rule, and thereby to protect the faithful from Perſecution, and by National Authority to eſtabliſh Chriſt's Kingdom and Government in their ſeveral Dominions. And this fell out, juſt before the blowing of the ſeventh Trumpet, (*Rev.* xi.) at which time *a tenth part of the great City, ſpiritually called Sodom and Egypt, fell*, and a great number in that Juriſdiction, were ſlain in a political Senſe, by being put out of all publick Places and Employment, and thoſe of the contrary Party brought in. Upon which great turn of Affairs the ſeventh Trumpet ſounding, *great Voices were heard in Heaven, ſaying, the Kingdoms of this World are become the Kingdoms of the Lord and of his Chriſt, and he ſhall reign for ever and ever*, ver. 15. The Morning-Star thus appearing by this Reformation, it gave notice of the Approach of that long expected and deſired Day, in which *the Son of Man is to receive Dominion, Glory and a Kingdom*, that not only a few Nations as then, *but that all People, Nations and Languages, ſhould ſerve him*, as the Prophet *Daniel* had foretold long before, *Chap.* vii. 14. of which the ſeveral Nations by their Reformation aforeſaid, became a *Specimen*, pledge or earneſt.

And whenever this deſired time ſhall come, in which the Enemies to Chriſt, to Chriſtianity and to true Chriſtians, ſhall be brought under in this World, and the Chriſtians ſet above the reach of their Malice, we ſhall find cauſe by what the Prophets have ſaid, to expect that the Church and Kingdom of Chriſt, will thereby (with other concomitant Cauſes) grow and be advanced to a far greater Amplitude, Height and Glory, than ever it arriv'd at in the former Ages of the World by the patient ſuffering of Chriſtians.

CHAP. I.

Of the Aſſurance we have of a time yet to come in this World, in which the Churches Sufferings in the Cauſe of Chriſtianity, ſhall ceaſe.

WE will then in the firſt place enquire whether there will not a time come, when the Kingdom and Government of Chriſt in the World, will be upheld and greatly enlarged, without thoſe Sufferings of Chriſtians for the Goſpel, by which it has been ſupported and propagated in the former Ages of Chriſtianity. And we ſhall find abundant Cauſe, as I conceive, to expect ſuch a time in this World, when the Churches Sufferings from her Enemies will come to an end. The many Prophecies in the Scripture which look this way, muſt needs put us under ſuch an Expectation; I ſhall inſtance in ſome. *Iſa.* xxv. 8. *And the Lord God will wipe away Tears from off all Faces, and the Rebuke of his People ſhall be take away from off all the Earth, for the Lord hath ſpoken it.* This hath not been done yet, but ſhall be in its time. *Iſa.* xxx. 19. *For the People ſhall dwell in Sion at Jeruſalem; thou ſhalt weep no more.* Meaning that they ſhould have no more cauſe of weeping for any thing they ſhall any more ſuffer from the Churches Enemies. Thus again, *Iſa.* lxv. 19. *I will rejoyce in Jeruſalem, and Joy in my People, and the Voice of weeping ſhall be no more heard in her, nor the Voice of crying.* Jer. xxxi. 12. *Their Soul ſhall be as a watered Garden, and they ſhall not ſorrow any more at all.*

To theſe Prophecies agrees that of St. *John*, Rev. xxi. 4. *And God ſhall wipe away all tears from their Eyes, and there ſhall be no more Death, neither ſorrow nor crying, neither ſhall there be any more pain; for the former things are paſſed away.* This is ſpoken of the Church in her *New Jeruſalem* State, after the Deſtruction of the power of her Enemies, deſcribed in the 18 and 19 *Chap.* foregoing. Meaning, that in this time and ſtate of the Church, there ſhould be no more ſuffering Death or Martyrdom for Chriſt, from his Enemies, nor leſſer pains to cauſe ſorrow or crying. And this *New Jeruſalem* is not a Deſcription of the State of the Church in Heaven, but of what it ſhall be here on Earth. For this *New Jeruſalem* is to *come down from God out of Heaven*, prepared as a Bride adorned for her Husband, *ver.* 2. And this great City the holy *Jeruſalem*, is called *the Lamb's Wife*, ver. 9, 10. of the time of whoſe Marriage we read, *chap.* 19. 7. referring as is verily thought, to the coming of the Nation of the *Jews* to Chriſt, and of the *Gentiles* in their fulneſs. *And the Glory and Honour of the Nations, and of the Kings of the Earth, will they bring into this City*, chap. xxi. 24, 26. which argues it to be a State of the Church here on Earth. And ſo it does in that the *Leaves of the Tree of Life in it, will be for the healing of the Nations*, chap. xxii. 2. And laſtly, becauſe ſeveral of the ſame things which are to be enjoyed in this *New Jeruſalem*, were fore declared to be enjoyed by the Church at ſome time while here on Earth. For this, compare *Iſa.* lx. 3. xi. 19. with *Rev.* xxi. 23, 24, 25. and xxii. 5.

I will the rather multiply Proofs of the future being of ſuch a State of the Church here on Earth, becauſe many Chriſtians perhaps do not believe it, as not having been inſtructed in it: And becauſe alſo thoſe Scriptures which prove this, will be of uſe to ſhew, that many of the Prophecies touching the Churches Deliverance, are not to be ſo much limited and reſtrained, as ſome would have them, to the Deliverance of the *Jews* from the *Aſſyrian* Invaſion, or from their 70 Years Captivity, *Iſa.* li. 22. *Thus ſaith thy Lord and thy God that pleadeth the cauſe of his People; Behold, I have taken out of thy hand the Cup of trembling, even the dregs of the Cup of my Fury, thou ſhalt no more drink it again.* And chap. lx. 18. *Violence ſhall no more be heard in thy Land, waſting nor Deſtruction within thy Borders.* And ver. 20. *Thy Sun ſhall no more go down, neither ſhall the Moon withdraw it ſelf, for the Lord ſhall be thy everlaſting Light, and the*

Days of thy mourning ſhall be ended. Ezek. xxviii. 24. *And there ſhall be no more a pricking Brier to the Houſe of Iſrael, nor a grieving Thorn of all that are round about them that deſpiſed them, and they ſhall know that I am the Lord God.* Ezek. xxxiv. 22. *I will ſave my Flock, and they ſhall no more be a prey.* Ver. 28. *And they ſhall no more be a prey to the Heathen.* Ver. 29. *Neither ſhall they bear the ſhame of the Heathen any more.* Chap. xxxvi. 15. *Neither will I cauſe Men to hear in thee the ſhame of the Heathen any more, neither ſhalt thou bear the reproach of the People any more.* Chap. xxxix. 29. *Neither will I hide my face any more from them.* Jer. xxx. 7, 8. *It is even the time of Jacob's trouble, but he ſhall be ſaved out of it; for it ſhall come to paſs in that day, ſaith the Lord of Hoſts, that I will break his Yoke from off thy Neck, and will burſt thy Bonds, and Strangers ſhall no more ſerve themſelves of him.* Amos ix. 15. *And I will plant them upon their Land, and they ſhall no more be pulled up out of their Land which I have given them, ſaith the Lord thy God.* Zeph. iii. 15. *The Lord hath taken thy Judgments, he hath caſt out the Enemy; the King of Iſrael, even the Lord in the midſt of thee; thou ſhalt not ſee evil any more.* Iſai. lxii. 4. *Thou ſhalt no more be termed Forſaken, neither ſhall thy Land any more be termed Deſolate.* Chap. liv. 4. *Thou ſhalt not be put to ſhame; for thou ſhalt forget the ſhame of thy Youth, and ſhalt not remember the reproach of thy Widowhood any more.*

Thus we ſee what an harmony there is among the holy Prophets in the Evidence they give of this thing, that a time is coming when the Church ſhall be no more in a ſuffering Condition from her Enemies. Moſt of theſe Scriptures do indeed reſpect the Jews primarily, who as yet remain caſt off by God in a great meaſure, and are deſpiſed and under the Reproach of Men, beſides their ſuffering otherwiſe: Which is a proof that the time of their happy State, foretold in the Scriptures forequoted, is not yet come, but remains to be expected.

I know it will be ſaid, that when it is ſaid concerning ſuch and ſuch things, that they ſhall be *no more*, or *not any more*, it is not always to be underſtood in the moſt abſolute and unlimited ſenſe, but that they ſhall be no more ſo and ſo, for a *long time*; and that theſe negative Particles, *no more*, *not any more*, are no more abſolute and unlimited in their ſignification, than ſuch affirmative Particles are, as when ſuch and ſuch things are ſaid to be for ever, or everlaſting, which yet ſometimes ſignifie but only a long duration of time, or for a great while. But ſuppoſing this to be true, yet it will not follow that theſe Scriptures, which I have inſtanced in, are to be underſtood in ſuch a limited ſenſe, or if ſome of them ſhould (to ſuppoſe which I think is more than can be proved) yet I can hardly think any Man of Judgment will think them all to be of that nature. And if but ſome of them be to be underſtood in an abſolute and unlimited ſenſe, the thing deſigned to be proved by them is as certainly proved, as if they were all to be underſtood in ſuch an abſolute ſenſe. But ſuppoſe none of theſe *no more*'s ſhould ſignifie any thing more than for a long duration of time, or for many Generations, as *Iſai.* lx. 15. *Whereas thou haſt been forſaken and hated, ſo that no Man went thorow thee, I will make thee an eternal Excellency, a joy of many Generations:* I ſay, ſuppoſe this, yet when was the Church and People of the *Jews* free for any ſuch long time, as *many Generations* ſignifies, from all ſuch Suffering as the Scriptures forecited foreſhew they ſhould be? or indeed ſo much as for one Generation? For after their return out of their Seventy Years Captivity into their own Land, can we with any good ground ſay that they had any ſuch long intermiſſion or freedom from Moleſtation and Trouble, but that within a ſhorter ſpace than the length of one Generation they were perplexed with one ſort of Enemies or another? For according to the Prophet *Daniel*'s Prediction, the Seventy Weeks, or the times intervening between the Command of *Cyrus* to reſtore and build *Jeruſalem*, and the Coming and Suffering of the *Meſſias*, were to be *troubleſome times*, as he calls them, *Dan.* ix. 25. And ſo they were, for after their return out of Captivity, they met with trouble and oppoſition in rebuilding the City and Temple, and were hindred in it for a long time. And after the Empire was transferred from the *Medes* and *Perſians* to the *Grecians*; though *Alexander* the Great was favourable to the *Jews*, yet his Reign after his Conqueſt was but very ſhort, and his Succeſſors became troubleſome to them. So that though they were not in Captivity out of their own Land, as before they had been, yet they were from time to time vexed and oppreſſed by *Alexander*'s Succeſſors, by means of their continual Wars one with another, *Judea* lying between the contending Parties, Kings of *Syria* and *Egypt*. Each of which Parties labouring to draw the *Jews* to their aſſiſtance, the *Jews* ſtill made that ſide Enemies to them, which they refuſed to ſide with, and accordingly felt the effects of it from time to time. And at laſt they fell under the power of the *Romans*, when the Empire fell into their hands.

So that the beſt and moſt proſperous State which the *Jews* at any time enjoyed after they came out of Captivity, ſeems to fall very far ſhort of anſwering that glorious and flouriſhing Eſtate which the Prophets have foretold they ſhould be ſettled in one time or other, when they ſhall *not learn War any more*, but that every one ſhall ſit under his own Vine, and under his own Fig-tree, and none ſhall make them afraid, and when there ſhall be no more hurting or deſtroying in all God's holy Mountain. And therefore, though it ſhould be granted that the Prophets in foretelling the Glory of the *Jews* Deliverances, and of their happy Eſtate after, ſhould have an immediate reſpect unto their Deliverances from the *Aſſyrian* Invaſion in *Hezekiah*'s time, and to their Deliverance from their Seventy Years Captivity, as doubtleſs they had in many of them: Yet they might for all that have reſpect therein alſo unto another Deliverance more remote and more glorious than thoſe, and to another happy ſtate in their own Land, for tranſcending any they ever yet have enjoyed ſince their return out of their Seventy Years Captivity.

For Prophecies and Promiſes are many of them fulfill'd gradually, and not all at once. The Prophecy that Chriſt *ſhould have the Heathen for his Inheritance, and the utmoſt parts of the Earth for his Poſſeſſion*, Pſal. ii. has been fulfilling gradually, and is not yet compleatly fulfill'd but in part, and perhaps in far the leſſer part. And the like may be ſaid of that Prophecy or Promiſe, of *making the Enemies of Chriſt his footſtool*, Pſal. cx. And that Prophecy, *Zech.* xii. 10. *They ſhall look on him whom they have pierced, and ſhall mourn*, was fulfilled in part when thoſe who had their hands in crucifying our bleſſed Saviour, were prick'd in their Hearts for it, *Acts* ii. 37. but the compleat fulfilling of it is yet behind when the *Jews* ſhall be converted. And it's ſaid, Rev. i. 7. *That every Eye ſhall ſee him, and all Kindreds of the Earth ſhall wail becauſe of him.* That ſaying of the Prophet, *Hoſea* xi. 1. *When Iſrael was a Child, then I loved him, and called my Son out of Egypt*; look'd backward to what God had done, *Exod.* iv. 23. and forward to what he would do in bringing Chriſt out of *Egypt* when but a Child, *Matth.* ii. 15. That Saying, *Iſai.* xxix. 13. *This People draw near with their mouth, and with their lips do honour me, but have removed their heart far from me; and their fear towards me is taught by the precepts of Men*; reſpected primarily a great part of the *Jews* then in being, when the Prophet ſpake theſe words: And yet our Saviour ſays that the Prophet in thoſe words propheſied of the Phariſees in his time, *Matth.* xv. 8, 9. So that many of the Divine Prophecies carry double as we ſay. And accordingly we frequently find many Sayings of the Prophets ſaid to be fulfilled by what is done under the New Teſtament, which yet primarily and in the Letter reſpected what was done under the Old Teſtament, *Matth.* ii. 17. and iv. 14, 15. and xiii. 14, 15, &c.

Theſe things being ſo, it may well be, that when the Prophets propheſied of a glorious Deliverance and Reſtauration of the *Jews* in general terms, and without limitation, which yet are applicable in a lower ſenſe to one Deliverance, and in a higher to another; it may, I ſay, well be, that both thoſe Deliverances which were leſſer and nearer hand, and that which will be greater and is more remote, may be comprehended in ſuch Prophecies, and receive their Accompliſhment gradually. And when we meet with Prophecies of ſuch a happy State of the *Jews* as far tranſcends any they have been in ſince thoſe Prophecies were firſt declared (as we ſhall with many) we ſhould greatly wrong ſuch Prophecies, and do that which tends to draw on a ſuſpicion of their Truth, in caſe we ſhould limit and reſtrain them to ſuch a State as falls quite ſhort of what ſuch Prophecies, according to the beſt Rules of ſpeaking, do import. When ſuch Circumſtances are foretold to accompany the *Jews* Deliverance and Reſtauration, as are not applicable to any Deliverance or Reſtauration they ever yet enjoyed, we have great reaſon in that caſe to underſtand ſuch Prophecies to refer to what is yet to come.

The Apoſtle ſpeaks of the Unbelief of the *Jews*, and of God's caſting them off for a long time thereupon, as of a *Myſtery*, Rom. xi. 25. *I would not, Brethren, that ye ſhould be ignorant of this myſtery, that blindneſs is happen'd to Iſrael in part, until the fulneſs of the Gentiles be come in*, but that then *all Iſrael ſhall be ſaved.* And why a *Myſtery?* but becauſe both their Rejection and Reſtoration were but obſcurely revealed, being wrapt up in ſuch Prophecies as primarily might ſeem to relate to their Captivity in *Babylon*, and their Deliverance out of it, and Reſtoration in their own Land. And the Myſteriouſneſs of their Rejection, as foretold in the Scripture, was one reaſon, as may well be conceived, why they did ſo violently and vehemently oppoſe St. *Paul* in his Doctrine touching their being caſt off by God for a time. And the very ſame thing ſeems to be the reaſon why many Chriſtians can hardly be brought to believe any general Reſtoration of that Nation to be deſigned by God; and are apt to underſtand and reſtrain ſuch Prophecies by which it is foretold, as relating only to their Deliverance out of the *Babyloniſh* Captivity, and Reſtoration thereupon in their own Land.

But if there ſhall be ſuch a Reſtoration of that Nation, as St. *Paul* has aſſured us there will, when he ſays, *that blindneſs is happen'd unto Iſrael but in part, and until the fulneſs of the Gentiles ſhall come in*, but that then *all Iſrael ſhall be ſaved:* I ſay, if this be ſo, then it will be unreaſonable to think that God by his Prophets has taken no notice of ſo great a thing as the recovering of ſuch a People out of ſo ſad a Condition as that is, in which they live unto this day; when as in Deliverances of far leſs Conſequence to them, the Prophets have abounded in foretelling them, and that before the Calamity befel them, out of which they were to be delivered.

Theſe things pre-conſidered, will be of uſe to us in the grounds upon which I ſhall proceed afterward in our Enquiry into the State of the Church, as it is like to be in the latter Ages of the World.

CHAP. II.

Of the Diſſolution of ſuch National Governments in the World, as are oppoſite to Chriſt's Kingdom and Government, in order to the ſetting up of his.

IN order to Chriſt's Reign over the World (in that ſenſe of his Reigning, to which I intend chiefly to bend my Enquiries) we ſhall find that he will take down ſuch Powers, and diſſolve ſuch Governments as ſhall then be oppoſite to his. I ſay, in that ſenſe of his Reigning: For in one ſenſe of it, it is not neceſſary for Chriſt to take down ſuch Government, which is oppoſite to his Government, before he can ſet up his own. For in one ſenſe he reigns as King over his Church *in the midſt of his Enemies*, when by his Goſpel he gathers him a People, and governs them among the Inhabitants of ſuch Nations, the Government of which is Idolatrous; or otherwiſe contrary to his. And thus Chriſt reign'd in the midſt of his Enemies, when in the Primitive Times of Chriſtianity, he had a great multitude in the *Roman* Empire, while *Pagan*, who owned and avowed Chriſt to be ſuperiour to all Earthly Potentates, and his Laws to be ſuperiour to theirs, and to be obeyed rather than theirs, when they commanded what he forbad, or forbad what he commanded. And this fell out according to what was foretold of him, Pſal. cx. 2. *The Lord ſhall ſend the Rod of thy Strength out of Sion: Rule thou in the midſt of thine Enemies.* The *Rod* or Scepter of his Strength ſent out of *Sion*, was the *Law*, which another Prophet foretold ſhould *go out of Sion, and the Word of the Lord from Jeruſalem*, Iſai. ii. 2. This was the Law of the Meſſias, or the Goſpel which was firſt preach'd in *Jeruſalem*, and from thence carried all over the *Roman* Empire. By reaſon whereof very many forſook the Religion and Worſhip commanded by Imperial Authority, and became obedient to the Goſpel, notwithſtanding all that the power of the Empire could do to hinder it: In which reſpect Chriſt might truly and properly be ſaid to *rule in the midſt of his Enemies.* And the ſame is true of all Orthodox Chriſtians this day, who live in Nations, whoſe Government is Idolatrous.

But then there is another ſenſe of Chriſt's Reigning, and that is when the National Government of Kingdoms, Principalities, and Common-wealths is truly Chriſtian, as it is when the Faith of the Goſpel, and the Worſhip therein required, is made the Religion of thoſe Nations by National Authority. For when the Authority of Chriſt is by National Conſtitution owned to be chief, and that no Laws repugnant to his ought to be obey'd, then he may be truly ſaid to Reign over thoſe Nations, the ſecular Kings and Rulers of them, acknowledging themſelves in their Dominion and Government to be ſubordinate and ſubject to him. And when-ever the Government of Nations becomes ſuch, they for that reaſon become *the Kingdoms of the Lord and of his Chriſt*; and but Kingdoms of the World till then, as I have ſhewed elſewhere.

In this ſenſe then it is, that we ſay Chriſt cannot be ſaid to Reign over the Kingdoms of the World, until the Government of them as oppoſite to his is diſſolved, and the Powers ſupporting ſuch Government be broken. Rule, and power of Ruling, will firſt be taken out of the hands of ſuch as are Enemies to Chriſt in the nature of their Government, before it can be put into the hands of ſuch as will uſe it for him, for his honour and intereſt, and for the benefit of his Church. And accordingly we ſhall find the Diſſolution and Deſtruction of ſuch Powers foretold in Scripture as are oppoſite to Chriſt and his Government, in order to the introducing his Reign and Government over the Nations of the World. Thus in *Pſal.* ii. it's foretold, *That though the Kings of the Earth and Rulers ſhall take counſel together and ſtand up againſt Chriſt*, to hinder him from ruling by his Goſpel in their Dominions; that yet for all that, *God will ſet his Son as King upon his holy Hill of Sion*, and make him uppermoſt in the World at laſt: And that in order to this, *he will daſh his Enemies to pieces like a Potter's Veſſel*, never to be repaired or piec'd together again. And that then indeed, *he ſhall have the Heathen for his Inheritance, and the utmoſt parts of the Earth for his Poſſeſſion.*

And to this agrees that of the Apoſtle, 1 *Cor.* xv. 24. where ſpeaking of Chriſt's Kingdom and Reign in times of this World, as preceding his delivering up that Kingdom of his to God the Father at laſt, ſhews, that in the time of this his Reign, *he ſhall have put down all rule, and all Authority and Power.* Meaning thereby, all adverſe Rule, Authority and Power, as the next *verſe* ſhews, where he ſays, *for he muſt reign, till he hath put all Enemies under his feet.* Which two Verſes Dr. *Hammond* paraphraſeth thus: *When in the Concluſion of this World, of this Spiritual Kingdom of Chriſt in the Church here below, he ſhall deliver up all his power exerciſed by himſelf, and his Commiſſioners, into the hands of God his Father; having firſt deſtroyed all Earthly Dominions, pronouncing ſentence on the greateſt Potentates as well as the meaneſt Men; or elſe ſubdued all to his power by converting them, and deſtroying all other. For to this purpoſe was the Promiſe made to Chriſt,* Pſal. cx. *that his Spiritual Kingdom on Earth ſhall laſt ſo long till God had brought all the World to be ſubject to him.* This then, I think, is very clear from this Text, That Chriſt will firſt or laſt, during the time of his Spiritual Kingdom and Reign here, put down all Rule, all Authority and Power that is contrary to his. And for what purpoſe will this be done? Certainly not to that end that there might be no Government, no Rule, Authority and Power in the World; but that there might be none but his, or ſuch as ſhall be exerciſed for him by his Vice-gerents or Commiſſioners. This is called his *taking to himſelf his great Power and Reigning*, and the Foreſight of it Prophetically celebrated, *Rev.* xi. *We give thee thanks, O Lord God Almighty, becauſe thou haſt taken to thee thy great power, and haſt reigned*, i. e. taken to thee, and out of other hands.

And as theſe and other like Scriptures ſhew, that all Power, Rule and Government will be taken out of the hands of the Enemies of Chriſt in general all the World over, to be put into his; ſo there are other which point out ſome more ſpecially and particularly who will be thus dealt with; and thoſe ſeem to be the Governours and Government of the *Roman Monarchy* ſo far as adverſe to Chriſt's Kingdom and Government. The Interpretation which the Prophet *Daniel* gave of the Dream of *Nebuchadnezzar* concerning the Image which he ſaw in his Dream, is one ground or reaſon of the foreſaid Aſſertion. The Image ſeemed to be made up of four ſorts of Metal; the Head of Gold, the Breaſt and Arms of Silver, the Thighs of Braſs, the Legs of Iron, the Feet part of Iron and part of Clay, *chap.* ii. 32. Theſe according to *Daniel*'s Interpretation, ſignified four Kingdoms or Monarchies ſucceeding one another. The three former of theſe, as all agree, were the *Babylonian*, that of the *Medes and Perſians*, and the *Grecian* Monarchies. The fourth and laſt, was the *Roman* Monarchy, as moſt hold. And the ten Toes of the Feet being the laſt part of the Image, ſignified the Diviſion of this laſt Kingdom into ten leſſer Kingdoms in proceſs of time. The Diviſion of which Kingdom into ten, agrees exactly to what befel the *Roman* Monarchy, and is one good Argument to prove that Monarchy to be meant by the fourth Kingdom.

But *Nebuchadnezzar* ſaw alſo in his Dream, *a Stone cut out without hands, which ſmote the Image upon his Feet, and brake them to pieces, and the Wind carried them away, ſo that no place was found for them*; but the Stone which ſmote the Image, *became a great Mountain, and filled the whole Earth*, Dan. ii. 34, 35. The Interpretation hereof we have, *ver.* 44, 45. *In the days of theſe Kings* (meaning of the laſt of them) *ſhall the God of Heaven ſet up a Kingdom (to wit, the Kingdom of Chriſt,) which ſhall never be deſtroy'd, but ſhall break in pieces and conſume all theſe Kingdoms, and it ſhall ſtand for ever.* Suppoſing then this fourth Kingdom to be the *Roman* Monarchy, this proves that this Monarchy will in time be broken to pieces by the Kingdom and Kingly Power of Chriſt, and that his Kingdom ſhall ſucceed the Ruine of that.

The ſame thing was repreſented to the ſame Prophet in another Viſion, *chap.* vii. In which Viſion he ſaw four great Beaſts, by which were meant four Kings or Kingdoms, as before in the Dream, according to the Interpretation of the Angel to *Daniel*, ver. 17. The fourth and laſt of theſe Beaſts had, as the Prophet ſaw in the Viſion, ten Horns (as the Image had ten Toes) and a little Horn came up among them, *ver.* 7. 8. This fourth Beaſt ſignified the fourth Kingdom or Monarchy, and the ten Horns of this Beaſt ſignified ten Kings according to the Angels Interpretation, *ver.* 24. By all which we may know that it is the *Roman* Monarchy that is here deciphered, becauſe that was divided into ten Kingdoms or Dominions, and becauſe it immediately ſucceeded the *Greek* Empire which was the third in the four.

And if theſe ten Horns belong to the *Roman* Beaſt or Monarchy, then the little Horn which came up among them, muſt belong to that Monarchy likewiſe. And the little Horn that came up among the ten, and yet differing from them, as it is ſaid it did, *ver.* xx. 24. ſhews us who is pointed to by it: And it muſt be he or they who in that Empire exerciſe a Power and Government different from that of the ten Kings, theirs being but *ſecular*, but this of the little Horn *Spiritual or Eccleſiaſtical*, as that of the *Pope* and his Clergy is. This little Horn is ſaid to come up among the ten Horns, becauſe, as I conceive, he did not as ſuch come into being, was not inveſted with his Power, nor known in the Empire in his proper Capacity, until the Empire became divided into its ten Kingdoms. By means of which Diviſion alſo, he got an Opportunity and Advantage to become a little Horn; whoſe Riſe perhaps was not ſo viſible as the ten Kings Reception of their Kingly Power was. For the breaking of the Empire to pieces at that time, did probably ſo take up Mens Thoughts and buſie their Minds, eſpecially of thoſe new Kings themſelves, that the riſing of the little Horn was little taken notice of, or diſcerned, until he had got ſome footing. In which reſpect he is perhaps ſaid to riſe *behind* the ten Horns, as not diſcerned in his Riſe: For the word tranſlated *after*, at *ver.* 24. may be as well rendred *behind*, as *after*, according to what Mr. *Joſ. Mede* and other learned Men have ſaid. And it may be this little Horn did not appear in his proper Capacity, until after the Riſe of ſome of thoſe ten Kings into whoſe hand the Empire was divided, and yet he might ſo appear before that Diviſion was compleated, which was not till many Years after that Diviſion began. And if ſo, he may well enough be ſaid in one reſpect to riſe *after* thoſe Kings, and in another to riſe *among* them.

Underſtanding then by the Beaſt with ten Horns, the *Roman* Empire in its State of Diviſion into ten Kingdoms, exerciſing ſecular Power; and by the little Horn that came up among them, the Papacy exerciſing an exorbitant Eccleſiaſtical Power in the ſame Empire; we ſhall now conſider the reſt of the Prophets Viſion and Revelation, which concerns the Deſtruction of the little Horn, and the ten horned Beaſt, ſo far as thoſe ten Kings ſupported the little Horn, or were ſubſervient to it in the Exerciſe of his undue Power; they having *given their Power and Strength unto the Beaſt*, as was foretold they would, *Rev.* xvii. 13. And we ſhall find that the Deſtruction of this Beaſt and the little Horn, is fore-ſhew'd in this Viſion, as making way for and uſhering in the more ample and extenſive Reign and Kingdom of the Meſſias.

For *Daniel* beheld until he ſaw Thrones ſet, and the Ancient of Days ſitting in a Majeſtick manner, to judge the Beaſt and little Horn, with a fiery Stream iſſuing and coming forth before him, *chap.* vii. 9, 10. And he ſays he *beheld* alſo *until (becauſe of the Voice of the great words which the Horn ſpake) the Beaſt was ſlain, and his Body deſtroy'd, and given to the burning Flame*, ver. 11. Then follows in the Viſion that which the Deſtruction of the Beaſt and little Horn made way for, to wit, Chriſt coming to take the Kingdom. *I ſaw in the Night Viſions*, ſaith he, *and behold one like the Son of Man, came with the Clouds of Heaven, and came to the Antient of Days, and they brought him near before him. And there was given him Dominion and Glory, and a Kingdom, that all People, Nations and Languages ſhould ſerve him*, ver. 13, 14.

And thus again at *ver.* 26. *But the Judgment ſhall ſit, and they ſhall take away his Dominion, to conſume, and to deſtroy it to the end.* And then it follows, *ver.* 27. *and the Kingdom and Dominion, and the Greatneſs of the Kingdom under the whole Heaven, ſhall be given to the People of the Saints of the moſt high, whoſe Kingdom is an everlaſting Kingdom, and all Dominions ſhall ſerve and obey him.*

And thus we ſee that the removing out of the way of the laſt of the four Monarchies, for the introducing of Chriſt's Kingdom and Government in the room of it, is plainly foretold over and ove rby this Prophet of the Lord, *Daniel*. And although it is the general ſenſe of Authors both Antient and Modern, that this fourth Kingdom, of which *Daniel* ſpeaks, is no other than the *Roman Monarchy*, yet ſome there have been who would perſuade us that the Succeſſors of *Alexander* the Great in the *Grecian* Monarchy, ſtiled the *Lagidæ* and *Seleucidæ*, are meant by this fourth Kingdom. But that they are miſtaken herein, is eaſily evinced.

I. For, firſt, *Alexander* and his Succeſſors made but *one Kingdom*; and if ſo, then the Succeſſors of *Alexander* could not be of the fourth Kingdom, but of the third, as *Alexander* himſelf was, as all agree. And that the Succeſſors of *Alexander*, as well as *Alexander* himſelf, were of one and the ſame Kingdom, will appear thus. Firſt, becauſe *Alexander* is ſaid to be the *firſt* King of *Grecia*, *Dan.* viii. 21. And *firſt* is a Relative Term, and implies and ſuppoſeth a *ſecond*; and if there were a ſecond King of the ſame Kingdom, of which *Alexander* was the firſt, then *Alexander* in his Reign could not alone make the third Kingdom, but that it was he and his Succeſſors that did ſo. Secondly, in *Dan.* viii. 8. it's ſaid, *When the great Horn of the Goat was broken*, (that is, when *Alexander* was taken off by Death) *four notable ones came up for it, or in the room of it*, which were *Alexander*'s four great Commanders and Succeſſors. The great Horn of the Goat, and the four notable ones, ſprang all out of the ſame Root, and managed the Government of the ſame Monarchy. This is yet more fully and plainly ſet out in *Dan.* vii. 6. where the third of the four Beaſts which *Daniel* ſaw coming up out of the Sea, was like a *Leopard*, which had on the back of it four Wings of a Fowl, and four Heads alſo. Now this third Beaſt ſignified the third of the four Monarchies, as the other three Beaſts did the reſt. And theſe four Heads we ſee were Heads of this third Beaſt, by which the third Kingdom was repreſented in the Viſion: And they ſignified the four Commanders, to whom *Alexander* in his Life-time aſſigned the Government of his Dominions, 1 *Mac.* i. 6. And therefore it is evident that theſe Heads being part of the Beaſt by which the third Monarchy was repreſented, the four Succeſſors of *Alexander* and their Government muſt needs appertain and belong to the Monarchy it ſelf, which was ſignified and repreſented by that Beaſt, deſcribed with four Heads. Thirdly, the King of *Grecia*, *Alexander*, and his four immediate Succeſſors, having been ſpoken of, *Chap.* viii. *ver.* 21, 22. it is ſaid in *ver.* 23. that in the latter time of *their Kingdom*, a King of fierce Countenance ſhall ſtand up, meaning *Antiochus*. From whence we may conclude, that the Kingdom under the Government of *Alexander*, and of all his Succeſſors down to *Antiochus*, was but one Kingdom; for it is termed *their Kingdom*, not their Kingdoms. And that which puts this farther out of doubt, is that which we have in 1 *Mac.* i. 10. where it is ſaid of *Antiochus*, that *he reign'd in the* 137 *Year of the Kingdom of the Greeks.* So that from the firſt founding of that Monarchy, to the 137 Year after, under the Reign of *Alexander*, and of all that ſucceeded him till then, was accounted in the time of the *Maccabees* but one Kingdom, and not *Alexander*'s one, and that of the *Lagidæ* and the *Seleucidæ* another.

2. It is ſaid in *Dan.* vii. 23. of the fourth Kingdom, *that it ſhould be diverſe from all Kingdoms, and that it ſhould devour the whole Earth, and tread it down and break it in pieces.* Which is not true of the Kingdom of the *Lagidæ* and *Seleucidæ* as diſtinct from the Kingdom of *Alexander*; for that was ſo far from devouring the whole Earth, and breaking it to pieces, that it was it ſelf devoured by the *Roman* Kingdom, and quite broken to pieces.

3. The ten Horns of the fourth Beaſt, and the ten Toes of the Image, ſignified ten Kings co-exiſtent as they were in the *Roman* Empire after its Diviſion, and not ten Kings by way of Succeſſion. But there was never any ſuch thing as ten Kings reigning together in the Dominions of the *Lagidæ* and *Seleucidæ*: And therefore they could not be ſignified by the fourth Beaſt with ten Horns.

4. It was foretold by *Daniel*, Chap. ii. 44. that *in the days of the four Kings*, or of one of them, *the God of Heaven would ſet up a Kingdom which ſhould never be deſtroyed*; meaning the Kingdom of Chriſt. But this was done in the time of the *Roman Cæſars*, and not in the time of the *Lagidæ* and *Seleucidæ*; and therefore the *Roman Cæſars* were of the fourth Kingdom, and not the *Lagidæ* and *Seleucidæ*.

5. I might add this farther, That if *Daniel*'s fourth Beaſt, and St. *John*'s Apocalyptick Beaſt be the ſame, then the fourth Kingdom ſignified by the fourth Beaſt cannot fall under the times of the *Lagidæ* and *Seleucidæ*, becauſe the being of the Apocalyptick Beaſt could not fall under thoſe times. But *Daniel*'s fourth Beaſt, and the Apocalyptick Beaſt ſeem to be perfectly the ſame. Firſt, becauſe as the one had ten Horns in *Daniel*'s Viſion, ſo had the other in St. *John*'s. Secondly, becauſe the time of the little Horns domineering over the Saints, and the time of the Reign of the Apocalyptick Beaſt and his making War upon the Saints, is the ſame. As the one is for a time, times, and half a time, or three Years and a half, *Dan.* vii. 25. So is the other for forty two Months, which is the ſame, *Rev.* xiii. 5, 7. And the times of the little Horn, and the times of the ten Horns are the ſame: For the little Horn came up among the ten, and grew out of the

the ſame Head, and is to be deſtroy'd in the Deſtruction of *Daniel*'s fourth Beaſt with ten Horns, *Chap.* vii. 11.

Theſe things and more you may find more largely and learnedly argued againſt *Grotius*, by the Reverend Dr. *Hen. More*, in his *Appendage to his Expoſition of* Daniel's *Prophecies, or Divine Viſions*, beginning p. 245.

Having ſaid thus much to antidote Mens Minds againſt thoſe who perſuade themſelves, and would perſuade others, that by the fourth Kingdom in *Daniel*, we are not to underſtand the *Roman* Monarchy, but the *Grecian* Government in the hands of *Alexander*'s Succeſſors: I might now add unto *Daniel*'s Viſions and Prophecies touching the downfal of this Kingdom, as ſtanding in the way of that more ample Kingdom and Reign of Chriſt in the World, which God hath deſign'd him in the latter Ages of it; to theſe, I ſay, I might add St. *John*'s Viſions and Prophecies touching the ſame thing in his Book of *Revelations*. For ſeveral of thoſe Viſions and Prophecies of his are a great Confirmation to thoſe of *Daniel* we have now inſiſted on, and of the ſenſe in which we underſtand them. And the pouring out of the ſeven Vials under the ſeventh Trumpet, are the ſeven laſt Plagues, as they are called, by which the exorbitant Eccleſiaſtical Power and Intereſt in the Kingdom of the Beaſt, is gradually brought down, and at laſt utterly broken. And this is and will be done to make way for the better Rule and Government of Chriſt, which is to ſucceed the Reign and Ruine of the Beaſt, of which both *Daniel* and St. *John* have propheſied. And therefore it is upon the ruine of the one, and the taking place of the other, as pre-declared, that St. *John* is ſaid to have *heard as it were the voice of a great multitude, and as the voice of many waters, and as the voice of mighty thunderings, ſaying, Alleluja; for the Lord God omnipotent reigneth*, Rev. xix. 6. The whole Univerſal Church, we ſee, will in that day celebrate with Praiſe and Thankſgiving the Omnipotent God and Saviour his taking to himſelf his great Power to reign, when as while his Enemies reigned, he ſeem'd to have laid it by as it were, and to ſuffer them to reign and rule for their time.

I ſhould now have proceeded to enquire in what way and by what means the final ruine of the Kingdom of the Beaſt will at laſt be brought to paſs, but that as I conceive the Call and Converſion of the Jews, and their return from their diſperſion, and what will accompany the ſame, will contribute much to it. For which cauſe I think it more proper to enquire into the Prophecies about that, before I proceed to the other.

CHAP. III.

Of the Times of the Reign of the Beaſt, ſpoken of by Daniel *and St.* John, *and the Times of the* Jews *Diſperſion, coming to a Period much about the ſame time.*

THere are ſome Prophecies which ſeem to intimate as if the time of the *Jews* Diſperſion will come to a Period much about the ſame time, in which the times of the Church's Enemies bearing rule and ſway in the World will be run out. Our bleſſed Saviour, foretelling the Deſtruction of *Jeruſalem* and the Jewiſh State, ſaid concerning that People, *that they ſhould fall by the edge of the Sword, and ſhould be led away captive into all Nations; and that Jeruſalem ſhould be troden down of the Gentiles, until the times of the Gentiles be fulfilled*, Luke xxi. 24. By this our Saviour ſeems to intimate, that the times of the *Gentiles*, and the times of the *Jews* diſperſion in all Nations, will come to an end together, or much about the ſame time. By the *Gentiles* here, I doubt not but our Saviour meant thoſe Powers of the World which would be Enemies to his Church and Kingdom in the World, eſpecially the *Roman* Monarchy, ſo far as ſuch, under which he and his Church were to ſuffer much, and by the power of which the *Jews* were led captive into all Nations of the *Roman* Dominions, and their City and Temple deſtroy'd. By the *times of the Gentiles* which are to be fulfilled, we may underſtand the determined and fixed times of the duration and ſtanding of that Monarchy; for God has limited the times thereof. The Angel in *Rev.* x. 6. ſwore that *there ſhould be time no longer, but that in the days of the voice of the ſeventh Angel, when he ſhall begin to ſound, the myſtery of God ſhould be finiſhed, as he hath declared to his Servants the Prophets.* Meaning, that there ſhould be time no longer permitted to the Enemies of the Church to domineer over them, but only to the times of the ſeventh

Trumpet: In which times, *viz.* towards the end of them, the taking Power and Rule out of the Enemies hands, to put it into the Churches, will be brought to paſs: A thing which the Prophets have much ſpoken of, and yet has been but little underſtood, for which cauſe as we ſee, it is called the *Myſtery of God.* Now theſe times of the *Gentiles* ſeem to be made by our Saviour, the *Meaſure* of the time in which *Jeruſalem* was to be troden down of the *Gentiles*, and the *Jews* Captivity and Diſperſion in all Nations was to laſt: And if ſo, then the times of both will come out together.

A farther Intimation of this nature we ſeem to have by the ſixth Vial being *poured out upon the great River Euphrates, that the way of the Kings of the Eaſt might be prepared*, Rev. xvi. 12. If by this we underſtand the preparing a way by God's ſpecial Providence for the *Jews* return out of their Diſperſion, or for their Converſion (as our Modern and beſt Expoſitors generally do) then it will farther ſhew, that the *Jews* return from their Diſperſion, and the Subverſion of the Kingdom of the Beaſt will be brought to paſs near about the ſame time. Upon the pouring out of the former Vial upon the Seat of the Beaſt, his Kingdom will be full of Darkneſs, in ſo ill a condition as that they will gnaw their Tongues for Anguiſh and Vexation at it, *ver.* 10. and yet upon the pouring out of this ſixth Vial their condition is like to be much worſe, and ſuch as will bring them to the next ſtep to utter Ruine. For the Beaſt and falſe Prophet being now on their laſt Legs, and ſtruggling for Life as it were, *three unclean Spirits like Frogs, will be ſent out of the Mouth of the Dragon, out of the Mouth of the Beaſt, and out of the Mouth of the falſe Prophet, to the Kings of the Earth and of the whole World, to gather them to the Battle of the great Day of God Almighty.* That is, they will in this laſt Effort of theirs beſtir themſelves to the utmoſt, to draw in all the Aid they can poſſible from all ſorts of Enemies to the Church, in all parts of the World, to ſupport their tottering Kingdom, and to keep them from ſinking down-right. But all this will but prepare them for the greater Execution to be done upon them with all their Confederates, by the pouring out of the laſt Vial upon them.

And that the drying up of the Waters of the River *Euphrates* to prepare the way of the Kings of the Eaſt, may be intended to ſignifie God's doing ſomething exraordinary at that time for the recovering the *Jews* from their Diſperſion, and for the bringing them together again in order to their returning to poſſeſs their own Land, will not ſeem improbable, when ſome other Divine Prophecies are compared with this. For in *Iſa.* xi. 11, 12. it's ſaid, *That it ſhall come to paſs in that day that the Lord ſhall ſet his hand the ſecond time to recover the remnant of his People which ſhall be left from Aſſyria, and from Egypt, and from Pathros, and from Ethiopia, and from Elam, and from Shinar, and from Hamath, and from the Iſlands of the Sea. And he ſhall ſet up an Enſign for the Nations, and ſhall aſſemble the Out-caſts of Iſrael, and gather together the diſperſed of Juda from the four corners of the Earth.* And *ver.* 15, 16. *The Lord ſhall utterly deſtroy the Tongue of the Egyptian Sea, and with his mighty Wind ſhall ſhake his hand over the River, and ſhall ſmite it in the ſeven Streams, and make Men go over dry ſhod. And there ſhall be a high way for the remnant of his People which ſhall be left from Aſſyria, like as it was to Iſrael in the day that he came up out of the Land of Egypt.* And if the drying up of the Waters of the River *Euphrates* by pouring out the ſixth Vial ſhall be thought not to refer to this Prophecy of *Iſaiah*, becauſe *Euphrates* is not mentioned here: Yet though *Euphrates* be not mentioned here, it ſeems to be plainly implied. For what elſe in reaſon can we underſtand by a *high way* from *Aſſyria* for the *Jews*, *like* as it was to *Iſrael* wh[illegible]e came out of *Egypt*, but *ſuch* a high way through *Euphrates* the River of *Aſſyria*, as *Iſrael* had through the Red Sea when he came out of *Egypt*? The Prophet had mentioned the return of the *Jews* out of *Aſſyria* before, as well as from other places, *ver.* 11. but becauſe their return out of *Aſſyria* to *Judea* did not lie through *Egypt* nor the River *Nilus*, as it did for thoſe of them diſperſed in other places there mentioned by the Prophet, therefore it ſeems neceſſary for him to re-aſſume the Buſineſs of their return out of *Aſſyria*, and to ſhew how that ſhould be provided for by God, as well as the return of other of them was through the River of *Egypt*. And having mentioned the ſmiting of the River of *Egypt* in the ſeven Streams, ſo that they might go over dry-ſhod, he only varies the Phraſe about their return out of *Aſſyria*, and ſays there ſhould be ſuch a high way made for them out of *Aſſyria*, as there was for them out of *Egypt* of old, which every one knows was by dividing the Waters. And the Prophet *Zechary* confirms this in Expreſſneſs of Words, *chap.* x. 10, 11. *I will bring them again alſo out of the Land of Egypt, and gather them from Aſſyria, and he ſhall paſs through the Sea with Affliction, and ſhall ſmite the Waves in the Sea, and all the Deeps of the River ſhall dry up: And the Pride of Aſſyria ſhall be brought down, and the*

the Scepter of Egypt ſhall depart away. And here it is to be noted that this Prophet *Zechary* propheſying after the *Jews* return out of the 70 Years Captivity, the thing here propheſied of, of bringing the *Jews* out of *Aſſyria* and *Egypt* through the Sea and the River, could not refer to what was to be done for the bringing them out of that Captivity which was paſt. Nor do we read of any ſuch extraordinary things done for the *Jews* Deliverance out of the 70 Years Captivity, or out of any other Diſperſion of theirs unto this day, as the dividing the Seas or the Rivers for them, mentioned by theſe two Prophets; and therefore theſe Prophecies in reaſon muſt in this part of them at leaſt, refer to what is yet to come. And they can refer to no time ſo likely as to the time of the pouring out of the ſixth Vial, by which the Waters of the River *Euphrates* will be dried up.

It will put the matter out of all doubt, I conceive, that this Prophecy in *Eſay* was not fulfilled in the return of the *Jews* out of their 70 Years Captivity, as ſome Expoſitors have ſuppoſed it was, nor indeed at any time ſince unto this day, if we conſider the import of the Prophets ſaying, that the Lord ſhall ſet his hand again the *ſecond time*, to recover the Remnant of his People which ſhall be left from *Aſſyria*, *Egypt*, *Pathros*, *Cuſh*, *Elam*, *Shinar*, *Hamath*, and from the Iſlands of the Sea. For God did not recover his People the *firſt time* out of the ſeveral Countries and Nations here named, when he brought them out of *Egypt*, but out of *Egypt* only where they were in Bondage. And therefore though God did deliver them out of thoſe ſeveral places in recovering them out of their 70 Years Captivity, yet it was but the *firſt* time he did ſo, and not the *ſecond*. And therefore it follows neceſſarily, that the Lord's ſetting his hand the *ſecond* time to recover his People out of all theſe places, muſt refer to ſome time ſince that Deliverance out of the *Babylonian* Captivity, or to ſome time yet to come. But no time is, nor, as I think, can be aſſigned, in which God has delivered the *Jews* out of the ſeveral Nations and Places forenamed, ſince their Deliverance out of their 70 Years Captivity; and therefore in all reaſon muſt refer to one yet to come. And that in all Probability will be when God ſhall work ſuch Wonders for them as are ſet forth and deſcribed in this Prophecy, which I think he has not done ever ſince this Prophecy was declar'd.

I might mention more Prophecies which look the ſame way, as *Iſa.* xxvii. 12, 13. *And it ſhall come to paſs in that day, that the Lord ſhall beat off from the Chanel of the River unto the Stream of Egypt, and ye ſhall be gathered one by one, O ye Children of Iſrael. And it ſhall come to paſs in that day, that the great Trumpet ſhall be blown, and they ſhall come which were ready to periſh in the Land of Aſſyria, and the Out-caſts in the Land of Egypt, and ſhall worſhip the Lord in the holy Mount at Jeruſalem.* And again, *Iſa.* xlii. 15, 16. *I will make the Rivers Iſlands, and will dry up the Pools, and will bring the blind by a way they knew not, I will lead them in Paths that they have not known.*

And beſides, there are other Prophecies which foretel in general Terms, that God will do as marvellous things for the recovery of his ancient People out of their Diſperſion, as he did in bringing them out of *Egypt*. Thus *Micah* vii. 15, 16. *According to the days of thy coming out of the Land of Egypt, will I ſhew unto him marvellous things: The Nations ſhall be confounded at their might, they ſhall lay their hand upon their Mouth*, &c. Nay it ſhould ſeem the Wonderfulneſs of this Deliverance ſhall in ſome reſpect exceed that out of *Egypt*, ſo that the Fame of the former will be ſwallowed up by the latter. *Behold the Days come ſaith the Lord, that they ſhall no more ſay the Lord liveth which brought up the Children of Iſrael out of Egypt; but the Lord liveth which brought and which led the Seed of the Houſe of Iſrael out of the North Country, and from all Countries whither I had driven them, and they ſhall dwell in their own Land*, Jer. xxiii. 7, 8. And that this is ſpoken of, as that which will be done in the Days of the Kingdom of the Meſſiah, ſeems plainly to appear by the Connexion of theſe words with thoſe going before in the two precedent Verſes, where he had ſaid, *Behold the days come, ſaith the Lord, that I will raiſe unto David a righteous Branch, and a King ſhall reign and proſper, and he ſhall execute Judgment and Juſtice in the Earth, in his days Juda ſhall be ſaved, and Iſrael ſhall dwell ſafely: And this is his Name whereby he ſhall be called, The Lord our Righteouſneſs. Therefore behold the days come, ſaith the Lord, that they ſhall no more ſay, the Lord liveth*, &c.

I have inſiſted the more on theſe Scriptures, to ſhew how probable it is that the drying up the River *Euphrates* upon the pouring out of the ſixth Vial, will be for the preparing a way for the *Jews* return to their own Land, and conſequently, that this return of theirs will fall out much about or near the end of the Reign of the Beaſt.

Moreover, if the *Marriage of the Lamb being come, and his Wiſe's making her ſelf ready*, mentioned *Rev.* xix. 7. be to be underſtood of the *Jews* Converſion and Conjunction with Chriſt and with his Church, as it is in the Judgment of the moſt approved Expoſitors; then this Scripture alſo will incline us to think, that the calling of the *Jews*, and the final overthrow of the Papal Power, and of the Power of other known Enemies of Chriſt, will fall out about the ſame time. For the Voice of the Church, ſaying, *Let us be glad and rejoyce, and give honour unto him; for the Marriage of the Lamb is come, and his Wife hath made her ſelf ready*; together with the *Allelujahs* in the former Verſes, will be partly for the deſtruction of *Babylon* deſcribed in the former Chapter, and partly for the Marriage and Supper of the Lamb, as then falling in upon it. Beſides, the Battel of the Rider on the white Horſe and his Army, follows quickly upon this, in which the Beaſt and falſe Prophet will be taken, and the reſt ſlain by him whom *John* ſaw in his Viſion ſitting upon the Horſe, as it follows in that Chapter.

The eleventh Chapter of *Daniel* and laſt Verſe, compared with Chap. xii. Ver. 1. ſeems likewiſe to give us a fair intimation, that the Deliverance of the *Jews*, and the Ruine of ſome notable and potent Enemy of the Church, will fall out about the ſame time. It is ſaid of that Enemy, Chap. xi. and laſt ver. *That he ſhall come to his end, and none ſhall help him. And at that ſame time Michael ſhall ſtand up, the great Prince which ſtandeth for the Children of thy People, and there ſhall be a time of trouble, ſuch as never was ſince there was a Nation to that time; and at that time thy People ſhall be delivered*, Chap. xii. 1. The Deliverance here ſpoken of, at ſuch a time of trouble as never was the like, does not ſeem to be meant of any particular Deliverance of *Daniel*'s People; not a deliverance from one Enemy, to fall into the hands of another quickly after, as they did after they were delivered from the Oppreſſion and Perſecution of *Antiochus Epiphanes*, and then to fall under new Troubles from his Succeſſors, and in concluſion to be brought under the power of the *Romans*, which proved more fatal to their Nation, than what they ſuffer'd from all the Enemies they had before. And therefore it ſeems far more likely to be meant of a general Deliverance from all Enemies of all Nations from ever holding them in bondage any more. And this is agreeable to what God hath abundantly declared concerning that People, after he hath gathered them out of all other Nations, and placed them in their own Land, as is ſhewed in the firſt Chapter. This Deliverance ſeems to be meant of one more extenſive, ample and abſolute, than that was which they received by the Death of *Antiochus*, which yet ſome endeavour to limit it to. For although *Antiochus* died in his Expedition into *Perſia*, by which the *Jews* were rid of one Enemy, yet their Sufferings were not at an end by that. For they were oppreſſed by his Son *Antiochus Eupater* with an Army of an hundred and twenty thouſand, under the command of *Lyſias*, 1 *Macab.* vi. 39. And after him ſucceeded *Demetrius* Son of *Seleucus*, who having eſcaped from *Rome* (as *Joſephus* ſays) made himſelf King. And he ſent *Bacchides* and *Alcimus* to take Vengeance of the Children of *Iſrael*, who with their Forces, and with the help of the apoſtate *Jews*, did them ſo much miſchief, as that it is ſaid, *it exceeded what they had ſuffered from the Heathen*, 1 *Mac.* vii. 23. And although the *Jews* prevailed once ſo againſt *Nicanor*, another whom the King had ſent againſt them, that the *Land of Judea was in reſt a little while* (as it's ſaid, 1 *Mac.* vii. 50.) yet upon the King's ſending *Bacchides* and *Alcimus into the Land of Judea a ſecond time*, it's ſaid *the affliction of Iſrael was ſo great, as that the like had not been ſince the time that a Prophet had not been ſeen among them*, 1 Mac. ix. 27.

Theſe things conſidered, I cannot ſee how it can upon any good ground be affirmed, that the Deliverance the *Jews* received by the Death of *Antiochus*, could be the Deliverance ſpoken of, *Dan.* xii. 1. as ſome would have it. And if not, then what is ſaid, *Chap.* xi. at the two laſt Verſes, touching a King's *going forth with great fury to deſtroy and utterly to make away many*; and in order thereto, *to plant the Tabernacles of his Palace in the glorious holy Mountain*, and of his *coming to his end, ſo as that none could help him*; cannot be meant of *Antiochus*. Nor does the Hiſtory of his Actions near the time of his coming to his end, as ſet down by *Joſephus*, or the Author of the Books of the *Maccabees*, give any ſuch account concerning him. For we do not find that any *tidings out of the Eaſt or out of the North did trouble him, and cauſe him to go forth with fury to deſtroy many*. And the laſt Action preceding his Death and his coming to his End, was nothing like it. For his laſt great Action before his end, was his going into *Perſia* with an Army, not againſt the *Jews*, nor as cauſed by any Tidings out of the Eaſt or out of the North, (as his will be, of whom *Daniel* ſpeaks) but out of a covetous deſire to enrich himſelf with a great Treaſure, which he had heard was in the

Temple of Diana in the City Elymais in that Country. But being diſappointed in his deſign, he fell ill of a miſerable Diſeaſe, and died before he returned, 1 *Mac.* vi. *Joſeph. Antiq. lib.* 12. *cap.* 13.

But if by the *King of the North*, Dan. xi. 40. be meant the Turk (as ſome Authors of no mean account do conceive it is) then, foraſmuch as all that is ſaid to the end of the Chapter concerns him and his doings, it is not unlikely but that the Tidings out of the Eaſt and out of the North (as *ver.* 44.) may be meant of his being alarm'd by the *Jews* gathering into a Body in thoſe parts, in order to their return to their own Land to poſſeſs it, at ſuch time when it is in his poſſeſſion. And if ſo, then his marching his Forces, and pitching his Tents in the holy Land to hinder it, may be meant by his *going forth with fury to deſtroy many*, and by his *planting the Tabernacles of his Palace in the glorious holy Mountain*; and his *coming to his end, ſo as none could help it*, may ſignifie that final overthrow which that Empire, with other States and Kingdoms in enmity and oppoſition to Chriſt and his Church, ſhall receive by an irreſiſtible Hand of Heaven: Of which more afterwards.

And although at that time there will be ſuch trouble as never had been before in all reſpects; yet then it will be that *Michael* the great Prince will ſtand up for the Children of *Daniel*'s People, and at that very time they ſhall be deliver'd, as the Text tells us.

Theſe four places of Scripture inſiſted on, taken together, may, I conceive, be ſufficient to incline us to think it no improbable thing that the Deliverance of the *Jews* from their Diſperſion, and abject and low Condition, and the downfal of thoſe Worldly Powers which have oppoſed Chriſt's Kingdom and Government in the World, may fall out much about the ſame time. And we may be farther confirm'd in this Opinion, I conceive, when we come to enquire into the way and means by which this downfal will be brought to paſs. But before we proceed to that Enquiry, it will I think be convenient to enquire into the buſineſs of the *Jews* Call and Converſion, and of their gathering together to return into their own Land, from which they have ſuffer'd a long Exile indeed, by the juſt Diſpleaſure of Almighty God, procured by themſelves.

CHAP. IV.

Of the Jews Converſion; and of their Return from their Diſperſion to their own Land.

Touching the *Jews* Call and Converſion to the Chriſtian Faith, and their Return out of their Diſperſion into their own Land; theſe things would be enquired into.

1. What ground there is to believe that that People will at laſt be converted to the Chriſtian Faith?

2. How and by what means it may be expected that they will be ſo converted?

3. Whether the *Jews* will then gather together in Bodies of Men, in order to their returning to their own Land to poſſeſs it.

1. *What ground there is to believe that that People will at laſt be converted to the Chriſtian Faith.* And there is ground enough to believe that they will, from what St. *Paul* hath ſaid concerning them, *Rom.* xi. 25, 26, 27. *I would not, Brethren, that ye ſhould be ignorant of this myſtery, that blindneſs in part is happen'd to Iſrael, until the fulneſs of the Gentiles be come in; and ſo all Iſrael ſhall be ſaved, as it is written, There ſhall come out of Zion the deliverer, and ſhall turn away ungodlineſs from Jacob; for this is my Covenant unto them, when I ſhall take away their ſins.* Part of *Iſrael* believed the Goſpel before, upon its being preached to them by the Apoſtles: But here St. *Paul* ſpeaks of a time when *all Iſrael* ſhall be ſaved out of their Blindneſs and Unbelief, and low and abject Condition, in which for their Unbelief they had long lay'n. And he adds, that it is God's Covenant to them to do ſo, when he ſhall take away their ſin. This general Converſion of them the Apoſtle had called *their fulneſs* at the twelfth Verſe, *If the diminiſhing of them be the Riches of the Gentiles, how much more their fulneſs?* Becauſe then they will not be call'd only in a ſmall part, as before, but then *all Iſrael ſhall be ſaved*, as he ſays. Add unto this, 2 *Cor.* iii. 14. where St. *Paul* ſpeaking of *Iſrael*, ſaith, *But their minds are blinded: for until this day remaineth the ſame veil untaken away in the reading of the Old Teſtament; which veil is done away in Chriſt.* And then in the 16th verſe he ſaith, *Neverthele ſs when it ſhall turn to the Lord, the veil ſhall be taken away.* Where he plainly ſuppoſeth, as a thing not doubted of, but

that a time ſhould come, when the Body of that People which then for the moſt part were blinded, ſhould turn to the Lord, and does aſſert that then the Veil ſhall be taken away.

2. But our next Enquiry is, How this will be brought to paſs that all *Iſrael* ſhall be converted, when there ſeems ſo great an Unlikelihood of it, conſidering how they are diſperſed, the moſt of them it may be living ſcarce within the ſound of the Goſpel, and conſidering how averſe thoſe of them are from receiving the Goſpel who yet live in places where it is preach'd and profeſſed. Theſe things conſider'd, ſeem indeed to make it altogether unlikely ever to be brought to paſs in an ordinary way. And ſo does the ſuddenneſs and ſhortneſs of the time in which it will be accompliſhed, according to what the Prophets have foretold concerning that matter: As that of the Prophet *Zachary*, chap. iii. 9. *I will remove the Iniquity of the Land in one day, ſaith the Lord of Hoſts.* Which can be underſtood of nothing ſo properly, as of the ſudden Converſion of that Nation in a ſhort time. Thus again, *Iſa.* lxvi. 8. *Who hath heard ſuch a thing? Who hath ſeen ſuch things? Shall the Earth be made to bring forth in one day, or ſhall a Nation be born at once? For as ſoon as Zion travelled ſhe brought forth her Children*, &c. Theſe Expreſſions ſeem to import that the Converſion of that Nation, as a new Birth, will be extraordinary and much to Admiration and Aſtoniſhment in reſpect of the ſuddenneſs and ſhortneſs of the time in which it will be effected, as well as the way and means by which. The things that will accompany this National Birth or quickly follow it, as here ſet forth by the Prophet in the following Verſes, are too great to be underſtood only of their Deliverance out of the 70 Years Captivity. And if this Scripture be to be underſtood of their Converſion to the Chriſtian Faith, as I doubt not but it is: Yet it is not at all probable it will be done by the preaching of the Goſpel to them by the *Gentiles*, both becauſe as it is probable but few of them are in places where Goſpel Preachers are; and becauſe thoſe few which are, are altogether averſe from ſo much as hearing them. And therefore it's highly probable it will be done in ſome extraordinary way.

And if we conſult the Scriptures of the Prophets, we ſhall not find them directing us to pitch upon any ſo likely to be made uſe of for this purpoſe, as *pouring out of God's holy Spirit in an extraordinary manner among them.* And that there will be ſuch a pouring out of the Spirit upon them when the time of their Reſtauration comes, we are led to believe by that Prophecy we have in *Iſa.* xxxii. 13, 14, 15. *Upon the Land of my People ſhall come up Thorns and Briars, yea upon all the Houſes of Joy in the joyous City; becauſe the Palaces ſhall be forſaken, the Multitude of the City ſhall be left, the Forts and Towers ſhall be for Dens for ever, a Joy of wild Aſſes, a Paſture of* Flocks*: Until the Spirit be poured upon us from on high, and the Wilderneſs be a fruitful Field*, &c. Inaſmuch as it is here ſaid that this Deſolation ſhould continue until the Spirit ſhould be pour'd upon them from on high, it cannot for that reaſon be underſtood of the time of their 70 Years Captivity in *Babylon*. For at the end of the 70 Years Captivity, when *Cyrus* made Proclamation for their return, and upon which 42360 did return at the firſt, beſide 7337 afterward, there was no pouring out of the Spirit upon them in any extraordinary meaſure that we read of. And although two Prophets *Haggai* and *Zechariah* were raiſed up to encourage the building of the Temple, yet this was not till about four Years before it was finiſhed (*Hag.* i. 1. compar'd with *Ez.* vi. 15.) all the time of the Reign of *Cyrus*, of *Ahaſuerus*, of *Artaxerxes*, and part of the Reign of *Darius*, coming between the time of the *Jews* firſt return, and the time of theſe Prophets propheſying. Which is a Demonſtration that this pouring out of the Spirit upon theſe two Prophets, did not uſher in their Deliverance from this Captivity, which was not vouchſafed them till many ſcores of Years after their return out of it. Whereas in the Text we have inſiſted on, the pouring out of the Spirit is foretold, as that which ſhall uſher in the Reſtauration of that People after a long Deſolation of their Nation, and as a Sign by which they may know that the time of it is come, when that ſhall take place.

Nor can this pouring out of the Spirit upon them from on high, be meant of the Effuſion of the Spirit in the Apoſtles times, becauſe that was upon the approach of the utter Deſolation of that Nation: Whereas this mentioned in this Prophecy, will uſher in a glorious Deliverance from a long Deſolation: The Deſolation here preſag'd is and will be in all Probability, the greateſt and longeſt that ever beſel that Nation, and that which they yet lie under unto this Day. And the Prophet foretelling that the pouring out of the Spirit upon them would bring them to the end of it: It muſt in all reaſon be to let us know, in what way and by what means they will be delivered from that Unbelief which brought them into that ſad Condition, and ſo from the Deſolation it ſelf. For it cannot

not be expected that the Effect which is their Deſolation, will be removed till the cauſe of it is removed, which is their Unbelief, and this will be removed by the pouring out of the Spirit upon them.

Another Prophecy which looks the ſame way and ſuggeſts to us the ſame thing is, *Ezek.* xxxix. 28, 29. the words are theſe. *When I have brought them again from the People, and gathered them out of their Enemies Lands, and am ſanctified in them in the ſight of many Nations; then ſhall they know that I am the Lord their God which cauſed them to be led away into Captivity among the Heathen. But I have gathered them unto their own Land, and have left none of them any more there: Neither will I hide my* Face *any more from them: For I have poured out my Spirit upon the Houſe of Iſrael, ſaith the Lord God.* Theſe laſt words, [for I have poured out my Spirit upon the Houſe of Iſrael,] contain an account how it came to paſs, and whence it was, that they were gathered out of their Enemies Lands unto their own, ſo as to return no more into a like ſad Condition; it was, we ſee, by God's pouring out his Spirit upon them. This Prophecy (after the manner of many others) ſpeaks of things as done, when they were a great way off, and yet to come.

There are ſeveral Circumſtances both from the words themſelves, and from their being brought in here at the end of the Prophecy of the Deſtruction of *Gog*, which argue the Deliverance here ſpoken of, not to be that from the 70 Years Captivity, but of a far greater in the latter Ages of the World: But I need not mention them, ſince I know of none that apply this Prophecy to that Deliverance out of *Babylon*. Nor can this pouring out of the Spirit upon the Houſe of *Iſrael*, be limited to the Effuſion of the Spirit which was in the Apoſtles days: Becauſe that produced no ſuch effect, nor was accompanied with any ſuch event as the gathering that People out of their Enemies Lands unto their own, nor of God's not hiding his Face from them any more, as this here ſpoken of will be; but on the contrary it was the Fore-runner of the great and terrible Day of Deſtruction of their City, Temple and Nation, and of their being led captive into all Nations, until the pouring out of the Spirit upon them ſpoken of in this and other Prophecies.

The Phraſe *pouring out of the Spirit*, uſed in theſe and other like Scriptures, ſeems to ſignifie a more than ordinary Effuſion thereof: It ſeems to ſignifie ſuch a giving of the Spirit as is more than what is common to all good Men, that are only regenerate and ſanctified by it; and ſuch is the Gift of Prophecy and of working Miracles. And why then may not this pouring out of the Spirit upon the *Jews* for their Converſion and Return out of Captivity, ſignifie ſome extraordinary Illumination of the Spirit, which may be vouchſafed to ſome among them, to open to the reſt the Scriptures of the Old Teſtament concerning the Meſſiah, and to convince them that they are already fulfilled in Chriſt Jeſus, which their Forefathers procured to be crucified; and to confirm their Doctrine with ſomething of a miraculous Nature? I know nothing from the Scriptures why this or the like may not be expected, nor am able to apprehend how their general Converſion and Recovery is like to be effected, without ſomething done by God, which will amount to as much as this will come to.

And ſince the Scriptures of the Prophets do ſo expreſly foretel as they do, that like Wonders will be wrought for the Recovery of the *Jews* out of their Diſperſion at laſt, as were in bringing them out of *Egypt* at firſt, as I have ſhewed from *Iſa.* xi. 11. and following Verſes, and from *Micah* vii. 15, 16. We may eaſily think other extraordinary Gifts of the Spirit will accompany the working of ſuch Wonders, as they have been wont to do, and indeed it cannot eaſily be thought otherwiſe.

And I know no reaſon why the compleat fulfilling of that Prophecy, *Joel* ii. 28. *I will pour out my Spirit upon all Fleſh, and your Sons and your Daughters ſhall propheſie*, &c. ſhould be limited and reſtrained unto that Effuſion of the Spirit upon the Apoſtles and others on the Day of Pentecoſt, and which continued in the Church for ſome time after. St. *Paul* ſeems to have accounted thoſe Effuſions but the *Firſt-fruits of the Spirit*, as he calls them, *Rom.* viii. 23. implying that a greater Harveſt was yet behind. There were but few of the Nation comparatively that were converted by the pouring out of the Spirit then, though in an extraordinary manner, and it's ſcarce probable that a whole Nation diſperſed up and down in many Nations, ſhould be brought over to Chriſtianity, and that ſo ſuddenly, and in ſo ſhort a time as the Scripture intimates it will be done in, without ſome more than ordinary Effuſion of the Spirit upon ſome among them. And that this Prophecy of *Joel* looks farther than the Primitive Times of Chriſtianity, and as far as the Jews great and general Deliverance which is yet to be accompliſhed, ſeems probable for this reaſon alſo, *viz.* becauſe what he adjoyns to it touching the Deliverance

rance which he foretels will be in *Mount Sion* and in *Jeruſalem*, in the laſt Verſe, reaches as far as the Deliverance of the *Jews* out of Captivity, which was not accompliſhed at that time of pouring out of the Spirit, nor in any time ſince. For the words in the laſt Verſe of Chap. ii. and thoſe in the firſt and ſecond Verſes of Chap. iii. run thus: *For in mount Sion and in Jeruſalem ſhall be deliverance, as the Lord hath ſaid, and in the remnant whom the Lord ſhall call. For behold, in thoſe days and at that time, when I ſhall bring again the captivity of Juda and Jeruſalem, I will alſo gather all nations, and will bring them down into the valley of Jehoſaphat, and will plead with them there for my people and for my heritage Iſrael.* And this he will do by deſpoiling their Enemies of their Power, and reſcuing and delivering his People, as is ſhew'd in the proceſs of this Chapter, which contains a Prophecy of what is to be fulfilled in Goſpel-times, not yet accompliſhed, as Expoſitors hold.

Unto all the reſt I may add *Iſai.* lix. 20, 21. compared with *Rom.* xi. 26, 27. where we ſhall find that God has made a Covenant of putting the ſame Spirit, which was upon the Prophet, upon the People of the Jews at the time of their general Converſion; ſo that neither it, nor the words in his mouth, ſhould ever depart out of the mouth of his Seed, or Seeds Seed: *And the Redeemer ſhall come to Sion, and to them which turn from tranſgreſſion in Jacob, ſaith the Lord. As for me, this is my Covenant with them, ſaith the Lord: My Spirit that is upon thee, and my words which I have put into thy mouth, ſhall not depart out of thy mouth, nor out of the mouth of thy Seed, nor out of the mouth of thy Seeds Seed, ſaith the Lord, from henceforth and for ever.* Now St. *Paul* foretold the Converſion of the whole Body of that People the *Jews* to Chriſtianity, in ſaying, *And ſo all Iſrael ſhall be ſaved.* To confirm which, he cites part of this Prophecy; by which we may be well aſſured, that this Prophecy reaches as far as to the times of the *Jews* general Call and Converſion, and relates to it. His words in *Rom.* xi. 26, 27. are theſe: *And ſo all Iſrael ſhall be ſaved; as it is written, There ſhall come out of Sion the deliverer, and ſhall turn away ungodlineſs from Jacob: for this is my Covenant unto them, when I ſhall take away their ſins.* St. *Paul* indeed here makes the Covenant of God to them to reſpect his ſending the Deliverer to *Sion*, to turn away Ungodlineſs from *Jacob*, as well as in the Prophets words it reſpects the putting the ſame Spirit which was on the Prophet, and the ſame Words which were in his Mouth, into the Mouth of his Seed and Seeds Seed for ever. So that here we ſee two things are promiſed: The one the Converſion of the Jews, ſtiled the turning away Ungodlineſs from *Jacob*; the other is God's putting his Spirit and Word into the Mouth of the Seed of the Prophet. And it may well be that the one is promiſed in order to the other; to wit, the putting the ſame Spirit and Word which the Prophet had, into the Mouths of ſome of the Jews, in order to the turning of the reſt of them from Ungodlineſs.

And it would here be conſidered likewiſe, that it hath been an Opinion commonly received in the antient Church, that *Elias*, to wit, one in the Power and Spirit of *Elias*, ſhall come *to reſtore all things*, before the *ſecond* coming of Chriſt, as *John* the Baptiſt had in part done before his *firſt appearance*, by *turning the Diſobedient to the Wiſdom of the Juſt.* The ground of which Opinion was, not only that Prophecy of *Malachy*, Ch. iv. ver. 5, 6. but alſo that ſaying of our Saviour, *Matth.* xvii. 11. *Elias truly ſhall firſt come, and reſtore all things.* Theſe words of our Saviour, wherein he ſays now after *John* the Baptiſt had been come and was gone out of the World, that *Elias ſhall come*, or ſhall yet come; it is thought that he would thereby ſignifie, that all the Prophecy of *Malachy* touching this coming of *Elias*, was not fulfilled in the coming of *John* the Baptiſt, though in part it was, as our Saviour Intimated in *ver.* 12.

It is true indeed, Mr. *Joſ. Mede*, that great and worthy Man, has ſuggeſted to us another Notion touching the Way, Manner and Means, by which he conceived the *Jews* may be converted, different from this of pouring out the Spirit, which I have now inſiſted on: And that is, Chriſt's viſible appearing to them in the Clouds of Heaven, as he did to St. *Paul* for his Converſion. And he was inclined to think ſuch a thing is hinted at by St. *Paul* himſelf in 1 *Tim.* i. 16. where he ſays, *For this cauſe I obtained mercy, that in me firſt Jeſus Chriſt might ſhew forth all long-ſuffering, for a pattern to them which ſhould hereafter believe on him.* As if the Way and Means by which he himſelf was converted, was to be a Pattern according to which the Jews in general ſhould at laſt be brought to believe. And that which he farther alledges in favour of this Notion, is *Matth.* xxiv. 29, 30. where our Saviour ſays, *Immediately after the Tribulation of thoſe Days* (which he expounds as ſignifying ſoon after the long Tribulation of the Jewiſh Nation is ended) *ſhall appear the ſign of the Son of Man in Heaven, and all the Tribes* *of the Earth*, or of the Land, *ſhall mourn*; referring, as he thinks, to that in *Zech.* xii. 10. *They ſhall look on me whom they have pierced, and ſhall mourn.*

But yet for all this in one of his Letters he ſays thus: “For my conceit of the manner of the Jews Converſion, though it often ſollicits me to give Credence to it, as beſt becoming the greateſt Work that ever God did for that People, for whom in former times he ſhewed ſo many Wonders: Yet I will ingenuouſly confeſs, the grounds I have hitherto found ſeem not to my ſelf ſufficient to build a firm aſſent upon; but only by a kind of Concinnity induce to a pleaſing, but wavering Conjecture, *lib.* 4. *p.* 766. And in *pag.* 768. he calls this Opinion *a wavering and uncertain Speculation.* And then as touching the appearing of the ſign of the Son of Man in Heaven, which he had alledged in favour of his foreſaid Opinion, he ſaith thus: “But here I find a rub which I cannot get over: For this appearance of the ſign of the Son of Man in Heaven, as well as his coming in the Clouds with great Glory, is ſaid to be immediately after the Tribulation of thoſe Days; that is (as I am wont to expound it) ſoon after the long Tribulation of the Jewiſh Nation ſhall be ended: But their Tribulation ſhall not end till they be converted: *Ergo*, their Converſion muſt needs precede the ſign of the Son of Man in Heaven there mentioned. Here I ſtick, *pag.* 766.

But though we ſhould ſuppoſe this Notion of Mr. *Mede* to be ſolid (of which yet we ſee he himſelf was very doubtful) yet this would be no Contradiction to the pouring out of the Spirit's being one means of that Converſion of the Jews, though the appearing of the ſign of the Son of Man ſhould be another.

3. Another thing I propoſed to enquire into, is, Whether the Jews at the time of their general Converſion, will gather together in Bodies from the ſeveral places of their Diſperſion, in order to a returning into their own Land to poſſeſs it. And that they will, ſeems very evident from that Prophecy formerly mentioned, *Iſai.* xi. 11, 12. *It ſhall come to paſs in that day, that the Lord ſhall ſet his hand again the ſecond time to recover the remnant of his People which ſhall be left, from Aſſyria, and from Egypt, from Pathros, and from Cuſh, from Elam, and from Shinar, from Hamath, and from the Iſlands of the Seas. And he ſhall ſet up an Enſign for the Nations, and aſſemble the out-caſts of Iſrael, and gather together the diſperſed of Juda, from the four corners of the Earth.* That this Prophecy reſpects the Recovery of the Jews in the times of the Meſſias, is the ſenſe of both Jewiſh and Chriſtian Authors of beſt account. And it looks very odly to underſtand their Recovery here ſpoken of, from *Aſſyria*, *Egypt*, *&c.* of the Recovery of a few only of that Nation from Infidelity in the Apoſtles days.

Again, *Ezek.* xxxvi. 24, 25. *I will take you from among the Heathen, and gather you out of all Countries, and will bring you into your own Land, then will I ſprinkle clean water upon you*, &c. Chap. xxxvii. 21, 22. *I will take the Children of Iſrael from among the Heathen, whither they be gone, and will gather them on every ſide, and bring them into their own land. And I will make them one nation upon the mountains of Iſrael, and one King ſhall be King to them all; and they ſhall be no more two Nations, neither ſhall they be divided into two Kingdoms any more at all.* Ver. 25. *And they ſhall dwell in the Land that I have given unto Jacob my Servant, wherein your Fathers dwelt, and they ſhall dwell therein, even they and their Children and their Childrens Children for ever, and my ſervant David ſhall be their Prince for ever.*

Theſe Prophecies muſt needs relate to Events of Providence in Goſpel-times, becauſe they were to fall out under the Reign of the Meſſias, which was ſignified by *David's being a Prince among them for ever*, as all Expoſitors acknowledge. But I will proceed to other proofs, which perhaps may give farther ſatisfaction in this point; and they ſhall be of that nature which tends to ſhew, that the Jews ſhall be poſſeſſed of their own Land, ſo as to be no more caſt out of it or diſpoſſeſſed; a thing which has never yet happen'd.

To this purpoſe is the Prophecy of *Amos*, Ch. ix. 14, 15. *I will bring again the Captivity of my People Iſrael, and they ſhall build the waſte Cities, and inhabit them; and they ſhall plant Vineyards, and drink the Wine thereof; they ſhall alſo make Gardens, and eat the fruit of them. And I will plant them upon their Land, and they ſhall no more be pulled up out of their Land which I have given them, ſaith the Lord thy God.* This laſt ſaying, *They ſhall be no more pulled up out of their Land*, ſhews plainly this Prophecy ſpeaks of ſuch a Poſſeſſion of their Land as they never enjoyed yet, but ſhall enjoy hereafter.

The Prophet *Jeremy* hath alſo propheſied of the Rebuilding of the City *Jeruſalem*, with a particular Deſcription of the Compaſs and Borders of it, and then concludes, ſaying, *It ſhall not be plucked up nor thrown down any more for ever*, Jer. xxxi. 40.

And matter of Fact ſhews it was never ſo built yet, and therefore this Prophecy remains yet to be fulfilled. To ſay this is a Prophecy of the Stability of the Catholick Church under its Type *Jeruſalem*, is a ſtrangely ſtrained Interpretation, conſidering that the Compaſs of this City is ſo particularly and expreſsly ſet out as it is. As when it's ſaid, *it ſhall be built from the Tower of Hananeel unto the Gate of the Corner: And that the meaſuring Line ſhall yet go forth over againſt it upon the Hill Gareb, and ſhall compaſs about to Goath*, &c. *ver.* 38, 39. No Man will ſay theſe are the Dimenſions of the Catholick Church.

Again, God hath ſaid that the Ordinances of Heaven concerning the Sun, Moon and Stars in being Lights to the World, *ſhall as ſoon ceaſe, as the Seed of Iſrael ceaſe from being a Nation before him for ever*, Jer. xxxi. 35, 36. So that the time will come when they ſhall be a Nation, and then never ceaſe being ſo as long as the World endures. And indeed this is nothing but what God anciently promiſed to *Abraham*, *Iſaac* and *Jacob*, and their Seed for ever. *He hath remembred his Covenant for ever, the word which he commanded to a thouſand Generations. Which Covenant he made with Abraham, and his Oath unto Iſaac; and confirmed the ſame unto Jacob for a Law, and to Iſrael for an everlaſting Covenant: Saying, unto thee will I give the Land of Canaan, the Lot of your Inheritance*, Pſal. cv. 8.

The Diſobedience and Unbelief of the Poſterity of theſe Patriarchs, hath indeed once and again interrupted the Fruition of this Promiſe, but not *cut off the intail* which laſts to a thouſand Generations, if the World ſhould laſt ſo long; for as often as they ſhall repent of ſuch Diſobedience, ſo often has God promiſed to bring them back again into this Land which he gave them by an everlaſting Covenant. Thus *Deut.* xxx. from *ver.* 1. to *ver.* 6. *It ſhall come to paſs when all theſe things are come upon thee, the Bleſſing and the Curſe, which I have ſet before thee, and thou ſhalt call them to mind among all the Nations whither the Lord thy God hath driven thee; and ſhalt return unto the Lord thy God, and ſhalt obey his Voice according to all that I command thee this day, thou and thy Children, with all thine Heart, and with all thy Soul: That then the Lord thy God will turn thy Captivity, and have Compaſſion upon thee, and will return and gather thee from all the Nations whither the Lord thy God hath ſcattered thee. If any of thine be driven out unto the utmoſt parts of Heaven: From thence will the Lord thy God gather thee, and from thence will he fetch thee. And the Lord thy God will bring thee into the Land which thy Fathers poſſeſſed, and thou ſhalt poſſeſs it: And he will multiply thee, and do thee good above thy Fathers.*

So that according to this general Declaration of the Mind and purpoſe of Almighty God touching that People, whenever they ſhall repent and return to God, and become obedient, as we juſtly preſume they will when they ſhall be converted to the Chriſtian Faith, then will he gather them, though diſperſed and driven to the uttermoſt parts of Heaven, and will bring them again to their own Land. And this proceeding of God, is but agreeable to another general Rule of his proceeding with Nations, delivered by the Prophet, *Jer.* xviii. 7, 8. *At what inſtant I ſhall ſpeak concerning a Nation, and concerning a Kingdom to pluck up, and to pull down, and to deſtroy it; if that Nation againſt whom I have pronounced, turn from their evil, I will repent of the evil that I thought to do unto them.*

Yea, we may go yet one ſtep farther, and ſay, that Almighty God has foretold or promiſed by his Prophet, that he himſelf will enable that People to perform in his time the Condition on which he has promiſed to reſtore them to their Land, and of their Continuance in it, ſo as never to be again diſpoſſeſſed of it, ſo long as there is a Nation upon Earth. *Jer.* xxxii. from *ver.* 37. to 41. *I will gather them out of all Countries whither I had driven them, and bring them again to this place, and cauſe them to dwell ſafely; and will be their God, and they ſhall be my People. And I will give them one heart and one way that they may fear me for ever; and will make an everlaſting Covenant with them, that I will not turn away from them to do them good; but put my fear into their hearts, that they ſhall not depart from me. Yea, I will rejoyce over them to do them good, and I will plant them in this Land aſſuredly, with my whole heart, and with my whole Soul.*

Here we may perceive that God ſpeaks to them, or of them as a Nation, in the ſeveral things here promiſed. As he promiſed to gather them out of all other Countries, and to bring them into their own Land to plant and ſettle them there; ſo in order to this he hath promiſed we ſee, ſo to put his Fear into their Hearts, as never nationally to depart from him any more as they have done.

Thus we ſee what reaſon we have to believe that Almighty God will convert and bring back again the diſperſed Jews into the Land of *Canaan*, and to ſettle them there.

How they ſhall draw into a Conſent to gather together at the ſame time, and in many diſtant places of the World, Eaſt, Weſt, North, and South, will not be hard to underſtand, if we ſuppoſe what was ſuggeſted in the laſt foregoing Head of Diſcourſe to be true, touching God's raiſing up Men among them extraordinarily inſpired and aſſiſted by him for this Buſineſs, as we may well conceive, will not only be by opening the Scriptures to them to convert them to the Chriſtian Faith, but alſo to excite them to return to their own Land in order to their Reſettlement in it; a thing ſo much ſpoken of in the Prophets. And as God ſtirred up the Hearts of the People at the end of the 70 Years Captivity to go out of *Babylon* unto *Jeruſalem*, Ezra. i. 5. ſo no doubt but he will ſtir up the Hearts of thoſe Jews alſo, to return to their own Land, out of their ſeveral Diſperſions when the time appointed for it is fully come, and when they have a Call and Invitation to it from God by ſome Signification of his Will, which they ſhall underſtand for ſuch.

And when we read ſome Prophecies we ſhall find them very apt to incline us to think that ſome of thoſe Men raiſed up, and extraordinarily aſſiſted by God, will be employed by him and choſen by the People, to call them together and to conduct them to the holy Land. And ſuch is *Hoſ.* i. 11. for one, where it is ſaid, *Then ſhall the Children of Juda and the Children of Iſrael be gathered together and appoint themſelves one Head, and they ſhall come up out of the Land; for great ſhall be the day of Jezreel.* In this return we ſee the Children of *Juda* the two Tribes, and the Children of *Iſrael* the ten Tribes will be united and return together from their Diſperſion: For which cauſe this in Probability cannot be meant of the Jews return from the 70 Years Captivity, in which the ten Tribes did not return with the two, as is generally held. And there ſeems to be ſufficient ground for this Opinion in Scripture; for we find it expreſly ſaid concerning thoſe that did return upon the Liberty granted by *Cyrus*, that they were thoſe who had been carried away by *Nebuchadnezzar* King of *Babylon*, both in *Ezra* ii. 1. and *Neh.* vii. 6. and thoſe we know were the two Tribes, who went not into Captivity till above a hundred and twenty Years after the ten Tribes were captivated by the King of *Aſſyria*. And there is this farther Aſſurance that they did conſiſt of the two Tribes, becauſe they took account of them particularly, and regiſtred them by their Genealogies and Families, as appears in the Chapters forecited. And it's ſaid they came to *Judah*, every one to their own City. It's probable that the ten Tribes having continued in *Media* more than 120 Years, and became long ſetled there, and they all dead long before, which perſonally came out of the Kingdom of *Iſrael*, they might not have ſo much Zeal as upon the account of Religion, to return to a ruinated Country. It is believed this was the caſe with many of the two Tribes, though they had not continued in Captivity much above half ſo long. If this was not the caſe of many, either of the ten or of the two Tribes, or of both, how came Jews out of every Nation under Heaven to be reſident at *Jeruſalem* on the day of Pentecoſt? *Acts* ii. 5. but that they were born in thoſe Nations, of Parents whoſe Predeceſſors ſetled there after they were carried captive thither. For we do not read that they were as yet compell'd to any ſuch Diſperſion by the *Romans*. And when St. *James* directs his Epiſtle to the ten Tribes ſcattered, as St. *Peter* one of his likewiſe to the Strangers ſcattered throughout *Pontus*, *Galatia*, *Cappadocia*, *Aſia* and *Bithynia*, they doubtleſs had reſpect to the Jews which had voluntarily ſetled themſelves in foreign Nations after they had liberty of returning out of them, among whom the Apoſtles had been to preach the Goſpel. And beſides, there were many, no doubt, both of the ten Tribes and of the two, which did eſcape the Captivities of the Kings of *Aſſyria* and *Babylon*, by flying into *Egypt* and other Neighbouring Countries, till that Storm was over, who yet might return into their own Land again afterwards, eſpecially when they ſaw thoſe of the two Tribes reſetled in it, and yet the groſs of the ten Tribes ſtill abide in thoſe Lands whither they were carried. And thoſe ſo returning may ſometimes in Scripture-ſtile, bear the Denomination of the twelve Tribes, as a part many times does of the whole. I might here add unto theſe things that of *Eſdras* in his 2^{d} Book, *chap.* xiii. *ver.* 40. and ſo on, touching the ten Tribes, and how they diſpoſed of themſelves after they came into Captivity, and of their Continuance there until the latter times. And although I can lay no ſtreſs upon what he ſays in all the Circumſtances of it; yet conſidering that he was one of thoſe who returned out of the *Babyloniſh* Captivity; and conſidering that he wrote his Books after that return, it argues that it was his Opinion, and probably the Opinion of the reſt of the Jews with him, that the ten Tribes were not at that time returned out of the Countries whither they had been carried captive.

tive. And their Opinion herein is the more conſiderable, becauſe of the opportunity they had of coming to the knowledge of the Return of the ten Tribes, if there had been any ſuch thing at that time. And ſince the Scripture gives ſo full and ſo particular an account of the return of the two Tribes, it ſeems altogether improbable they ſhould be totally ſilent concerning the return of the Ten, which were ſo much the major part of the Body of that Nation, if they had indeed returned as the other did. I have ſaid thus much on the by, to ſhew how altogether improbable it is that the ten Tribes did return with the two out of their Captivity: And if they did not, then what the Prophet here ſays touching their being gathered together, and their appointing one Head over them both, and touching their coming up out of the Land together, muſt relate to ſome other Time and Action. And if none other can be named, wherein they did ſo ſince they went into Captivity at the firſt, then there muſt needs be a great probability at leaſt that that part of this Prophecy is yet to be fulfilled, and does belong to their laſt and general Return out of their long Diſperſion.

One thing indeed is objected againſt this Opinion, *viz.* That the groſs of the Ten Tribes never returned out of Captivity ſince they went into it; and that is, that no certain account can be given where they are. But there is no account, neither can be given, when or to what place they did return, or where they have been ſince: And that is as good an Argument that they never have returned, as that objected is that they have, and as I think much better. But for farther ſatisfaction in this matter, I ſhall offer two things to Conſideration.

I. That Almighty God has declared that he would make a great difference between his caſting off the Two Tribes and the Ten, in point of their continuance in their reſpective Captivities. *Hoſ.* i. 6, 7. *I will no more have mercy upon the Houſe of Iſrael, but I will utterly take them away: But I will have mercy upon the Houſe of Juda, and will ſave them by the Lord their God.* And yet in ver. 10, and 11. following, he declares alſo, that at the laſt he will ſave the Houſe of *Iſrael*, the Ten Tribes, out of Captivity, as well as the Houſe of *Juda.* So that his ſaying he would no more have mercy upon the Houſe of *Iſrael*, and yet would have mercy upon the Houſe of *Juda*, ſeems to import no more here, but that the Captivity of the Ten Tribes ſhould be of very long continuance, indeed ſo long as that it ſhould look like as if God had quite caſt them off; whereas the Houſe of *Juda* ſhould be ſaved out of theirs in a few Years comparatively.

II. There ſeems to be an intimation in the Prophecy of *Eſaias*, that the Condition of the Ten Tribes would be ſuch as that they ſhould ſeem to be utterly loſt, and their Being in the World ſo obſcure, as ſcarcely to be known by the Two Tribes themſelves, where they had been until the time of the general Converſion both of them, and of the Two Tribes alſo. *Iſai.* xlix. 21. *Thou ſhalt ſay in thine heart, who hath begotten me theſe, ſeeing I have loſt my Children, and am deſolate, a Captive, and removing to and fro? and who hath brought up theſe? Behold, I was left alone, theſe where had they been?* Thou ſhalt ſay in thine Heart; that is, *Sion* ſhall think ſo: For *Sion* is ſpoken to here, as appears from *ver.* 14. and ſo on. And the *Sion* or *Jeruſalem* was the Mother-City, and the other Cities in *Iſrael* her Daughters, and their Inhabitants her Children. And when ſhe ſays, *Who hath begotten me theſe, ſeeing I have loſt my Children? who hath brought up theſe*, and *theſe where had they been?* The Two Tribes being frequently in Scripture meant by *Sion*, ſeem to be brought in here ſpeaking thus concerning the Ten Tribes, as ſeeming to them to have been loſt, until *Sion* now at laſt ſees them to her admiration to appear.

But having ſaid thus much on the by, I ſhall now return and proceed with what I was about, which was to ſhew, that it's very probable that ſome Men extraordinarily aſſiſted by God, will be raiſed up to conduct the *Jews* out of the places of their Diſperſion into their own Land, at the time of their Converſion and Reſtoration.

Micah v. 5, 6. will incline us likewiſe to think, that ſome extraordinary Men will be raiſed up to conduct the *Jews* in their laſt return from their Diſperſion, the words are theſe: *This Man ſhall be the peace when the Aſſyrian ſhall come into our Land: and when he ſhall tread in our Palaces, then ſhall we raiſe againſt him ſeven Shepherds, and eight principal Men, and they ſhall waſte the Land of Aſſyria with the Sword, and the Land of Nimrod in the entrances thereof: And thus he ſhall deliver us from the Aſſyrian, when he cometh into our Land, and treadeth in our Boders.* There was never any ſuch thing yet done, I conceive, by the *Jews* againſt the *Aſſyrians*, when he came into their Land, or trod in their Borders. Not when he beſieged *Jeruſalem* in *Hezekiah*'s time; for the Deſtruction of his Army then was not by the Sword of Men, but by an

Angel of the Lord. Nor when he beſieged *Samaria* three Years, and took it and other Cities belonging to the Ten Tribes; for then they were overcome, and carried captive by him into his own Dominions. And to underſtand this Prophecy of the Church's ſpiritual Victory over her ſpiritual Enemies, ſeems to be an over-ſtraining of the Prophets words altogether. And therefore this Prophecy, in all probability, muſt refer unto a Time and Action yet to come, and as it is likely, points to what ſhall befal the *Aſſyrians* when they ſhall oppoſe the *Jews* return to and re-ſettlement in their own Land. And the ſeven Shepherds and eight principal Men here mentioned, muſt in all probability be meant of ſuch as ſhall be Leaders and Commanders among the *Jews* in their laſt return from their long Captivity and abject Condition to their own Land. It's evident the thing here propheſied of was to be done in the times of the Meſſiah: For *the Man* which this Prophet ſays ſhould be *their Peace* when the *Aſſyrian* ſhould come into their Land, is *he that was to come out of Bethlehem, and to be the Ruler in Iſrael*, ver. 2. which is Chriſt, *Matth.* ii. 6.

To theſe we may add the Prophecy of *Obadiah*, ver. 21. *And Saviours ſhall come upon mount Zion to judge the mount of Eſau, and the Kingdom ſhall be the Lord's.* By *Saviours* here, we are I conceive to underſtand *Temporal Deliverers*, for ſuch are called *Saviours* in Scripture, *Nehem.* ix. 27. 2 *Kings* xiii. 5. *Iſai.* xix. 20. And ſuch will they be whom God will raiſe up as his Inſtruments to ſave the *Jews* by conducting them out of their laſt Captivity and Diſperſion, and by foiling the *Edomites* in oppoſing them in it. The iſſue of which Salvation to the *Jews*, and Victory over the *Edomites*, will be the ſetting up of Chriſt's Kingdom there, as in other parts of the World, of which more afterward. That by *Saviours* here, which ſhall come upon the mount of *Eſau*, is meant Temporal Deliverers, we have reaſon to believe, becauſe they ſhall come there to *judge it*. And what is meant by that, we may underſtand by what is ſaid in the 18th verſe. *The houſe of Jacob ſhall be a fire, and the houſe of Joſeph a flame, and the houſe of Eſau for ſtubble, and they ſhall kindle in them, and devour them, and there ſhall not be any remaining of the houſe of Eſau, for the Lord hath ſpoken it.* And that the Mount of *Eſau* was ever yet thus judged by the Houſe of *Jacob*, I think does no where appear, which argues this Prophecy to relate to the Times of the *Jews* Reſtoration.

CHAP. V.

Of the Oppoſition which the Jews will meet with from their Enemies after their Converſion, in attempting to poſſeſs their own Land: And of the Event of that Oppoſition in a compleat Victory over, and a total Overthrow of thoſe Enemies. To which is added ſomething by way of Digreſſion.

FOraſmuch as it is very probable that the *Jews*, upon their Converſion, will return in a Body, or ſeveral Bodies, towards their own Land, under the Conduct of ſeveral eminent Men: Then our next Enquiry will be,

1. Whether they will or can go in peaceably to poſſeſs the Land? Or whether they ſhall not meet with very great Oppoſition in this Attempt after their Converſion?
2. Whether the Event of that Oppoſition will not be a compleat Victory over, and a total Overthrow of thoſe their Oppoſers?

For the firſt of theſe: When we conſult the Scriptures in this matter, they will incline us to think, that the *Jews* will be oppoſed and encountred in a hoſtile manner, with Armies and great Numbers of Men, when after their Converſion they ſhall attempt to return to their own Land, and to repoſſeſs it. And it's probable that thoſe Forces of the Enemy will not engage only againſt the *Jews*, now become Chriſtians, but alſo againſt the Chriſtian *Gentiles* of the Reformed Churches, who probably may then joyn with the *Jews* againſt the common Enemy.

And here, for our clearer underſtanding this matter, we may do well to look back and reflect upon what hath been ſaid in our third Chapter, to ſhew that the times of the *Jews* Diſperſion, and their abiding in Unbelief, will be run out much about the ſame time, in which the times of the Reign of the Beaſt, ſet out in the Book of *Revelations*, will

will come to a Period, and his final Overthrow be at hand. I have already ſhew'd that upon the pouring out of the fifth Vial upon the Seat of the Beaſt, his Kingdom will be full of Darkneſs, and that the Face of his Affairs will look with a ſad Countenance, as being in a very declining condition, which will make thoſe of his Kingdom to gnaw their Tongues for Vexation and Anguiſh. And then when upon the Heels of this, the ſixth Vial comes to be poured out upon the great River *Euphrates*, and way is thereby made for the gathering together and return of the Jews as then converted, the Kingdom of the Beaſt which was full of Darkneſs before, will now be farther alarm'd with Apprehenſion of farther Danger approaching. Whereupon they will beſtir themſelves all they poſſibly can to prevent that Danger, and to uphold their tottering Kingdom. And to that end Emiſſaries will be diſpatch'd by the Dragon, Beaſt and falſe Prophet, to the Kings of the Earth and of the whole World, to gather them to the Battel of the great Day of God Almighty: That is, the utmoſt endeavours will be uſed by the red Dragon, or the Devil, to engage the Infidel and Pagan part of the World; and by the Beaſt and falſe Prophet, to engage the Antichriſtian part of the World againſt the Orthodox Chriſtians, both Jews and Gentiles.

And here, as it ſeems, two things will concur to make this Aſſociation and Combination of the Enemies of the truly Chriſtian Church, to be very great and very threatning to them, 1. The one is the extraordinary endeavours of the Enemies themſelves to bring vaſt numbers together in ſeveral Armies, to be near one another in order to the aſſiſting each other againſt the Orthodox Chriſtians, to eat them up and root them out at once, as we ſee here by their ſending to ſolicite and excite the Kings of the Earth and of the whole World to battle againſt the Church of God. 2. The other is the deſign of God in the ordering of his Providence to bring theſe Enemies of his People together in ſuch vaſt numbers and in ſo formidable an Appearance as will then be made, to the end they may be deſtroyed together, and their Strength broken at once; and that the mighty hand of God, for his People and againſt their Enemies, may be ſo conſpicuous and notorious, that the ſound thereof may go into all the Earth, as one means among others, of converting the Nations of the World from Paganiſm to Chriſtianity, and for the bringing in the Fulneſs of the Gentiles as we ſhall ſee afterwards. Though the Preparations for War, and the gathering together of Armies againſt the Church will proceed from the enraged Malice of their Enemies, yet the great God will by an over-ruling hand of Providence, diſpoſe of their Motion ſo as ſhall beſt conduce to his ends. And accordingly we ſee that though the Meſſengers of the Dragon, Beaſt and falſe Prophet, are ſent out to gather the Kings of the Earth and of the whole World to Battel, yet it's ſaid that *He*, to wit, the great God himſelf, gathered them together into a place called *Armageddon*, Rev. xvi. 16. And to this that of the Prophet *Joel* ſeems well to agree, Chap. iii. 1, 2. *For behold in thoſe days at that time when I ſhall bring again the Captivity of Juda and Jeruſalem, I will alſo gather all Nations, and will bring them down into the Valley of Jehoſaphat, and will plead with them there for my People and for my Heritage Iſrael, whom they have ſcattered among the Nations, and parted my Land.* And in the 9th and following *Verſes*, the Prophet ſeems to foretel what great Preparation will be made againſt the Church of God in thoſe latter days, but withal ſeems to challenge them to do their worſt, and to muſter up all the force they can, and to arm to the utmoſt. *Proclaim ye this among the Gentiles; prepare War, wake up the mighty Men, let all the Men of War draw near, let them come up. Beat your Plough-ſhares into Swords, and your Pruning-hooks into Spears: Let the weak ſay I am ſtrong. Aſſemble your ſelves and come all ye Heathen, and gather your ſelves together round about: Thither cauſe thy mighty ones to come down, O Lord: Let the Heathen be awakened, and come up to the Valley of Jehoſaphat; for there will I ſit to judge all the Heathen round about.* This in the 14th *Verſe* is called the *Valley of Deciſion*, a place where the cauſe depending between the Church of God and her Enemies, will be *decided* and put to an iſſue: For there, ſaith the Lord, will I ſit to judge the Heathen round about.

And it is not unlikely but that what is ſaid in *Revelations* xvi. touching the gathering the Kings of the Earth and of the whole World to *Armageddon*, and what is ſaid in *Joel* iii. of God's gathering all Nations into the *Valley of Jehoſaphat*, may reſpect the ſame thing both for Time, Place, and Action, though called by different Names. For the Name of the Place ſeems to be given from the future *Event* of that great Congreſs or Meeting, and not becauſe there was any Place called by the one Name or the other antecedently to theſe Prophecies. For that which in *Joel* at *ver.* 12. is ſtiled the *Valley of Jehoſaphat*, is in *ver.* 14. called the *Valley of Deciſion*, or the Valley of *Conciſion or threſhing*, as it is in the Margent. And this Name, without doubt, reſpects the future

Event of that Aſſembly, becauſe the Controverſie between the Church and her Enemies will there and then be decided, by the Enemies being threſhed and cut off. And the like may be ſaid of *Armageddon*, as the Name of the Place where the Kings of the Earth and of the whole World ſhall meet; for this Name ſeems to be given to the Place of their Meeting, from the future Event of it; *Armageddon* ſignifying *devoted to Deſtruction*, or *cauſing Deſolation*, according to Expoſitors. And the *gathering together all Nations*, as in *Joel*; and the *gathering the Kings of the Earth, and of the whole World together*, as in the *Revelations*, is much the ſame thing. And it is the more probable ſtill, that both theſe Texts, that in *Joel*, and this in the *Revelations*, aim at one and the ſame thing, becauſe the Agents then to be employed by God are in both Prophecies called upon to *thruſt in their Sickles, and to gather the Cluſters*, which will then be fully ripe, as we may ſee, *Joel* iii. 13. *Rev.* xiv. 18. and xix. 15. For thoſe things which concern the uſe of the *Sickle* and *Wine-preſs*, though mentioned in other Chapters in the *Revelations* than that where we read of the gathering of the Enemies Forces together to the Battel at *Armageddon*, yet they refer to the ſame Execution which will be done upon the Church's Enemies there and then, according to the Judgment of Expoſitors.

Almighty God in his over-ruling Providence will, as I ſay, have a hand in gathering the main ſtrength of the Church's Enemies together at this time, as well as they will themſelves; but for quite *different ends: They* to deſtroy the Church's ſtrength at once, but *He* that they may be broken to pieces like a Potters Veſſel, never to be repaired again. For thus runs the Prophecy in *Micah* iv. 11, 12. *Now alſo many Nations are gathered againſt thee, that ſay let her be defiled, let our eye look upon Sion. But they know not the Thoughts of the Lord, neither underſtand they his Counſel: For he ſhall gather them as ſheaves into the floor: Ariſe and threſh, O Daughter of Sion.* To this great and famous Time and Action, that Prophecy ſeems to refer, *Iſai.* xxiv. 21, 22. *It ſhall come to paſs in that day, that the Lord ſhall puniſh the hoſt of the high ones that are on high, and the Kings of the earth upon the earth; and they ſhall be gathered together as priſoners are gathered in the pit.* And ſo does that Prophecy likewiſe, *Zeph.* iii. 8. *For my determination is to gather the Nations, that I may aſſemble the Kingdoms, to pour upon them mine Indignation, even all my fierce Anger; for all the Earth ſhall be devoured with the Fire of my Jealouſie.*

Thus much of the Oppoſition which the Jews after their Converſion are like to meet with in their return to their own Land, and of the Oppoſition which the Chriſtian Gentiles of the Reformed Churches are like to meet with in their joyning with them and aſſiſting them; or however in their defence of the common Cauſe of Chriſtianity at the ſame time.

2. I come now to enquire into the iſſue or event of this Oppoſition, and of the great Preparations that will be made for it: And our Enquiry ſhall be, whether the iſſue and event of this Oppoſition againſt the Church will not be a compleat Victory of the Church over her Enemies, and a total Overthrow of thoſe her Oppoſers. Theſe Scriptures now inſiſted on, we ſee ſpeak of a very great Congreſs or Gathering together of the Forces of many Nations in the latter days, againſt the Church of God. *Multitudes, multitudes in the valley of deciſion: For the day of the Lord is near in the valley of deciſion*, ſaith the Prophet *Joel*, ch. iii. 14. If the Queſtion be, what defence the People of God, when thus aſſaulted by the Strength of the whole World in a manner, will make, or which will be made for them? To this the Prophet's words may be an anſwer, where he ſays, *When the Enemy ſhall come in like a flood, the Spirit of the Lord ſhall lift up a ſtandard againſt him*, Iſai. lix. 19. When he ſhall come in like a Flood, threatning to overflow all, and to carry all before him like a Flood, againſt which there is no Reſiſtance, and ſhall perhaps deſpiſe all the Reſiſtance the Church is like to make; Then will be the time when the Spirit of the Lord will lift up a Standard againſt him. What we are to underſtand by that, ſhall be conſider'd preſently. In the mean time let us enquire when this ſhall be, that the Enemy ſhall thus come in like a Flood, and when the Spirit of the Lord will lift up a Standard againſt him: And we ſhall find it will be at the time of the *Jews* Deliverance from their Blindneſs and Infidelity, if we compare theſe words of the Prophet, and thoſe in the next Verſe, with *Rom.* xi. 25, 26. For at that time, when the Enemy ſhall thus come in, and the Spirit of the Lord thus lift up a Standard againſt him, *the Redeemer ſhall come to Sion, and unto them that turn from Tranſgreſſion in Jacob.* For ſo we find theſe two things coupled together in the 19th and 20th Verſes of *Iſaiah* lix. And we find alſo by the Apoſtles words in the fore-cited place of *Rom.* xi. 25, 26, 27. that this will be at the *Jews* Reſtoration and Deliverance from their Blindneſs. For he ſays, *I would not, Brethren, that ye ſhould be ignorant of*

this myſtery, that blindneſs is happen'd to Iſrael in part until the fulneſs of the Gentiles be come in; and ſo all Iſrael ſhall be ſaved: As it is written, There ſhall come out of Sion the deliverer, and ſhall turn away ungodlineſs from Jacob: For this is my Covenant unto them, when I ſhall take away their ſins.

By the Spirit's lifting up a Standard againſt this formidable Enemy, is meant his making war againſt him; for a Standard is an Enſign of War; he will oppoſe and withſtand him, yea, ſo check and reſiſt him, as to *put him to flight*, as it is in the Margin. We ſee the Oppoſition that will be made againſt this *Enemy*, by which he will be put to flight, is aſcribed *wholly* to the Spirit of the Lord, and not to his People againſt whom the Enemy will bend his Forces. Not as if they would do nothing to defend themſelves, and to offend the Enemy: But the aſcribing the matter only to the Spirit of God, ſignifies that the defence of his People, and the ſhameful baffling of their Enemies at that time, will be the work of the Spirit of God chiefly. There will be ſo much done in this great Action, in an extraordinary way, and out of the uſual road of Human Power, as will miniſter occaſion unto Men to attribute and aſcribe the Church's Victory over her Enemies unto God only, as fighting for them.

And that ſeems to be the meaning of the Viſion which the Prophet ſaw, when he ſays, *Who is this that cometh from Edom, with died garments from Bozrah? this that is glorious in his apparel, travelling in the greatneſs of his ſtrength? I that ſpeak in righteouſneſs, mighty to ſave. Wherefore art thou red in thine apparel, and thy garments like him that treadeth in the wine-fat? I have troden the wine-preſs alone, and of the people there was none with me: for I will tread them in mine anger, and trample them in my fury, and their blood ſhall be ſprinkled upon my garments, and I will ſtain all my raiment. For the day of vengeance is in my heart, and the year of my redeemed is come. And I looked, and there was none to help; and I wondred that there was none to uphold. Therefore mine own arm brought ſalvation unto me, and my fury it upheld me. And I will tread down the people in mine anger, and make them drunk in my fury, and will bring down their ſtrength to the earth*, Iſai. lxiii. 1,—6. The Prophet in the words foregoing at the end of the former Chapter had ſaid, *Behold, the Lord hath proclaimed unto the end of the World, ſay to the Daughter of Sion, Behold thy Salvation cometh*, &c. And here he ſees in a Viſion an inſtance how that Salvation will be brought about, to wit, in ſuch an extraordinary and unuſual way, that little other ſhall appear in it than the Hand and mighty Work of God. And therefore the Worker of this Deliverance, that is mighty to ſave, is ſaid to have trodden the Winepreſs *alone*, and that of the People there was *none with him*. He only appears as having his Garments ſtained with the Blood of his Peoples Enemies, as if the Execution upon them lay wholly on his hands. And although *Edom* and *Bozrah* be here only named, yet it is but as a particular Inſtance of that Victory and Conqueſt which will be obtained by Chriſt at laſt over the Enemies of the Church in general, as Expoſitors alſo do think. For ſo *Idumea*, or *Edom*, is in like manner inſtanced in, when yet the Deſtruction of the Enemies of the Church in general is foretold by the Prophet *Iſaiah*, xxxiv. 1. *Come near ye Nations to hear, and hearken ye People: For the Indignation of the Lord is upon all Nations, and his Fury upon all their Armies: he hath utterly deſtroy'd them, he hath deliver'd them to the ſlaughter. The Mountains ſhall be melted with their Blood, and all the Hoſt of Heaven ſhall be diſſolved, and the Heavens ſhall be rolled together as a ſcroll. For my Sword ſhall be bathed in Heaven: behold it ſhall come down upon Idumea, and upon the People of my Curſe to Judgment.* And *Edom* is thought the rather to be named, when Judgments are denounced againſt the Church's Enemies in general, becauſe the *Edomites* were frequently more vexatious to the Jews than others, as being their near Neighbours and irreconcileable Enemies.

Nor is it likely that theſe Prophecies, under their majeſtick and lofty Circumſtances, received their accompliſhment in that Overthrow which *Judas* gave the Children of *Eſau*, by which he is ſaid to have *abated their Courage*, 1 Mac. v. 3. For that was ſo far from a total ſubduing of them, as that the Jews were maſſacred by them at two ſeveral times after this, as we have it from *Joſephus*, *lib.* 4. *cap.* 11. & *lib.* 5. *cap.* 1. of the Wars.

And it is the more likely that the Victory over the *Edomites* here deſcrib'd, refers to that Overthrow of the Church's Enemies more generally conſider'd, which is deſcrib'd by the Spirit's lifting up a Standard againſt them, when they ſhall come in like a Flood, mentioned before, *Iſai.* lix. 19. becauſe the words immediately foregoing, in *ver.* 16, 17, 18. do ſo much harmonize and agree with what is ſaid concerning the triumphant Victory over the *Edomites* before rehearſed, as they do no where elſe in the whole Bible.

For as it is ſaid *Chap.* lxiii. 5. *And I looked and there was none to help; and I wondred that there was none to uphold, therefore mine own Arm brought Salvation unto me, and my Fury it upheld me:* So it is ſaid in *Chap.* lix. 16, 17. *That he ſaw that there was no Man, and wondered that there was no Interceſſor: Therefore his Arm brought Salvation unto him, and his Righteouſneſs it ſuſtained him. For he put on Righteouſneſs as a Breaſt-plate, and an Helmet of Salvation upon his Head; and he put on the Garments of Vengeance for clothing, and was clad with Zeal as a Cloak,* &c.

Another Scripture which ſeems to agree with theſe in ſhewing that the general Victory which the Church in the latter days ſhall obtain over her Enemies, will be brought to paſs ſo, as that it will appear plainly that Almighty God, that Chriſt the King of his Church does interpoſe and concern himſelf in it after a more immediate and extraordinary manner than what has been uſual at other times, is *Rev.* xix. Where the Viſion which St. *John* there relates, ſeems to be that of the Battel of the great Day of God Almighty, ſpoken of *Chap.* xvi. to which the Kings of the Earth, and of the whole World had been invited and ſolicited by the Emiſſaries of the Dragon, Beaſt and falſe Prophet. For it is ſaid at the 19th *Verſe, I ſaw the Beaſt, and the Kings of the Earth, and their Armies gathered together to make war againſt him that ſate upon the Horſe, and againſt his Army.* And the Royal General of the Armies that ſhall engage againſt the Armies the Dragon, Beaſt and falſe Prophet, is deſcribed among other things, by his *Veſture as* of *dipt in Blood*, ver. 13. as that Royal Victor alſo was which came from *Edom*, and which trode the Wine-preſs *alone*, by doing of which his Raiment was ſtained with Blood. Which two Viſions ſeem by their Agreement to relate to, and to point at the ſame thing. Now the Appearance of Chriſt as in Garments dipt in Blood, when in a Warlike Poſture engaged againſt Enemies, muſt needs ſignifie the great Slaughter of thoſe Enemies to be made, or as already made by him. And when his Garments only appear in this bloody hue, but the Garments of his Soldiers that follow him upon white Horſes, to remain *white and clean*; what can it betoken leſs than that the Slaughter of thoſe Enemies will be owing principally to him their General?

But beſides this, the Armies of the Dragon, Beaſt and falſe Prophet, are ſaid to be *ſlain by the Sword proceeding out of the mouth of him that ſate upon the Horſe*, but not one word of their being ſlain by his Soldiers, *ver.* 21. And what can this ſignifie leſs than that the Slaughter of thoſe Enemies will appear to the Beholders to proceed more from him, and what he will do in that day, than from his Soldiers and Followers, or from what they ſhall do. And when we conſider that and other Prophecies concerning Chriſt, which we have in *Pſal.* cx. 5, 6. *The Lord at thy right hand ſhall ſtrike through Kings in the day of his Wrath: He ſhall judge among the Heathen, he ſhall fill the places with the dead Bodies, he ſhall wound the Heads over many Countries:* I ſay, when we conſider this, we have great reaſon to think, that the ſlaying of his Enemies with the Sword of his Mouth in this place and upon this occaſion here mentioned, muſt needs ſignifie a temporal Deſtruction which they ſhall receive from him at the Battel of that great Day of God Almighty, which is as likely to be as much or more the Day of his Wrath, than any on this ſide the Day of the general Judgment of the World.

And if what the Rider of the white Horſe is here ſaid to have done againſt the *Beaſt*, and the Kings of the Earth, and againſt their Armies, be the Effect of the pouring out one of the ſeven Vials (as it ſeems to be the effect of the laſt of them) then we cannot underſtand by his ſlaying them with the Sword of his Mouth, the Converſion of Chriſt's Enemies to him, unleſs we can conceive how their Converſion ſhould be a Plague: For the *ſeven Vials are the ſeven laſt Plagues*, Rev. xv. 1, 6, 7, 8. Nor can I find any where in Scripture that the word *ſlaying* by the Sword of God's Mouth, or the Breath of his Lips is uſed in ſo favourable a ſenſe, as to ſignifie the Converſion of Men from ſin, but always either for his denouncing evil againſt them, or for the Execution of it at his Pleaſure or Appointment.

And it is not unlikely but that the Enemies of the Church at ſuch a time as this, when the Kings of the Earth and of the whole World have brought their Armies together, may ſo far out-number thoſe of the Church, that unleſs the Lord of Hoſts himſelf ſhould by ſome extraordinary Acts of Providence engage for the one, and againſt the other, the Church would be in great danger of being devoured by her Enemies. So that as the caſe may then be, there may be a kind of neceſſity for God to interpoſe and concern himſelf in ſome extraordinary way for the Deliverance of his Church by deſtroying their Enemies.

But beſides this, Almighty God by appearing thus viſibly by ſome tokens of his Power and Preſence in the behalf of his Church and People, and againſt their Enemies, will ſerve another great deſign of his Grace and Favour towards the World; and that is in making ſuch proceeding of his to be a means of convincing the World in general, that the God of thoſe Chriſtians for whom he thus wondrouſly appears, is the only true God, and their Religion the only true Religion, upon account of which they will be drawn to learn it of them. There are many Scriptures which give Intimation of this, ſome of which I intend ſhall be conſidered in the next Chapter.

And as the Scriptures already inſiſted on tend to put us in Expectation that Almighty God will do ſomething extraordinary for the Deliverance of his People, and for the Deſtruction of their Enemies in that day when the Churches Enemies ſhall aſſociate, combine and gather themſelves together againſt them, from all parts of the World as it were; ſo there are other Scriptures which ſeem to give us ſome hints touching the way and manner how Almighty God will do this without any extraordinary hazardous Engagement of his People againſt the numerous Hoſts of their Enemies.

The one of which is the Enemies falling out among themſelves, and falling foul upon one another, inſtead of proſecuting their deſign againſt the Armies of the Chriſtians. For when Armies not only of ſeveral Nations, but alſo of ſeveral *different* falſe Religions ſhall be brought together, it is not hard to imagine how eaſie a thing it is with God to mingle a perverſe Spirit among them, as he threatned to do among the *Egyptians*, ſaying, *I will ſet the Egyptians againſt the Egyptians; and they ſhall fight every Man againſt his Brother, and every one againſt his Neighbour; City againſt City, and Kingdom againſt Kingdom*, Iſa. xix. 2. And as he did when three Nations, *the Children of Moab, Ammon, and Mount Seir*, combined themſelves and came againſt *Jehoſaphat* King of *Juda*. For when their Army and the Army of the King of *Juda* were near meeting and engaging, *the Lord ſet Ambuſhments againſt the Children of Moab, Ammon, and the Inhabitants of Mount Seir: For the Children of Ammon and Moab ſtood up againſt the Inhabitants of Mount Seir, utterly to ſlay and to deſtroy them. And when they had made an end of the Inhabitants of Seir, every one helped to deſtroy another*, 2 *Chron*. xx. 22, 23. And I do not know but that the place to which God in *Joel* iii. ſays he will gather all Nations, and there to plead with them for his People, and there to ſit and judge them, is called the *Valley of Jehoſaphat*, not ſo much for that there is any place ſo called elſewhere in Scripture, as becauſe the way by which God will bring them down and ſubdue them, is likely to be the ſame in a great meaſure, by which he deſtroy'd the three confederate Armies which came againſt *Jehoſaphat* and his Kingdom, to wit, by dividing them and ſetting them one againſt another.

And that Almighty God will in this way and after this manner cut off and deſtroy the Enemies of his Church in thoſe latter times, of which we are ſpeaking, is plainly foretold by ſeveral of the Prophets. As by the Prophet *Zachary* for one, *Chap*. xiv. *v*. 13. *And it ſhall come to paſs in that day, that a great Tumult from the Lord ſhall be among them, and they ſhall lay hold every one on the hand of his Neighbour, and his hand ſhall riſe up againſt the hand of his Neighbour*. And that this Prophecy reſpects what is to be done in the latter days againſt the Enemies of the Church, we may eaſily believe when we conſult the foregoing and following words.

See the like foretold by another Prophet, *Hag*. ii. 22. *I will ſhake the Heaven and the Earth, and I will overthrow the Throne of Kingdoms, and will deſtroy the Strength of the Kingdoms of the Heathen, and I will overthrow the Chariots and thoſe that ride in them, and the Horſes and their Riders ſhall come down, every one by the Sword of his Brother*. Mark that. Theſe two Prophets propheſied after the Jews return out of the 70 Years Captivity, and we cannot ſay this Prophecy was fulfilled by any thing done in the time of the *Maccabees*, or ſince, and therefore is yet to be accompliſhed.

Add to theſe a Prophecy of the Deſtruction of *Gog* and his Armies, when he ſhall come againſt the Land of *Iſrael* in the latter days with his numerous Bands from *Meſhech and Tubal*, from *Perſia*, *Ethiopia*, *Libya*, *Gomer and Togarmah*, Ezek. xxxviii. 21. *I will call for a Sword againſt him throughout all my Mountain, ſaith the Lord God: Every Man's Sword ſhall be againſt his Brother*.

We may farther add, *Micah* v. 6. formerly mentioned, reading the words according to the Margin, which then will run thus. *And they ſhall waſte or eat up the Land of Aſſyria with the Sword, and the Land of Nimrod with her own naked Swords: Thus ſhall he deliver us from the Aſſyrian when he cometh into our Land, and when he treadeth in our Borders*. Thus ſhall he deliver us; that is, thus ſhall Chriſt deliver us: For it is the He which the Prophet had ſaid ſhould come out of *Bethlehem* and be *Ruler in Iſrael*, whoſe goings forth have been from everlaſting, *ver*. 2. *and* who ſhall be *great to* *the ends of the Earth*, ver. 4. and *He* who ſhall be *the Peace* when the *Aſſyrian* ſhould come into their Land, *ver.* 5.

This way of dividing the Enemies of the Church one againſt another, ſeems to be deſigned to be put in Execution upon the pouring out of the *ſeventh Vial* into the Air over the Armies of the Kings of the Earth and of the whole World, when they are gathered together to the Battel of the great Day of God Almighty, and againſt the Rider on the white Horſe, and his Army. For upon the pouring out of the ſeventh Vial it's ſaid, that the great City was *divided into three parts*, Rev. xvi. 17, 19. And what is the *great City* here but the ſame which in Chap. xi. 8. is ſaid to be *the great City, ſpiritually called Sodom and Egypt*, to wit, the Papal Juriſdiction, according to Expoſitors. And what can be better underſtood, by its being divided into three parts, than that the Antichriſtian Party, and their Adherents, will at that time become divided into three Parties in oppoſition to one another, and ſo fall foul upon each other, as part of the effect of the pouring out of that Vial ? And if the Rider of the white Horſe do but *call for ſuch a Sword as this*, as the Lord ſaith, *he will call for againſt Gog and his Bands*; that *Sword of his Mouth* will be ſufficient to ſlay his Enemies, though his Followers ſhould be no more concerned in the Execution than *Jehoſaphat*'s Army was, when they only *ſtood ſtill to behold the Salvation of the Lord, while he only fought for them*, by cauſing their Enemies to deſtroy one another. I do not ſay they will not be concerned in it any more than thoſe were: But foraſmuch as the Rider on the white Horſe *only* has his *Veſture dipt in Blood*, while the Clothing of his Soldiers is *clean and white*, it ſeems to intimate that thoſe Soldiers of Chriſt will have but little ſhare in the Execution of Judgment upon their Enemies in that great Battel, in compariſon of what will be done and performed by Chriſt himſelf. *I have trodden the Wine-preſs alone, and of the People there was none with me*; for ſo Chriſt is brought in, ſaying, if that be meant of him in *Iſai.* lxiii. 3. And if ſuch other things ſhall happen upon the pouring out of the ſeventh Vial, as we ſhall find foretold in St. *John*'s Prophecy concerning it, and in other Prophecies which ſeem to refer unto the ſame time, it need not ſeem ſtrange to us, that the Armies of the Enemies of the Chriſt and his Church, though never ſo numerous and formidable, ſhould fall into Diſtraction, Confuſion and Tumult. For upon the pouring out of that Vial, it is ſaid, *There were* (*i.e.* there will be) *Voices, and Thunderings, and Lightnings, and there was a great Earthquake, ſuch as was not ſince Men were upon the Earth, ſo mighty an Earthquake and ſo great. And there fell upon Men a great Hail out of Heaven, every Stone about the weight of a Talent*, Rev. xvi. 17, 18, 21. And when all Nations ſhall be brought down to the Valley of *Jehoſaphat*, where there ſhall be *multitudes, multitudes in the valley of deciſion*, as it is in *Joel*; or *tumults, tumults, noiſe, noiſe*, as ſome others read it: *When the Sun and the Moon ſhall be darkned, and the Stars ſhall withdraw their ſhining: when the Lord ſhall roar out of Sion, and utter his voice from Jeruſalem: when the Heavens and the Earth ſhall ſhake*, as it is there: *when the Lord ſhall come with Fire, and with his Chariots, like a Whirlwind, to render his Anger with Fury, and his Rebukes with Flames of Fire; when by Fire and by his Sword the Lord ſhall plead with all Fleſh, ſo that the ſlain of the Lord ſhall be many*, as it is in *Iſaiah* lxvi. 15, 16. I ſay, when ſuch things as theſe ſhall befal the Armies at *Armageddon*, it will be no wonder if they become utterly confounded and diſtracted, like Men that do they know not what, miſtaking their Friends for Foes.

For we find in Scripture, that huge Armies upon far leſs occaſion have been ſo amazed, affrighted and confounded, (when God would have it ſo) as that the Soldiers of the ſame Hoſt have turned head upon one another, and fled. Thus the huge Hoſt of the *Midianites*, and the *Amalekites*, and the *Children of the Eaſt*, though they were *like Graſshoppers for multitude, they and their Camels without number, as Sand on the Sea-ſhore*: Yet when but three hundred of *Gideon*'s Men did but break ſo many Pitchers with Lamps in them, and blow their Trumpets, and cry, *They Sword of the Lord and Gideon*, they all fled; and not only ſo, but it's ſaid, that *the Lord ſet every Man's Sword againſt his fellow, throughout all the Hoſt*, Judges vii. 22.

At another time the Lord made the Hoſt of the *Syrians*, in the Siege of *Samaria*, *to hear a noiſe of Chariots and the noiſe of Horſes, even the noiſe of a great Hoſt*; upon which they fled for their Lives, leaving their Tents, Horſes and Aſſes behind them, beſides other Booty in abundance, 2 *Kings* vii. 6, 7.

Yea, the Gariſon of the *Philiſtins* fled, when but only *Jonathan* and his Armourbearer appeared againſt them, *when God had but firſt cauſed an Earthquake to be among them, and a great Trembling in the Hoſt, beating down one another, every Man's Sword being againſt his fellow*, 1 *Sam.* xiv. 15, 16, 20. What then may ſuch an Earthquake produce,

duce, which for the greatneſs will be ſuch as never was ſince Men were upon the Earth, eſpecially when accompanied with *Voices*, *Thunderings* and *Lightnings*, and the falling of *great Hail-ſtones* of the weight of a Talent? And yet ſuch things it ſeems there will be, either properly or metaphorically, in the Armies of *Armageddon*, upon the pouring out of the ſeventh Vial into the Air over them.

To conclude this buſineſs, the Lord hath foretold by another of his Prophets, ſaying, *Behold, I will make Jeruſalem a Cup of Trembling unto all the People round about, when they ſhall be in the Siege both againſt Juda and Jeruſalem. And in that day will I make Jeruſalem a burthenſome Stone for all People: all that burthen themſelves with it, ſhall be cut in pieces, though all the People of the Earth be gathered together againſt it.* But how? Why, *in that day, ſaith the Lord, I will ſmite every Horſe with aſtoniſhment, and his Rider with madneſs; and I will open mine Eyes upon the Houſe of Juda, and will ſmite every Horſe of the People with Blindneſs*, Zach. xii. 2, 3, 4. And what Confuſion muſt there needs be in thoſe Armies, when both Men and Horſes ſhall be in ſuch an ill caſe? I have mentioned *Zach.* xiv. 13. once before, to ſhew that the Enemies of God's People, when gathered together againſt them in the latter days, will fall foul upon one another; but mark the Reaſon of it there given: *For a great tumult from the Lord ſhall be among them, and they ſhall lay hold every one on the hand of his Neighbour. At the noiſe of the tumult the People fled*, (ſaith the Prophet) *at the lifting up of thy ſelf the Nations were ſcattered*, Iſai. xxxiii. 3.

What is added by way of Digreſſion, follows.

From what hath been diſcourſed in this Chapter, we may antidote our ſelves againſt deſponding Thoughts, and being over-ſolicitous in caſe we ſee or apprehend the numbers or viſible ſtrength of the Enemies of the Church, in their Preparations and Combinations againſt her, to over-match her never ſo much. For her ſafety and hope of deliverance in times of greateſt danger, does not depend ſo much upon the Church's viſible Strength, as upon the Power, Wiſdom and Goodneſs of Chriſt her Head and King. *And with him it is nothing to help, whether with many, or with them that have no power*, as *Aſa* ſaid to Almighty God, when he engaged againſt *Zarah* the *Ethiopian*, who had an Army of ten hundred thouſand, 2 *Chron.* xiv. 11. *There is no reſtraint to him to ſave by many or by few*, as *Jonathan* ſaid, 1 *Sam.* xiv. 6. When *Jehoſaphat* was brought to that extremity, as to ſay in his Prayer to God, *We have no might againſt this great company that cometh againſt us; neither know we what to do, but our eyes are upon thee*; he and his People were as ſafe as they would have been, in caſe they had had as great a viſible ſtrength as they could wiſh, 2 *Chron.* xx.

For, for what end can we think, hath Almighty God by his Prophets declared ſo long before, as he has done, what great and extraordinary things he will at laſt do for the deliverance of his Church, and for the bringing down her Enemies? Certainly not to take her off from providing for her own defence and ſafety, ſo far as ſhe can, in all due ways: But when ſhe has ſo done, he would have her without anxiety of Mind to depend upon Chriſt, *the only Potentate*, and to *be ſtrong in the Lord, and in the power of his might*, who is as much concern'd for her, as ſhe is for her ſelf. And when ſhe cannot help and ſave her ſelf in the ordinary way of human Affairs, then without all doubt he will interpoſe to help and ſave her in ways and by means extraordinary and unuſual; and *there is nothing too hard for him.*

And farther, if the Deliverance of the Church at laſt, by deſtroying her Enemies, will proceed more from what Chriſt their King and General will himſelf do therein by extraordinary Acts of his Power, as the Scriptures before inſiſted on ſeem to intimate to us that it will: Then this may diſſuade all Chriſtians from uſing any undue means for the introducing Chriſt's Kingly Government into the World, or for the ſetting him upon his Throne. For it is not likely to be done by their might and ſtrength, but ſo as that it ſhall be truly ſaid, that *he hath done marvellous things: and that his right hand and his holy arm have gotten himſelf the victory*, Pſal. xcviii. 1. He ſtands in no need of any unrighteous or irregular help from Men, to give him poſſeſſion of his Kingdom in the World. He who hath given Laws to his Subjects, to direct and govern them in all their Actions, will never take it well from any of them, if they ſhall break any of his Laws, in zeal for him, or to advance his Kingdom in the World, as we may know ſome have done, by betaking themſelves to Arms upon an Enthuſiaſtical Impulſe, without any colour of Call from their Superiours; to the diſturbance of the publick Peace, and in affront to the Government under which the Providence of God had placed them.

All Actions of any thing alike nature, are no Honour to Chriſt or his Religion, nor do they tend to farther or advance his Intereſt, in the World, but greatly to hinder it, and make him the more Enemies in the World for their ſakes. And it is ſo far unlikely that ever he ſhould in his Providence do any thing extraordinary for the Succeſs of irregular Undertakings of any who ſhall therein pretend a Zeal for him, as that it may rather be expected, that he ſhould do ſomething extraordinary firſt or laſt, to let the World know that he diſowns ſuch Perſons in ſuch their Proceedings.

The Scripture ſaith, *he that believeth doth not make haſte*, Iſa. xxviii. 16. He doth not uſe any indirect means to *haſten* that which God hath promiſed, as being impatient of his delay to fulfil and perform it. And therefore all irregular Practices of Men to haſten the ſetting up of Chriſt's Kingdom in the World, are an Argument rather of their Diffidence and Diſtruſt in Chriſt as King of his Church: Either of his Power, as if he could not ſet up his Kingdom and Government, without ſuch humane Help as they deem neceſſary to that end; Or of his Wiſdom, as not regarding the beſt time and fitteſt ſeaſon to do it in; Or of his care of his Church, in not haſtning more to her Relief and Deliverance from all powerful Enemies.

When Men will take Chriſt's own Work out of his hands, and lead the way, and go before him in it, as if they expected that he ſhould ſecond them and aſſiſt them in it, it is never like to proſper in theirs who ſo uſurp that Authority. For if he himſelf does not aſſiſt them in it, as they have little reaſon to expect that he ſhould, they will quickly find the Undertaking too great for all their Power and Skill to go through with it. And when they find themſelves intangled with inſuperable Difficulties, and to ſink under the Weight and Burthen of them, it's very likely they will thereupon entertain hard and unbecoming Thoughts of Chriſt himſelf, as if he had deſerted his own Cauſe in their hands, in leaving them to themſelves in their raſh Undertaking. And it's well if they do not thereupon bring themſelves under a ſtrong Temptation, either to Diſobedience, or to queſtion whether thoſe grounds upon which judicious and ſober Chriſtians expect the Churches great Deliverance from the hands of her Enemies, be true or no. Nay, it's well if they do not thereby bring themſelves to queſtion the Truth of the other great Doctrines of Chriſtianity, and ſlip into Atheiſm, as it's certain ſome have done upon occaſion of the Miſcarriage of ſuch raſh Undertaking, as that we are now ſpeaking of is.

Let none then out of a haſty and miſtaken Zeal, and under pretence of uſhering the Kingdom and Government of Chriſt into the World, attempt any thing in order thereto, that tends to diſturb the publick Peace, or the ſubverting of that Government by which the publick Peace is upheld and maintain'd in the World. Almighty God who hath the Hearts and Lives of Princes, Rulers and Governours in his hands, can eaſily make what Alteration in Governments and Governors he pleaſeth, in the Nations of the World, when he thinks fit to have it done. And it is a Work too big for Men of any Modeſty to undertake that are under Government themſelves.

Do but obſerve in all the great Alterations which God hath made in States and Kingdoms for the Eaſe and for the Deliverance of his People from time to time, and ſee whether they have been made by the Policy or Plottings of his People under the Government of thoſe that oppreſſed them, or by the working Providence of God without them. There were ſix hundred thouſand Men of *Iſrael* in Bondage in *Egypt* before they were brought out of it, *Exod.* xii. 37. And yet they were never perſuaded by *Moſes*, though he had been among them forty Years before they were delivered, to attempt their own Deliverance, till they could obtain leave from *Pharaoh* their King to *quit their ſtation.* When they were in Captivity in *Babylon*, did any of them attempt their Deliverance till God ſtir'd up the Heart of *Cyrus* to *give them leave* to return to their own Land? *Ezra* i. 1, And until then, God Almighty would have them *ſeek the peace of the place* where his Providence had brought them, *and to pray for it.* Jer. xxix. 7. And the Primitive Chriſtians, though under the Government of cruel perſecuting Pagan Emperours, yet never attempted their Deliverance by any ſecret Plots, or publick Diſturbance, though ſo numerous as that they fill'd all places as their Apologiſts have obſerv'd, but patiently waited till God himſelf ſhould bring about their Deliverance, as he did by *turning the heart of Conſtantine*, one of their Emperours, to the Chriſtian Faith. But in the mean time he declared that his Mind and Will was, that they ſhould be *ſubject* to the Imperial Power ſet over them by God's Providence, and that not only *for Wrath*, or Fear of Puniſhment, but *for Conſcience ſake*, and in Obedience to God, who required *every Soul of them to be ſubject to thoſe higher Powers*, and *to ſubmit themſelves to every Ordinance of Man for the Lord's ſake*, that were not contrary to any Command or Appointment of his, *Rom.* xiii. 1 *Pet.* ii.

Which by the way diſcovers their Principle to be corrupt and rotten, who think themſelves diſobliged from Obedience and Subjection to any of thoſe Kings whom they eſteem to be any of the Ten Horns of the Beaſt St. *John* ſpeaks of, *Rev.* xiii. For the Government of the Empire, under which the Primitive Chriſtians lived, was in the Nature and Conſtitution of it in reference to Religion, the *Pagan Beaſt*, with ſeven Heads and ten Horns, which St. *John* ſpake of, *Rev.* xii. And yet we ſee, they were to be ſubject and obedient to theſe Rulers, both ſupreme and ſubordinate, and that out of Conſcience to God, in all their lawful Ordinances or Commands.

But as I was ſaying, the greateſt Deliverance which the Church has received from time to time, have been brought about, not by their own Contrivance, or by any ſucceſsful Attempts of their Power or Policy, but by God's own ſpecial Work. And when we conſider that the Deliverance which the Church ſhall receive at the time of that great Turn of Affairs, when Chriſt ſhall be actually putting down all Rule, Authority and Power contrary to his, that his Name alone may be exalted in all the Earth, it is likely to be the greateſt, and of greateſt concern for the good of the World, of any ſhe ever yet received, next to the eternal Redemption by Chriſt: And when we conſider what we are put in Expectation of by the Prophecies recited in this Chapter: I ſay, when we conſider theſe things, we have great reaſon to think, that that Deliverance will be ſo managed by the Providence of God, that all the World may ſay it was of his doing, and that his Hand brought it to paſs, and that it was no natural or proper Effect of Human Power and Wiſdom. Which if ſo, then the People of God need not, out of fear or diſtruſt of being over-power'd by their Enemies, uſe any other means or methods of proceeding againſt them, or to increaſe their own ſtrength, than what are every way fair, unqueſtionable and unexceptionable.

And as the time of this great Action draws nearer and nearer, ſo the Providence of God no doubt will make the way clear and plain before the Church, ſo that ſhe ſhall be in no doubt what is fit for her to do in order to her own defence. Almighty God, who has the Hearts of Kings in his hand, as Rivers of Water, to turn the ſtream of their Counſels and Reſolutions which way he pleaſeth, will turn the Minds of thoſe, or ſome of thoſe Kings, who formerly had *given their Kingdom, Power and Strength unto the Beaſt*; ſo that they ſhall *hate the Whore*, ſet againſt her, and deſtroy her, *Rev.* xvii. 16, 17. And when thoſe of the Church ſhall be under the Conduct of lawful Authority, in that caſe they can be under no Doubtfulneſs of Mind what to do. And Almighty God ſeems to have mentioned this in his Word, on purpoſe to direct the generality of Orthodox Chriſtians under the degree of Kings, how and when to act in a hoſtile manner againſt the Church's Enemies, and to prevent all raſh and diſorderly Attempts of Men in a hoſtile way, out of a pretence of Zeal againſt *Romiſh* Superſtitions, and the Supporters of them.

And the pouring out of the latter of the Vials, as that upon the Seat of the Beaſt, and ſo on, will, as it's likely, be more open and manifeſt ſigns of the approaching ruine of the Kingdom of the Beaſt, and of the great Whore, by which ſome of thoſe Kings and Kingdoms which had before ſupported them, will have their Eyes opened, and fall off from them, and ſet themſelves againſt them. And then other Kings and Kingdoms, which had fallen off from them before, will take their meaſures how and when to act againſt the Beaſt and the great Whore.

For as the pouring out of the Seven Vials are and will be ſo many Plagues upon the Antichriſtian Crew; ſo they are and will be ſo many Signs to the Church's Party, to direct them in their Actings againſt the Church's Enemies. Which *thoſe that are wiſe will underſtand, when none of the wicked, which will ſtill do wickedly, ſhall underſtand*, as the Angel ſaid to *Daniel*, Dan. xii. 10. And it ſeems very probable, that the latter Vials will follow one another at no ſuch great diſtance, as thoſe of the former of them perhaps have done. For it ſeems as if there would be no greater diſtance between the pouring out of the two laſt, than there will be between the ſending to and gathering the Kings of the Earth and of the whole World to the Battel at *Armageddon*, and the fighting of that Battel. And if the effects of the pouring out of the fifth Vial upon the Seat of the Beaſt, ſhall be the deſtruction of great *Babylon*, deſcribed in *Rev.* xviii. as it's probable they will; then it's likely there will be no great diſtance neither between that and the Dragon, Beaſt and falſe Prophets beſtirring themſelves under the ſixth Vial, to procure all the aid they can poſſibly againſt the Church, from the Kings of the Earth and of the whole World.

CHAP. VI.

Of the Converſion of Heathen Nations to Chriſtianity, by means of the marvellous things which God will do for the Deliverance of his Church, and for the Deſtruction of her Enemies in the latter Days.

After the marvellous Victory over the Enemies of Chriſtians, and of God's working Wonders in the ſight of the World in behalf of the Chriſtian Church, we ſhall find that the Heathen Nations will begin to come in a-pace to the imbracing and profeſſion of the Chriſtian Religion. And the great and wonderful Works of God which will be brought to paſs in the Converſion of the Jews, and for their defence afterward, and for the deſtruction of their, and other Chriſtian Enemies, will contribute much to ſuch their Converſion. The Prophecy concerning Chriſt, *Pſal.* cx. 3. is, *That the People will be willing in the day of his power:* They will flow in to him at ſuch a time as that, when he ſhall give ſuch viſible proofs of his Power, as he will then do, in bringing his Enemies under his Feet, with a high Hand and ſtretched-out Arm in the ſight of the Nations round about.

The Prophet hath foretold in *Zach.* viii. 22, 23. *That many People and ſtrong Nations ſhall come to ſeek the Lord in Jeruſalem, and to pray before the Lord: Thus ſaith the Lord of Hoſts, In thoſe days it ſhall come to paſs, that ten Men ſhall take hold out of all Languages of the Nations, even ſhall take hold of the Skirt of him that is a Jew, ſaying, We will go with you, for we have heard that God is with you.* The reaſon of this great Conflux, the flowing of many People and ſtrong Nations into the Church, and of the Eagerneſs and Earneſtneſs of the *Gentiles* to joyn themſelves to the *Jews* in ſeeking and worſhipping God, is given in thoſe laſt words, *for we have heard that God is with you.* They will conclude this from the great and marvellous things which they will then have heard that God has done for them.

In *Iſaiah* lxvi. the Prophet having ſaid at the 16th Verſe, *By Fire and by his Sword will the Lord plead with all Fleſh, and the ſlain of the Lord ſhall be many.* In the 18th Verſe he ſaith in the Name of the Lord, *That it ſhall come to paſs, that I will gather all Nations and Tongues, and they ſhall come and ſee my Glory:* That is, as I conceive, they ſhall ſee the Glory of his Power and Greatneſs in the wonderful things which he will then do for the Deliverance of his People, and for the Deſtruction of their Enemies, when aſſembled againſt them out of many Nations. And to this ſenſe the following words at the 19th Verſe will guide us, *And I will ſend thoſe that eſcape of them* (that is, thoſe of them that eſcape the great Deſtruction forementioned) *unto the Nations, to Tarſhiſh, Pul and Lud that draw the bow, to Tubal and Javan, to the Iſles a-far off that have not heard my Fame, neither ſeen my Glory, and they ſhall declare my Glory among the Gentiles:* That is, I conceive, they ſhall then declare to thoſe Nations what Wonders God ſhall have then wrought for the Jews, and other his People, in the utter ſubverſion and overthrow of their Enemies in other parts of the World diſtant from them. And then it follows, as the effect of this, at Ver. 20. *And they ſhall bring your Brethren for an Offering to the Lord, out of all Nations, upon Horſes and in Chariots, and in Litters, and upon Mules, and upon ſwift Beaſts, to my holy mountain Jeruſalem, ſaith the Lord, as the Children of Iſrael bring an Offering in a clean Veſſel into the Houſe of the Lord.* The meaning of all which I ſuppoſe is, that upon the undoubted Credit of this Information, ſeveral out of thoſe Nations will repair to the Jews, to learn the manner of their Religion, and to let them know that they are deſirous to joyn with them in the worſhipping of their God.

So again, *Iſai.* lix. 17, 18, 19. When *the Lord ſhall put on Righteouſneſs as a Breaſtplate, and an Helmet of Salvation on his Head*; when *he ſhall put on the Garments of Vengeance for Cloathing, and is clad with Zeal as a Cloke, to repay Fury to his Adverſaries, and Recompence to his Enemies: And when the Spirit of the Lord ſhall have lifted up a Standard againſt the Enemy coming in like a Flood,* it is ſaid that then, or thereupon *they ſhall fear the Name of the Lord from the Weſt, and his Glory from the riſing of the Sun*; that is, all the World over.

And thus again the Heathen will come to *know* the true God, *when he ſhall be ſanctified before their Eyes,* by viſible Tokens of his inviſible Power, in the Deſtruction of *Gog* and his huge Hoſt, drawn together out of many Nations againſt the *Iſrael of God,* Ezek. xxxviii. 16. *And thou ſhalt come up againſt my People of Iſrael, as a Cloud covereth the Land, it ſhall be in the latter days, and I will bring thee againſt my Land, that the Heathen may know me, when I ſhall be ſanctified in thee, O Gog, before their eyes*; to wit, in his Deſtruction. To the ſame purpoſe read *ver.* 21, 22, 23.

And thoſe which ſhall get the *Victory over the Beaſt, and over his Image, and over his Mark, and over the number of his Name,* will in ſinging their Song of *Moſes* and of the Lamb, ſay thus, *all Nations ſhall come and worſhip before thee*; *for thy Judgments are made manifeſt:* That is, his Judgments on the Churches Enemies; and this they conclude will bring in all Nations to worſhip the true God. When God's Judgments on the Enemies of his Church and for the Deliverance of his People ſhall be ſo famous that all Nations ſhall take notice of them, then will it be that all Nations will come and worſhip before him.

We read of a mixed Multitude that went up with *Iſrael* out of *Egypt*, Exod. xii. 38. Theſe doubtleſs had been prevailed upon to joyn with them, by the Judgments of God which they ſaw executed upon the *Egyptians* for their ſakes. Others came into them and joyned themſelves with them, upon the report and hearing what great things God had done for them againſt their Enemies, both in their being brought out of *Egypt*, and as they journied in the Wilderneſs, *Joſh.* ii. 10, 11. and ix. 9, 10. If then the terrible Judgments which God in favour of his People and for their Deliverance, brought upon *Egypt*, had ſuch effect as to cauſe many of the *Egyptians* themſelves to come out of *Egypt* with them, and to joyn themſelves to them, as we ſee it had: We may eaſily believe that ſuch Works of Wonder in this laſt Deliverance, as ſhall ſo far exceed thoſe that went before, as to drown the Fame of them in ſome ſort, may and will produce greater Effects in the Converſion of Heathen People to God and to his Church, than his Wonders in *Egypt* and afterwards, did. And yet ſuch will the Wonders of this greater Deliverance be, which will be a Deliverance not out of one Nation only, as that from *Egypt* was, but of many; not from an outward Servility and Contempt only as before, but now from a ſpiritual Vaſſalage and Bondage alſo, which is far worſe. In his days whoſe Name is the Lord our Righteouſneſs, *Men ſhall no more ſay the Lord liveth, which brought up the Children of Iſrael out of the Land of Egypt: But the Lord liveth, which brought up, and which led the Seed of the Houſe of Iſrael out of the North Country, and from all Countries whither I had driven them, and they ſhall dwell in their own Land,* Jer. xxiii. 6, 7. But no ſuch thing as this hath yet come to paſs in his days, whoſe Name is the Lord our Righteouſneſs; but the Lord will haſten it in its time.

Now if ſuch a ſevere way of God's proceeding againſt the Armies of the Enemies of his Church, will be a means of procuring a greater good to the reſt of the World, by converting them to Chriſtianity, as I have ſhew'd it will, then it will be no hard matter to believe the former in order to the latter; it will be no hard matter to believe that God will uſe ſuch Severity towards them, when for him to do ſo, will not only manifeſt his juſt Indignation againſt the Heinouſneſs of the ſins for which he thus deals with them, but alſo be a powerful means to bring in the reſt of the World to imbrace that Religion, for oppoſing of which, and perſecuting the Profeſſors of it, theſe Enemies of it do ſo, ſeverely ſuffer.

And yet perhaps thoſe Severities of God againſt the Enemies of his People, will not prevail ſo much upon the reſt of the World for their Converſion, as they are Severities againſt ſin ſimply conſidered, as they will for that they are Evidences of his Favour to his People; and of his Favour to them, upon account of the Religion they have received from him, and profeſs and practiſe in the World. And ſo other viſible Tokens of God's Favour to his People, beſides thoſe of Severity againſt their Enemies for their ſakes, will contribute their ſhare alſo towards the bringing in the unbelieving Nations into the Church. For this conſider theſe Scriptures following.

Thus *Iſa.* lx. 1, 2, 3, 4, 5. *Ariſe, ſhine, for thy Light is come, and the Glory of the Lord is riſen upon thee. For behold the Darkneſs ſhall cover the Earth, and groſs Darkneſs the People: But the Lord ſhall ariſe upon thee, and his Glory ſhall be ſeen upon thee. And the Gentiles ſhall come to thy Light, and Kings to the Brightneſs of thy riſing. Lift up thine Eyes round about and ſee; all they gather themſelves together, they come to thee; thy Sons ſhall come from far, and thy Daughters ſhall be nurſed at thy ſide. Then thou ſhalt ſee and flow together, and thine heart ſhall fear, and be enlarged, becauſe the abundance of the Sea ſhall be converted unto thee, the Forces of the Gentiles ſhall come unto thee,* &c. That we ſee which will draw this great Concourſe to them from all Quarters round about, is the *riſing of the Glory of the Lord upon the Jews, and the Brightneſs of their riſing.* By which we are to underſtand no doubt, that the

Power and Goodneſs of God which is his Glory, will ſo conſpicuouſly appear for them in his Works of Wonder in one kind or other, as will fill the World with Admiration, and cauſe them to flock to them from all parts to ſeek their Favour. For ſo it follows at ver. 14. *The Sons of them that afflicted thee, ſhall come bending unto thee; and all they that deſpiſed thee ſhall bow themſelves down at the ſoles of thy feet. All that ſee them ſhall acknowledge them, that they are the ſeed which the Lord hath bleſſed, as it is,* Chap. lxi. 9. *The Gentiles ſhall come to thy Light, and Kings to the Brightneſs of thy riſing.* The *Jews* riſing out of ſo low, deſpicable and abject a Condition as that in which they had ſo long lain, to a glorious and proſperous State, and that ſo ſuddenly and by ways, means and methods which the World had been Strangers to for many Ages, will make their riſing bright indeed, and draw Mens Eyes upon it with much Admiration and Wonder. And this very thing will draw over to them not mean Men only; but even the greateſt *Kings* alſo who are not wont to make any Alteration in their Religion by things ordinary and common, *will come to the Brightneſs of their riſing*, ſo magnificent will their Appearance be, when God has *clothed them with the Garments of his Salvation*, as the Prophet ſpeaks, *Chap.* lxi. 10.

Thus this Prophet goes on in *Chap.* lxii. 2, 3, 4. *The Gentiles ſhall ſee thy Righteouſneſs, and all Kings thy Glory: And thou ſhalt be called by a new-Name, which the Mouth of the Lord ſhall name:* Meaning that from that new State into which God will bring them, they ſhall receive a new Name. *They ſhall no more be termed forſaken, neither their Land termed deſolate; thou ſhalt be a Crown of Glory in the hand of the Lord, and a royal Diadem in the hand of thy God.*

When the Lord ſhall build up Zion, he ſhall appear in his Glory. What's the Conſequence of this? *So the Heathen ſhall fear the Name of the Lord, and all the Kings of the Earth thy Glory, Pſal.* cii. This did not follow upon the rebuilding the City and Temple of *Jeruſalem* after their return out of their 70 Years Captivity, but will follow that more glorious building up of *Sion* which is yet to come, when God will appear more in his Glory than he did at that Building. And the Pſalmiſt in another place hath foretold what the effect will be of God's bleſſing the People of the *Jews* in that manner as we have heard, when he ſays, *God ſhall bleſs us, and all the ends of the Earth ſhall fear him,* Pſal. lxvii. 7. a thing which we cannot ſay hath come to paſs upon any his former bleſſing that People.

The Prophet *Amos* hath done the like, *Chap.* ix. 11, 12. *In that day I will raiſe up the Tabernacle of David that is fallen, and cloſe up the Breaches thereof, and I will raiſe up his Ruines, and I will build it as in the days of old: That they may poſſeſs the remnant of Edom, and of all the Heathen which are called by my Name, ſaith the Lord that doth this.* The raiſing up the decay'd and low Eſtate of the Houſe of *David*, or of the People of the Jews, is, we ſee, deſigned by God, not only as an extraordinary Favour to them; but to this end alſo, and as a means conducing to it, *viz.* that the reſidue of Men might ſeek after the Lord, and all the Gentiles upon whom my Name is called, ſaith the Lord; for ſo the words run, *Acts* xv. 17.

Theſe glorious things ſpoken of this People of God which will thus affect even Nations, and cauſe them to deſire and ſeek their Favour and Friendſhip, are to be underſtood, I conceive of their outward Proſperity eſpecially, and of the Extraordinarineſs of the Change of their outward Condition, both for the ſuddenneſs of it, and the means of effecting it. As for their ſpiritual Glory, and Beauty, the Heathen it's like will not firſt be moved with that to ſeek their Favour and Friendſhip, nor to admire them for that Glory; becauſe they cannot have a Senſe of that, until they are inſtructed in the nature of ſpiritual things. Only ſo far as they come to hear of the Excellency of their Morals, their Truth and Fidelity, their Juſtice and Charity, their Temperance and Chaſtity, theſe the Heathen can judge of indeed, and an Eminency in theſe, will procure Reverence and Reſpect even from barbarous Nations. But it's likely that which will come firſt to the notice of foreign Nations concerning the Jews, will be their ſtrange and wonderful Victories, and the extraordinary manner of obtaining them, the wonderful things which will be done for them in bringing them together out of their Diſperſion, and how in all things they proſper, and the like. And the Fame of theſe things, and the Reſpect it will procure them, will prepare the Heathen to receive the Goſpel, and to be taught the way of Salvation by them, and quickly to fall in with them in the Belief and Profeſſion of it, *Jer.* xxxiii. 7. *I will cauſe the Captivity of Judah and the Captivity of Iſrael to return, and will build them as at the firſt*—ver. 9. *and it ſhall be to me a Name of Joy, a Praiſe and an Honour before all the Nations of the Earth, which ſhall*

ſhall hear all the good I do unto them; and they ſhall fear and tremble for all the Goodneſs, and for all the Proſperity that I procure unto it.

After all this which I have ſaid touching God's wonderful dealing with and for the Jews, as a means of converting the Heathen Nations to Chriſtianity: I muſt before I leave it, clear one thing, and anſwer an Objection, which may otherwiſe be thought to lie againſt it. For it has been thought that the bringing in of the Fulneſs of the Gentiles to the Chriſtian Faith, will precede or go before the Calling and Converſion of the Jews, and not follow after it, as it muſt, if that which hath been now diſcourſed be true. And this Opinion objected, ſeems fairly to be grounded on the Apoſtles words, *Rom.* xi. 25, 26. *For I would not, Brethren, that ye ſhould be ignorant of this myſtery, (leſt ye be wiſe in your own conceit) that blindneſs in part is happened to Iſrael, until the fulneſs of the Gentiles be come in; and ſo all Iſrael ſhall be ſaved,* &c.

For anſwer to which, I ſay, That there is a neceſſity of underſtanding thoſe words, *until the fulneſs of the Gentiles be come in,* in a qualified ſenſe, to make them conſiſtent with what the Apoſtle had ſaid in the 12th Verſe. For there he ſaith of the Jews thus: *Now if the fall of them be the riches of the World, and the diminiſhing of them the riches of the Gentiles; how much more their fulneſs?* The meaning of which I take to be, That if the rejecting of the Goſpel by the generality of the Jews, was an occaſion of ſending it to the Gentiles, and ſo a means of their Converſion in many places of the World; then the calling or converſion of the Jews in their *fulneſs* will be much more a means of ſo great a benefit to the unconverted Gentiles, as their Converſion to the Chriſtian Faith will be. And it follows in the 15th Verſe thus: *If the caſting away of them be the reconciling of the World, what ſhall the receiving of them be, but life from the dead?* Which Dr. *Hammond* paraphraſeth thus: "If the caſting off of the contumacious Jews, be a means of ſending and ſpreading the Goſpel to the Gentiles, and ſo of bringing them into the Church, and obtaining Pardon for them upon their Repentance, what a Miracle of Mercy will it be for theſe Jews now to repent, and to be actually re-aſſumed into God's Favour, and to receive the Faith of Chriſt? Even as great a Miracle, as fit to work upon the Gentiles, (both to make them all believe in Chriſt, when his Crucifiers do ſo, and rejoyce at this happy turn) as if they ſhould ſee them raiſed from the dead again.

Seeing therefore that the general Converſion of the Jewiſh Nation to the Chriſtian Profeſſion at laſt, will be a means of converting the Nations of the Gentiles to the ſame Faith in greater abundance probably than ever before, inſomuch as that the Prediction of the *Pſalmiſt* may then take place, *Pſal.* lxxxvi. 9. *All Nations whom thou haſt made, ſhall come and worſhip before thee, O Lord, and glorifie thy Name:* I ſay, ſeeing theſe things ſeem ſo manifeſt and clear, we muſt needs underſtand thoſe words of St. *Paul* in a qualified ſenſe, where he ſays, *that blindneſs in part is happen'd unto Iſrael, until the fulneſs of the Gentiles be come in.* And Dr. *Hammond* in his Marginal Note, renders the words thus from the Greek, *Blindneſs in part is happen'd unto Iſrael ſo long, till the fulneſs of the Gentiles do come in;* not *are* come in. And according to this Reading of the Words, the Import of them may be this; Blindneſs in part is befallen *Iſrael,* for ſo long as until the time come in which the Gentiles ſhall come in, in their fulneſs: That is, they ſhall come in then more generally than ever before, by which their Calling will be compleated and filled up. At which time all Iſrael ſhall be ſaved out of that ſad State and Condition in which they had lain for ſo many hundred Years, as ſince the deſtruction of *Jeruſalem* until then. So that according to this, the coming in of the *Jews* in their *fulneſs,* and the coming in of the *Gentiles* in their *fulneſs,* is likely to fall much about the ſame time, according to God's appointment: Only it ſhould ſeem the extraordinary manner of calling the *Jews,* will be made a means of bringing in the generality of the Heathen World to the Chriſtian Profeſſion, and conſequently be ſomewhat antecedent to it.

To this agrees the Judgment of Mr. *Joſ. Mede,* who ſaith, *The calling of the remainder of the World, which is not yet under Chriſt, is reſerved for the ſolemnizing of the Jews reſtitution. This,* ſaith he, *is that Calling and that Time which he* (the Apoſtle) *calls the fulneſs of the Gentiles,* Rom. xi. lib. 1. p. 139.

CHAP. VII.

Of the Alteration of Government that will be in the Heathen and Antichriſtian Parts of the World, after the Converſion of the Jews, and the total Overthrow of their Enemies, and the Enemies of other Chriſtians.

OUR next Enquiry ſhall be, what Alteration of Government in the World, the Deſtruction of the Force and Power of the Church's Enemies is like to produce. For it is probable, that at this juncture, *the putting down all Rule, and all Authority and Power*, ſpoken of, 1 *Cor.* xv. 24. will eſpecially, and for the greateſt part, be fulfilled; as being the time when the Enemies of Chriſt will in a great meaſure be *put under his feet.* And when the Rule and Government of his Enemies is brought down by him, then will be the time of ſetting up his own. For as long as the World ſtands, there will be a Government in it, and that by Chriſt, when he will not ſuffer his Enemies any longer to rule. Whenever he takes the Power out of Antichriſtian and Heathen Hands, he will put it into the Hands of Chriſtians, that will uſe it for him, and not againſt him, as the Antichriſtians had done, and in his Name too, as they pretended.

We find in *Daniel*, Chap. vii. that when the Antient of Days ſhall ſit in Judgment upon the fourth Beaſt with ten Horns (or fourth Kingdom) which *Daniel* ſaw in a Viſion, and upon the little Horn which came up among the ten; and when ſentence is paſs'd upon them, and they become deſtroy'd; That then the *Dominion and Kingdom* will be *given to one like the Son of Man*; that is, unto Chriſt; and alſo unto the Saints of the moſt High. For it is ſaid to be given unto both, as we ſhall find in that Chapter; in what different Reſpects, ſhall be conſider'd afterwards.

Firſt, the Kingdom is ſaid to be then given to Chriſt: Thus at *ver.* 13, 14. *I ſaw in the night Viſions, and behold, one like the Son of Man came with the Clouds of Heaven, and came to the Antient of Days, and they brought him before him. And there was given him Dominion and Glory, and a Kingdom, that all People, Nations and Languages, ſhould ſerve him: His Dominion is an everlaſting Dominion, which ſhall not paſs away, and his Kingdom that which ſhall not be deſtroyed.*

It is ſaid to be given to the Saints of the moſt High likewiſe, thus: Ver. 18. *But the Saints of the moſt High ſhall take the Kingdom, and poſſeſs the Kingdom for ever, even for ever and ever.* So again at *ver.* 21, 22. *I beheld, and the ſame Horn made war with the Saints, and prevailed againſt them, until the Antient of Days came, and Judgment was given to the Saints of the moſt High; and the time came that the Saints poſſeſſed the Kingdom.* And at *ver.* 26, 27. it's ſaid, *But the Judgment ſhall ſit, and they ſhall take away his Dominion, to conſume and deſtroy it unto the end. And the Kingdom and Dominion, and the greatneſs of the Kingdom under the whole Heaven, ſhall be given to the People of the Saints of the moſt High, whoſe Kingdom is an everlaſting Kingdom, and all Dominions ſhall ſerve and obey him.*

Now as touching the giving the Kingdom to the Son of Man, or to Chriſt, upon the deſtruction of the Beaſt with ten Horns, and of the little Horn: The queſtion may be, in what reſpect the Kingdom will be given to him then; and whether he was not King, and had his Kingdom long before this time? Yes, doubtleſs, he was King of his Church, and had ſuch a Kingdom in the World, as his viſible Church is, ever ſince there was firſt a Chriſtian Church in the World. And not only ſo, but in reſpect of his *Providential Kingdom*, he has been King not only of his Church, but of all the Earth, and over all Kings and Kingdoms throughout the World, ever ſince all Power was given to him in Heaven and Earth. But as his Kingdom ſignifies his Governing Men by his Laws, ſo and in this reſpect his Kingdom on Earth reaches no farther, and contains no more Subjects than his viſible Church; who acknowledge his Sovereinty and Laws to be above all others. And we cannot ſay he has been in actual Poſſeſſion of his Kingdom, in this ſenſe of his Kingdom, farther than his Sovereignty and Authority has been own'd and acknowledg'd to be ſupreme and over all Power on Earth. For though in this ſenſe alſo our Lord Chriſt has by *Right* and *Title* been all along King of all Nations of the World: Yet ſo far as Antichriſtian, Heathen or Pagan Powers have ruled, and their Laws been obey'd in the World, in oppoſition to his Law, and Government by that Law; ſo far he has been kept out of actual Poſſeſſion of his Kingdom and Dominion. But when theſe two ſorts of Power, between which all the World in a manner is divided, which are not properly Chriſtian, come to be wreſted out of the Hands of thoſe that poſſeſs them, ſo that they can no longer compel Obedience to their Laws: And when the People of thoſe Nations, where theſe Powers prevailed, come to own Chriſt in his Kingly Authority, and to own his Laws in oppoſition to thoſe which had been impoſed upon them before in derogation to his Authority: Then and for that reaſon the Kingdom and Dominion may be ſaid to be given unto Chriſt, whenever this great change of Affairs in the World falls out.

And it was in this reſpect and in this ſenſe, *that the Kingdoms of this World were ſaid to become the Kingdoms of our Lord and of his Chriſt*, when they became reformed from Popery, *Rev.* xi. 15. For this was ſaid upon occaſion of the falling, or falling off of a tenth part of the City ſpiritually called *Sodom* and *Egypt*, as we may ſee at the 13th Verſe, and other precedent Verſes. Meaning thereby the falling off of a conſiderable part of thoſe within the Papal Juriſdiction, from Popery: A thing which was done by ſeveral National Reformations which have been made in *Chriſtendom*, after *Luther* had prepared the way. Theſe Kingdoms, as all the Kingdoms of the World, were under the abſolute Dominion or Power of our Lord and of his Chriſt before the Reformation; but they were not his by a voluntary ſubjection to his Authority and Government in point of purity of Faith and Worſhip, until that took place, as it ſhould ſeem by their becoming his, upon the account of that. By this *he takes unto himſelf his great power and reigns*, as we have it at the 17th Verſe, until which he ſuffers his Enemies to uſe and exerciſe their Authority and Power in the World, though in oppoſition to his. Theſe Kingdoms falling into the hands of Chriſt by the Reformation, were therein but a *Specimen* and *Earneſt* of all the reſt of the Kingdoms of the World becoming his Kingdoms, before the blaſt of the ſeventh Trumpet is ended, at the beginning of the ſounding of which it was thus ſaid, *That the Kingdoms of this World are become the Kingdoms of the Lord and of his Chriſt*, and upon the occaſion before declared. And this brings me to the Conſideration of the extent of this happy Government of Chriſt in the World, which he will ſet up and exerciſe in it, after the power of Governing is taken out of the hands of his Enemies.

For then our bleſſed Saviour will be *great unto the ends of the Earth*, as one Prophet has it in his Prophecy of him, *Micah* v. 4. And then this Lord *ſhall be King over all the Earth*, when there ſhall be *one Lord, and his Name one*, as another Prophet expreſſeth it, *Zech.* xiv. 9. He ſhall have Dominion from Sea to Sea, and from the River *unto the ends of the Earth*, Pſal. lxxii. 8. And of this St. *Paul*, as I ſuppoſe, ſpake when he ſaid of him, *which in his times he ſhall ſhew, who is the bleſſed and only Potentate, the King of Kings and Lord of Lords*, 1 Tim. vi. 15. In theſe *his times*, he will ſhew himſelf to be the *only Potentate*, and no other King in all the World, but what ſhall be ſo, under him, and acknowledge themſelves to be ſo, and ſhall do Homage unto him, as ſupreme King over all Kings. *The Kings of Tarſhiſh and of the Iſles ſhall bring Preſents; the Kings of Sheba and Seba ſhall offer Gifts: Yea, all Kings ſhall fall down before him: All Nations ſhall ſerve him*, Pſal. lxxii. 10, 11.

And theſe Kings which ſhall be but as Vice-roys under Chriſt, who is King of Kings and Lord of Lords, ſhall receive Laws from him, and rule and govern their People by thoſe Laws, ſo as not to impoſe upon them any thing repugnant to them. *The Lord is our Judge, the Lord is our Law-giver, the Lord is our King, he will ſave us*, Iſa. xxxiii. 22. Eſa. li. 4. *Hearken unto me my People, and give ear unto me, O my Nation: for a Law ſhall proceed from me, and I will make my Judgment to reſt for a Light of the People.* The Names of Chriſt's *Twelve* Apoſtles, are in the Foundation of that City the New *Jeruſalem* coming down from Heaven, by which the glorious State of the Church in the latter Ages of the World is allegorically deſcribed, *Rev.* xxi. 14. For the Glory and Happineſs of the Church as then perfectly under the Government of Chriſt, will be built upon and proceed from a due Obſervation of thoſe Laws of his, which he has given unto his Church, by thoſe *Twelve* Commiſſioners of his, inſpired by his Spirit.

But though the Government of Chriſt in this Kingdom of his, will extend it ſelf over all Nations, as has been ſhew'd: Yet ſome Scriptures ſeem to intimate as if this Rule and Government of his would be exerciſed over the Nation and among the People of the Jews, with ſome ſpecial reſpect to them, and as a Benefit deſigned more eſpecially for them and promiſed to them, though not ſo as to exclude the Gentiles. The Scripture ſpeaks ſomewhat indeed of his *reigning over the Gentiles*, Rom. xv. 12. but the

Promiſe of his Reign is generally made of his reigning over the *Jews and in the Throne of his Father David.* Thus by the Prophet, *Iſa.* ix. 6, 7. *To us a Child is born, unto us a Son is given, and the Government ſhall be upon his ſhoulders,* &c. *of the Increaſe of his Government and Peace there ſhall be no end, upon the Throne of David and upon his Kingdom, to order it, and to eſtabliſh it with Judgment and with Juſtice, from henceforth even for ever; for the Zeal of the Lord of Hoſts will perform this.* Thus again by the Angel in his Speech to the Mother of our Lord, *Luke* i. 32, 33. *He ſhall be great, and ſhall be called the Son of the higheſt; and the Lord God ſhall give unto him the Throne of his Father David: And he ſhall reign over the Houſe of Jacob for ever, and of his Kingdom there ſhall be no end.*

And this Reign of Chriſt over them, is promiſed them eſpecially when that time of their general and final Deliverance ſhall come, when Strangers ſhall no more ſerve themſelves of them, by ruling over them. Thus in *Jer.* xxx. 8, 9. *It ſhall come to paſs in that day, ſaith the Lord of Hoſts, that I will break his Yoke from off thy Neck, and will burſt thy Bonds, and Strangers ſhall no more ſerve themſelves of him: But they ſhall ſerve the Lord their God, and David their King, whom I will raiſe up unto them.* And again, *Ezek.* xxxiv. 22, 23. *I will ſave my Flock, and they ſhall no more be a Prey, and I will ſet up one Shepherd over them, and he ſhall feed them, even my Servant David; he ſhall feed them, and he ſhall be their Shepherd.* And *ver.* 29. *And I will raiſe up for them a Plant of Renown, and they ſhall no more be conſumed with Hunger in the Land, neither bear the Shame of the Heathen any more.* And Chap. xxxvii. 23, 24, 25. *I will ſave them out of all their dwelling places wherein they have ſinned, and will cleanſe them; ſo ſhall they be my People, and I will be their God: And David my Servant ſhall be King over them, and they ſhall have one Shepherd: And they ſhall dwell in the Land that I have given unto Jacob my Servant, wherein your Fathers have dwelt, and ſhall dwell therein, even they and their Children, and their Childrens Children for ever, and my Servant David ſhall be their Prince for ever.* Theſe things, I think will not be denied to be future and yet to come, at leaſt in great part. For Chriſt, who is of the Seed of *David*, and ſo the Son of *David*, and the *David* himſelf in theſe Prophecies ſpoken of under that Name, has not reigned over any conſiderable part of that Nation for many Generations paſt, if ever, under ſuch Circumſtances accompanying his Reign, as here are promiſed and foretold.

And as the Promiſe of Chriſt's Reign and Government in the World, is made to the Jews in ſpecial, and in reference to their Benefit; ſo there are ſeveral other things which conſidered and laid together, do ſeem to make it very probable, that whenever Almighty God ſhall bring them into their own Land again, and there ſettle them as a Nation, that then he may make them the chief among the Nations.

There is a ſecond and more glorious calling of the Gentiles to be found in the Prophecies of Scripture; a calling wherein the Jews ſhall have a ſhare of the greateſt Glory, and are to have a preeminence above other Nations, when all Nations ſhall flow unto them, and walk in their Light, ſaith Mr. *Mede*, lib. 1. pag. 139. The Reaſons which may induce us to think the Jews will be made chief among the Nations after their Converſion and Reſettlement in their own Land, are ſuch as theſe.

1. Becauſe when God firſt made them a Nation he beſtowed many Privileges upon them, more than on any Nation beſides; and the Tenour of his Promiſe to them then was, that in caſe they would be obedient, that then he would *ſet them on high above all Nations of the Earth, and make them the Head and not the Tail,* Deut. xxviii. 1, 13.

2. In caſe of their ſinning againſt God, and of being thereupon driven by him into other Nations, which has been their caſe; yet his Promiſe to them in that caſe was, that if they ſhould repent and become obedient, that then he would not only gather them out of all Lands whither he had ſcattered them, and bring them into their own Land, but alſo that then *he would rejoyce over them again for good, as he rejoyced over their Fathers; yea, that he would multiply and do them good above their Fathers,* Deut. xxx. 5, 9.

3. The Apoſtle ſays, even of the Unbelieving Jews, *that as touching the Election* (*viz.* of that Nation which was once choſen by God) *they are beloved for their Fathers ſake:* Of which he gives this reaſon, ſaying, *for the Gifts and Calling of God are without Repentance.* Meaning thereby, as I ſuppoſe, that whenever they ſhould be turned from Ungodlineſs, (having ſaid before that a time would come when they ſhould) that then God would make good to them in the main, the Favours promiſed, given and granted to their Anceſtors, and their Seed, of the beſtowing and promiſing of which, and of the calling of them to enjoy them, he never did, or would *repent.*

4. The Promiſes made of Deliverance of the Church in general, and of its future flouriſhing Eſtate, run much in the Name of *Jacob*, *Iſrael*, *Sion*, and *Jeruſalem*, as being principally reſpected therein.

5. The greateſt part of Chriſtians of the Gentiles that will be in the World, by that time the Jews as converted are well ſettled as a Nation, will in Probability, owe their Converſion to Chriſtianity, under God, unto the Jews, and to the extraordinary things which God will have done for them. For if the World in general ſhall then become Chriſtian (as it's probable they will, as I have ſhew'd) and that upon occaſion of the wonderous things which God will then have done for the Jews; then the number of ſuch is likely far to exceed the number of thoſe Chriſtians which ſhall be in the World immediately before the Converſion of the Jews.

6. The Chriſtian Gentiles out of the ſenſe of the Benefit they ſhall have received from the Jews, and of the high Honour which Almighty God ſhall then have put upon them, will be willing to give them the Preference, to miniſter to them and to ſerve them. This we may gather from ſuch Paſſages in the Prophecies as theſe, *Iſa* xlix. 22, 23. *Thus ſaith the Lord God, Behold, I will lift up my hand to the Gentiles, and ſet up my Standard to the People: And they ſhall bring thy Sons in their Arms, and thy Daughters ſhall be carried upon their ſhoulders. And Kings ſhall be thy nurſing Fathers, and Queens thy nurſing Mothers; they ſhall bow down to thee with their Face to the Earth, and lick the duſt of thy feet.* Iſa. lx. 10. *The Sons of Strangers ſhall build up thy Walls, and their Kings ſhall miniſter to thee*, ver. 14. *All they that deſpiſed thee ſhall bow themſelves down at the ſoles of thy feet; and they ſhall call thee the City of the Lord, the Zion of the holy one of Iſrael.* Iſa. lxi. 5, 6. *Strangers ſhall ſtand and feed your Flocks, and the Sons of the Alien ſhall be your Plow-men, and your Vine-dreſſers. But you ſhall be named the Prieſts of the Lord; Men ſhall call you the Miniſters of our God: Ye ſhall eat the Riches of the Gentiles, and in their Glory ſhall you boaſt your ſelves.*

7. Nay, which is yet more, God by his Prophet ſaith expreſly concerning that People of his in the times of their happy and glorious Reſtauration, *That the Nation and Kingdom that will not ſerve thee, ſhall periſh: Yea, thoſe Nations ſhall be utterly waſted*, Iſa. lx. 12.

8. At this time of which we are ſpeaking, *They ſhall call Jeruſalem the Throne of the Lord, and all Nations ſhall be gathered unto it*, as the Prophet ſpeaks, *Jer.* iii. 17. As if this ſhould then be the Metropolis or chief City of the Univerſal Monarchy of Chriſt over all the Nations of the World, or the Throne of his Father *David*, on which in ſpecial, he ſhall now reign over the Houſe of *Jacob* for ever; and all Nations have recourſe hither, as having in ſome ſort a dependance in the managing their reſpective Affairs and Governments, upon the Government of Chriſt, as adminiſtred in and by this People and Nation of the Jews.

The Verſe before, and the Verſe after theſe words, will ſhew us that the things here foretold, refer unto a time in the days of the *Meſſias*, and to ſuch a time in thoſe days as wherein the Jews will have become Chriſtians, as it is highly probable, as we ſhall ſee. When it is here ſaid, *At that time they ſhall call Jeruſalem the Throne of the Lord*, &c. it refers to the time forementioned in the 16th *Verſe*, where we have theſe words: *And it ſhall come to paſs when ye are multiplied and increaſed in the Land; in thoſe days ſaith the Lord, they ſhall ſay no more, The Ark of the Covenant of the Lord: neither ſhall it come to mind; neither ſhall they remember it, neither ſhall they viſit it, neither ſhall that be done any more.* The Ark of the Covenant was the great and ſpecial Symbol and Sign of God's Preſence among the Jews, for which they had ſuch an eſteem, as that when that was taken by the *Philiſtines*, they ſaid the *Glory was departed*; and the Pſalmiſt referring to this Action, ſaith concerning God, *he delivered his Strength into Captivity, and his Glory into the Enemies hand.* The Ark it was as it were the Throne of God, for he ſate between the Cherubims where the Ark was, and there they worſhipped him, *lifting up their hands towards this his holy Oracle:* For ſo it was, becauſe from thence he gave his Anſwers to them, when they enquired of him. And yet at this time of which the Prophet here ſpeaks, this Ark will not be *viſited* by them, nor ſo much as *minded* or *deſired* any more. And this being here mentioned not as any Fault in them, or Calamity befallen them, but as being then under ſuch Circumſtances as not to need the Ark; it is a certain Argument, that at the time here pointed at, they will be in that State of Chriſtianity, as by which they will underſtand they have no need of the *Type*, now the *Antitype* is come. And yet at this time it is that they ſhall call *Jeruſalem* the *Throne* of the Lord, and that then *all Nations ſhall be gathered to it, to* *the Name of the Lord to Jeruſalem, when they ſhall walk no more after the imagination of their evil heart.* Which is another Argument that this Prediction is not yet fulfill'd, but that at the time of its accompliſhment, the *Jews* will be ſo converted as no more to walk after the imagination of their evil heart, which yet they are not. And *when* was the *time* when all the Nations were gathered to *Jeruſalem* to the Name of the Lord?

In the following words, *ver.* 18. it's ſaid, *In thoſe days* (ſtill relating to the ſame time) *the houſe of Juda ſhall walk with the houſe of Iſrael, and they ſhall come together out of the Land of the North, to the Land that I have given as an inheritance to your Fathers.* A Prophecy not yet fulfilled, as it is probable, becauſe we have no good ground to think that the Houſe of *Juda* and the Houſe of *Iſrael*, the two Tribes and the ten, did ever yet thus come together out of the Land of the North to their own Land, ſince they were firſt carry'd captive out of it. Of the Reaſonableneſs of the Opinion in the contrary, I have ſaid ſomething in *Chap.* IV. of this Diſcourſe.

To which I ſhall now add ſomewhat more, which had not then fallen under my Obſervation. *Joſephus*, in his Preface to his Books of the *Wars of the Jews*, has ſome hints, by which we may plainly perceive, that he who was himſelf a *Jew*, more knowing than moſt of them, did not doubt but that thoſe of the ten Tribes, which had been carried captive into *Aſſyria*, beyond the River *Euphrates*, were there ſtill in his time, and not returned. For when, ſpeaking of the Inclination of his Countrymen inhabiting *Judea*, to Rebel againſt the *Romans*, he ſaith, *The Jews hope was, that all thoſe of their Nation (even they who inhabited the parts beyond* Euphrates) *would have followed them in their Rebellion.* And again, he ſhews how unworthy a thing he thought it would be in him not to acquaint the *Grecians* (I ſuppoſe he meant the *Helleniſts*, or *Jews* among the *Grecians*) with the ſtate of Affairs relating to the *Jews*, when-as he had, as he ſays, *permitted thoſe of their Nations inhabiting beyond* Euphrates, *together with the* Adiabenites, *the true Knowledge of theſe Events*, &c. And in *lib.* 2. *cap.* 16. he recites an *Oration* of King *Agrippa* to the *Jews*, not long before the fatal Siege of *Jeruſalem* by *Veſpaſian*, perſuading them not to Rebel but to Obey the *Romans*: In which Speech he ſays, *All thoſe that at this day dwell in any place of the World that is inhabited, obey the Romans; except peradventure ſome of you hope for help from beyond* Euphrates, *thinking that your Countrymen of* Adiabena *will help you. Adiabena* is ſaid to be a part of *Aſſyria*, where it ſeems, according to common Opinion in the days of *Joſephus* and King *Agrippa*, the *Jews* of the ten Tribes were, that had been firſt carried captive thither. And if they were there then, no Man can think they have return'd to their own Land ſince, that has heard what has befallen the Nation of the *Jews* ſince the times of *Joſephus* and *Agrippa*.

Add this too, that Mr. *Mede* brings in St. *Hierom* ſpeaking of the ten Tribes, and ſaying of them, *That even unto this day they have their habitation in the Cities and Mountains of the Medes*, lib. 1. p. 75. of the 4th Edition. And Mr. *Mede* himſelf in the ſame Page, ſpeaking of the ten Tribes, ſaith, *Theſe never (I mean any conſiderable part of them) returned to dwell again in their own Country.* Thus much to ſhew that the aforeſaid Prophecy of *Jeremy* relates to times yet to come.

But although *Jeruſalem* ſhall be called the *Throne of the Lord*; and although our Lord Jeſus Chriſt ſhall Reign as King in all the Earth, and *his Name alone be exalted* in this his Day; and though he ſhall Reign and Rule upon the Throne of his Father *David*: Yet I can by no means agree with them who have thought that he ſhall come from Heaven to Reign *perſonally* here on Earth for a thouſand Years. For,

1. He is to ſit at the right Hand of his Father Almighty in the Heavens, until all his Enemies are made his Footſtool, and that will not be till after his thouſand Years Reign, mentioned *Rev.* xx. is expired. For after this, *Gog* and *Magog*, with their numerous Company, are to be ſubdued. And when St. *Paul* ſaith, *he muſt reign until he hath put all Enemies under his feet*; he adds in the next words, *the laſt Enemy which ſhall be deſtroyed is Death*, 1 Cor. xv.

2. If our Lord Chriſt ſhould come into the World in that Splendor and Glory wherewith he is now inveſted in the Heavens, Men in this mortal State would not be able to bear it, or to converſe with him. St. *John*, at his appearance to him with a Countenance as the Sun ſhining in his ſtrength, fell at his Feet as dead, *Rev.* i. 18. And it's a groundleſs fancy to think he ſhould enter into a ſtate of Humiliation again, after his Exaltation, and lay aſide his Glory to converſe with mortal Men.

3. It's altogether unneceſſary and needleſs for our bleſſed Saviour to come from Heaven to Reign on Earth, in reference to the Ends and Purpoſes of his Reign. For there is nothing

thing neceſſary, as we may well conceive, to his Governing the World, which he cannot do as well, if not much better, while he is in Heaven, than he could if he were here on Earth to do it.

It is ſaid indeed, that our Lord Jeſus Chriſt ſhall *judge the Quick and the Dead at his appearing, and his Kingdom*, 2 Tim. iv. 1. From whence ſome have inferr'd, that either he muſt appear to receive his Kingdom, or that he will appear at the time of his Kingdom and Reign. That his Appearing and his Kingdom will in ſome reſpect be co-exiſtent or co-incident, will not be deny'd. But in that reſpect that it will be ſo, it will be of no uſe to prove his *Perſonal* Reign on Earth for a thouſand Years. For his Judging the Quick and the Dead at the end of the World, is an Act, and a principal Act of Chriſt's Kingly Office, and is to be performed at the latter end of his Reign; and before he delivers up the Kingdom to God his Father: And his appearing then in the Clouds of Heaven to do this, is his appearing in the time of his Kingdom, though but at the latter end of it; and yet we know not how long time will be taken up in the managing this great part of his Kingly Office, or whether it will be long or ſhort.

Hear what Mr. *Mede* ſaith againſt this *Perſonal* Reign of Chriſt on Earth: *The preſence of Chriſt in his Kingdom ſhall no doubt be glorious and evident; yet I dare not ſo much as imagine that it ſhall be a viſible Converſe on Earth. For the Kingdom of Chriſt ever hath been, and ſhall be a Kingdom, whoſe Throne and Kingly Reſidence is in Heaven*, lib. 3. p. 603.

Thus far to ſhew in what reſpect Chriſt is ſaid to receive his Kingdom, after the Deſtruction of thoſe that are Enemies to his Kingdom and Government: Proceed we now to enquire in what reſpect the Kingdom is ſaid to be given to the People of the Saints of the moſt High at the ſame time. And the Kingdom, or Adminiſtration of the Government of Chriſt's Kingdom, will then be given to the Church or People of God in a double reſpect: Firſt, becauſe thoſe which are of his Church ſhall Reign and Rule, and adminiſter the Affairs of Chriſt's Kingdom and Government under him. Secondly, becauſe this Kingdom and Government is given to Chriſt, and by him to his Subſtitutes, for the behoof and benefit of the whole Church, and of every particular Member of it.

1. The Kingdom under the whole Heaven may be ſaid to be given to the People of the Saints of the moſt High, becauſe the Government of the whole World will at the time pointed at in this Prophecy, be put into the Hands of thoſe who ſhall be of the Church of Chriſt, which is and will be his Kingdom in ſpecial. For our bleſſed Lord and Saviour will not adminiſter all the Affairs of his univerſal Kingdom here on Earth by himſelf *immediately*, but by *Subſtitutes* and *Vice-gerents*, which will be Kings over Men, when yet they are but Vice-roys under Chriſt, *who is Prince of the Kings of the Earth, and King of Kings, and Lord of Lords*, as the Scripture calls him. The great Monarchs of the World in their time, did not manage the Affairs of their Dominions by themſelves immediately, but by ſeveral Princes and Vice-roys. For which cauſe *Nebuchadnezzar* was ſaid to be *a King of Kings*, Dan. ii. 37. And *Ahaſuerus* had 127 Princes over ſo many Provinces, which managed the Affairs of his Empire under him and for him: And ſo, but after a more excellent manner, will it be in the univerſal Kingdom of Chriſt. Thus in *Pſal.* xlv. which is a Prophecy of the Kingdom of Chriſt, as appears by the Apoſtle's applying it in *Heb.* i. 8, 9. The *Pſalmiſt*, ſpeaking of Chriſt and his Church, under the Type of *Solomon* and his Queen, at *ver.* 16. ſaith thus, *Inſtead of Fathers ſhall be thy Children, whom thou may'ſt make Princes in all the Earth.* And it argues ſufficiently that all Kingdoms and Dominions of the Earth ſhall be put into the hands of ſuch as ſhall then be of the Church, in that it is foretold by a Spirit of Prophecy, *that all Kings ſhall fall down before the Meſſias, and that all Nations ſhall ſerve him*, Pſal. lxxii. 11. And when it's ſaid again, *All the Kings of the Earth ſhall praiſe thee, O Lord, when they ſhall hear the words of thy mouth: Yea, they ſhall ſing in the ways of the Lord; for great is the glory of the Lord*, Pſal. cxxxviii. 4, 5. Theſe are ſuch Sayings which no State of the World hitherto hath ever reached unto; and therefore the full accompliſhment of them muſt be expected in this time of Chriſt's Kingdom, of which we ſpeak. As God the Father is ſaid to *judge the World in Righteouſneſs* by that Man whom he hath ordained, (to wit, Chriſt, *Acts* xvii. 31.) ſo Chriſt will rule and govern the World in the time of his Kingdom here by Governours deputed by him.

It is ſaid of the four Beaſts and four and twenty Elders that were before the Throne, that they fell down before the Lamb, ſaying, *Thou haſt redeemed us to God by thy Blood out of every Kindred, Tongue, People and Nation, and haſt made us to our God Kings and Prieſts, and we ſhall Reign on the Earth*, Rev. v. 9, 10. The four and twenty Elders, which are here brought in, ſaying, *We ſhall Reign upon the Earth*, St. *John* had

ſeen

ſeen in a Viſion ſitting upon four and twenty Seats or Thrones, *with Crowns of Gold upon their heads*, Chap. iv. 4.

Conſidering then, that this Viſion, as others ſeen by St. *John*, was Prophetical of things which afterwards were to be brought to paſs, as is intimated in *Chap.* i. 1. Theſe four and twenty Elders with Crowns of Gold on their Heads, did as it's very probable foreſhew, that in proceſs of time there ſhould be Chriſtian Kings inveſted with Sovereign Power abroad in the World (as their *Crowns* ſignified) who ſhould under that ſupreme Lord of Heaven and Earth, who ſat upon the Throne of Majeſty, adminiſter Affairs of Rule and Government upon Earth. And their caſting their Crowns down before the Throne (as *Chap.* iv. 10.) did ſhew that thoſe Kings would acknowledge that as they received their Regal Authority from him that ſat on the Throne, ſo they would uſe it under him and for him, and not otherwiſe. And ſince theſe 24 Elders are ſaid to fall down before the Lamb, acknowledging to him that he had made them both *Kings* and *Prieſts* unto God; their being crown'd might perhaps repreſent in the Viſion thoſe which ſhould be of chief Authority and rule both in Matters Civil and Eccleſiaſtical.

Thoſe who from theſe words of the 24 Elders have inferr'd that all Chriſtians who are redeemed by Chriſt's Blood out of every Kindred, Tongue, People and Nation, ſhall reign upon the Earth, ſeem to make their Concluſion of larger extent than the Premiſes; unleſs by their reigning they underſtand their ſharing in the Benefit of being governed by Chriſtian Kings, or their bearing their part in ſupporting ſuch Government. For if all good Chriſtians ſhould be made Kings on the Earth, who ſhould be their Subjects? Whereas King, is a relative Term, and ſignifies Superiority over others in point of Rule and Government. And in this ſenſe the Generality of Chriſtians can never be ſaid to reign upon Earth.

2. But in a large and leſs proper ſenſe the whole Body of Chriſtians may be ſaid to reign on the Earth when the Rule and Government of the World ſhall be put into the hands of the Church, or thoſe that are of the Church, and this in a double reſpect.

Firſt, becauſe all Chriſtians, or the whole Church, will ſhare in the Benefit of that Reign and Government as well as thoſe Kings ſhall, who ſhall then reign in a more proper ſenſe. For by this means they will have the upper hand of their Enemies, or thoſe who are no Chriſtians, as well as the Kings themſelves will, and be as free from the wonted Moleſtation and Vexation of Enemies as they will. Thus, *Eſa.* xiv. 2, 3. it's ſaid, *They ſhall take them captive whoſe Captives they were, and they ſhall rule over their Oppreſſors. And it ſhall come to paſs in that day, that the Lord ſhall give thee reſt from thy Sorrow, and from thy Fear, and from thy hard Bondage wherewith thou waſt made to ſerve.* They ſhall rule over their Oppreſſors, *i. e.* the governed ſhall ſo rule as well as the Governours by vertue of the Government it ſelf, being in the hands of ſuch as will uſe it for them, and with their Aſſiſtance. In this reſpect the Kingdom, and the Greatneſs of the Kingdom under the whole Heaven may be ſaid to be given to the Saints of the moſt high, when the Government in a proper ſenſe is put into the hands but of Chriſtian Kings only, and ſubordinate Rulers. As when it's ſaid, *Fear not little Flock, it's your Father's good pleaſure to give you the Kingdom*; meaning the Kingdom of Heaven, *Luke* xii. 32. We are not to underſtand thereby that he will make each of them Kings in that Kingdom, or Kings in it in a proper ſenſe, as that ſignifies Power and Authority to rule and govern it: But that he will give them *Poſſeſſion* and *Fruition* of the Glory and Happineſs of that Kingdom, the Affairs and Concerns of which will be ordered and managed by the glorious King of Heaven in a more immediate manner than the Kingdom of Chriſt on Earth was, when *God himſelf ſhall be all in all.*

Secondly, In a *ſocial* and *collective* ſenſe the whole Body and ſpiritual Corporation and Community of Chriſtians may in a large and leſs proper ſenſe be ſaid to reign and rule the Nations, when in a more proper ſenſe but few of them comparatively do ſo. And in this ſenſe may that promiſe of Chriſt be underſtood when he ſaid, *He that overcometh and keepeth my Works to the end, to him will I give power over the Nations (and he ſhall rule them with a Rod of Iron: As the Veſſels of a Potter ſhall they be broken to Shivers) even as I received of my Father*, Rev. ii. 26, 27. And ſo may that alſo in Rev. iii. 21. *To him that overcometh will I grant to ſit with me in my Throne, even as I overcame, and am ſet down with my Father in his Throne.* Theſe two Texts ſeem to be much of the ſame Importance. To have Power over the Nations, and to rule them with a Rod of Iron, even as Chriſt received of his Father: And to ſit down with him in his Throne, as he is ſet down in his Father's Throne, ſeem to be the ſame thing. And to have Power over the Nations to rule them with a rod of Iron, does doubtleſs ſignifie

Rule and Government *in this World* under Chriſt, King of all Kings. And both theſe Scriptures ſeem to be Prophetical of what that Sort or Community of Men in their Succeſſors which overcame in thoſe Primitive times or after, ſhould in due time, and in the Succeſſion of Ages be advanced to; to wit, the Rule and Government of Nations. For otherwiſe, in what tolerable ſenſe can we think, could thoſe Chriſtians who overcame all Temptations in St. *John*'s time by ſuffering Martyrdom, be ſaid to have Power over the Nations to rule them with a Rod of Iron? But underſtanding theſe Scriptures as Prophecies of a future Advancement of Chriſtians to Rule and Government over Nations, the ſenſe will agree with the Event, and with other Prophecies likewiſe.

The firſt Inſtance of the fulfilling of theſe Prophecies in this ſenſe, was *Conſtantine* the firſt Chriſtian Emperor, who ſeems to be that *Man-Child* which the Church brought forth to *rule all Nations in the* Empire *with a Rod of Iron*, after *he was caught up to God and to his Throne*, Rev. xii. 5. That is, after he was advanced to the Imperial Throne: For that was *God's Throne*, as the Thrones of all Chriſtian Kings are which rule for him; as it was ſaid of *Solomon*, that *he ſat on the Throne of the Lord, as King inſtead of David his Father*, 1 Chron. xxix. 23. And thoſe Chriſtian Kings who are deputed and delegated by Chriſt to rule under and for him, and do ſo accordingly, may be ſaid to *ſit down on his Throne, as he is ſet down on his Father's Throne*, by having all *Judgment* or Government *commited to him by the Father:* Which delegated Kingdom or Government he will deliver up to the Father, when he himſelf ſhall be ſubject to him that hath put all things under him, that God may be all in all, 1 *Cor.* xv. But then though we underſtand theſe Texts in ſuch a Prophetical Senſe as I have ſaid: Yet we muſt not underſtand them ſo as if every individual Chriſtian which overcomes all Temptations, ſhould at any time have power of the Nations to rule them with a Rod of Iron, otherwiſe than to have ſuch a power is a privilege confer'd, or to be confer'd on the Church, of which every ſuch Chriſtian is a Member, and of which every privilege every individual will have a ſhare when the Government of the Nations of the World ſhall be put into the hands of ſome of themſelves for the Benefit of the whole Community. A Privilege which was promiſed to the Church, and foretold long before, *Jer.* xxx. 21. *Their Nobles ſhall be of themſelves, and their Governor ſhall proceed from the midſt of them.* Whereas it had been their great Calamity to have Strangers and Enemies to rule over them. *O Lord our God* (ſaid they) *other Lords beſides thee have had Dominion over us, ſuch as were not called by thy Name:* Such as were the *Aſſyrians*, *Babylonians*, *Medes* and *Perſians*, and *Grecians*, and afterwards the *Romans*.

CHAP. VIII.

Of the Happineſs in general which will be enjoy'd under the Reign and Government of Chriſt in its extent: And that Righteouſneſs and Peace will much more abound under it, than ever they did before.

THE Happineſs of living under ſuch a Government as that of Chriſt's Kingdom on Earth will be, when his Name alone ſhall be exalted as King in all the Earth, will be very great we may be ſure, if we ſhould gueſs at it by nothing elſe but by this, to wit, that Heaven and Earth, the Creatures animate and inanimate, are all ſummoned to rejoyce, and to make Heaven and Earth ring as it were with Joy and Triumph at Chriſt's coming to reign, and to take the Government of all the Kingdoms of the World into his own hands. This Summons we have in *Pſal.* xcvi. 11, 12, 13. *Let the Heavens rejoyce, and let the Earth be glad: Let the Sea roar, and the Fulneſs thereof. Let the Field be joyful, and all that is therein: Then ſhall all the Trees of the Woods rejoyce before the Lord: For he cometh, he cometh to judge the Earth: He ſhall judge the World with Righteouſneſs, and the People with his Truth.* The like we have in that Parallel, *Pſal.* xcviii. *ver.* 4. and ſo on. *Make a joyful noiſe unto the Lord, all the Earth, make a loud noiſe, and rejoyce and ſing praiſe. Sing unto the Lord with the Harp; with the Harp, and the Voice of a Pſalm: With Trumpets and ſound of Cornet make a joyful noiſe before the Lord, the King. Let the Sea roar, and the Fulneſs thereof; the World, and they that dwell therein. Let the Floods clap their hands: Let the* *little Hills rejoyce together before the Lord; for he cometh to judge the Earth: with Righteouſneſs ſhall he judge the World, and the People with Equity.*

It is not the manner of the Wiſdom of God thus to awaken the whole World, and to call upon it to expreſs ſo much Joy and Triumph, as it is here ſet forth, but upon ſuch occaſion as will well bear it, and is moſt worthy of it, in reſpect of the greatneſs of the benefit that will accrue to the World by it. And therefore this calling upon the whole World with ſuch Solemnity as is here expreſs'd, to celebrate with Joy and Triumph the coming of Chriſt to Reign over and to Judge and to Rule the Earth, muſt needs put the World into a rational Expectation of far greater Benefits to be received thereby, than at any time it had enjoy'd before.

Although it is not to be expected that we ſhould meet with all the particulars of the Benefits to be ſet forth in the Prophecies relating to thoſe Times, which will then be enjoy'd; yet ſome of them are therein pre-declar'd: And thoſe we ſhall now proceed to enquire after more particularly, by the help of thoſe Prophecies.

The Excellency of Chriſt's Government is deſcrib'd, as we ſee in the two forementioned *Pſalms*, by the Righteouſneſs and Equity of it: *He cometh to judge the World with Righteouſneſs, and the People with Equity.* His coming to *judge* the World ſpoken of in theſe *Pſalms*, is not meant of the Judgment of the laſt Day, but of his *governing* of this World for the ſpace of ſeveral Generations before that. To *judge* frequently in Scripture ſignifies to *rule* and *govern.* Thoſe that governed the Nation of the *Jews* after *Moſes* and *Joſhua*, until *Saul* was choſen King, were called *Judges*; and their ruling of *Iſrael*, is ſtiled their *judging of Iſrael.* And when they deſired a King, it was that he might *judge them* like all the Nations; that is, *govern them.* So here Chriſt's coming to *judge the World with Righteouſneſs*, is to be underſtood of his coming to rule it with Righteouſneſs.

And by Chriſt's Governing the World with Righteouſneſs, I underſtand, not only that his Adminiſtration of the Government of the World will be Juſt and Righteous in all the *Acts* of it, but alſo that the taking place of abundance of Righteouſneſs in the World will be the *Effect* of it: According to that in *Pſal.* lxxxv. 13. *Righteouſneſs ſhall go before him, and ſet us in the way of his ſteps:* So that *in his days the Righteous* and Righteouſneſs *ſhall flouriſh*, Pſal. lxxii. 7. This Government of Chriſt is extoll'd for the Righteouſneſs of it in many places of Scripture, as in *Pſal.* lxxii. 2. *He ſhall judge the People with Righteouſneſs, and the Poor with Judgment.* And *Iſai.* xi. 4, 5. *And the Scepter of his Kingdom is called a Scepter of Righteouſneſs*, Heb. i. 8. By this Government of his, our Lord and Saviour will countenance and encourage Righteouſneſs, and all Righteous Men every where, though they be never ſo mean; and diſcountenance and diſcourage the contrary, in whomſoever found, and though they be never ſo great: And by doing ſo, in conjunction with other means, will propagate and promote Righteouſneſs every where. And this he will do by providing himſelf with Rulers under him, both ſupreme and ſubordinate, which ſhall do this for him, as I ſhall after ſhew.

The End of Government, at leaſt one principal End of it, is, that Right might take place among Men. And any Government is more or leſs Excellent, as it does more or leſs anſwer this End, or produce this Effect: And People are more or leſs happy by the Government they live under, according as Righteouſneſs and Equity among thoſe who are governed, is more or leſs provided for, and promoted thereby.

Now becauſe theſe will take place throughout the World in this Kingdom and under this Government of Chriſt on Earth, tranſcendently more than they generally did in the World before under other Rulers: And becauſe the World will be far more happy by that means than ever it was before; Thence it is that Chriſt's coming to judge the World, is matter of ſuch Joy and Triumph to the whole World, as is ſet forth in the two *Pſalms* lately mentioned. To which may be added, *Pſal.* lxvii. 3, 4. *Let the People praiſe thee, O God, let all the People praiſe thee: O let the Nations be glad and ſing for joy; for thou ſhalt judge the People righteouſly, and govern the Nations upon Earth.* And again, *The Lord reigneth, let the Earth rejoyce, let the multitude of the Iſles be glad thereof*, Pſal. xcvii. 1.

When Righteouſneſs ſhall generally take place in the World, by virtue of this Government of Chriſt, the World will be at eaſe; becauſe then things would be as they ſhould be, and as well as prudent Men can wiſh, in a State here on Earth. Whereas under other Governments, in moſt places of the World, the People were in pain by reaſon of Diſorder, and for want of Right taking place, by giving to, and receiving from one another that which of right was every ones due. For it is in the Body Politick, as it is in the Body Natural: In the Natural Body, when Bones are diſlocated, out of joint, and diſplaced, it cauſes pain and complaining; and ſo it does in the Bodies Politick, when for want of good Government, things are wrong placed, ſome having more and ſome leſs than their due, it cauſes uneaſineſs, murmuring and complaining in a State. Thus it was under ſome of the Kings of *Juda*, Iſai. v. *I looked for Judgment, and behold Oppreſſion; for Righteouſneſs, and behold a Cry:* Great crying out and complaining becauſe of the Diſeaſes in the Body Politick; *the whole Head whereof being ſick, and the whole Heart faint; for from the Head to the Foot was no ſoundneſs*, as that Prophet complained, *Chap.* i.

Now when the Government of the World by Chriſt, in the time of his univerſal Kingdom, is ſo greatly magnified as it is upon account of the Righteouſneſs of it, we are to underſtand this Righteouſneſs in the *moſt comprehenſive Senſe*, and then it will ſignifie here, as it frequently does in Scripture, the whole of Religion. For Righteouſneſs conſiſts in a conformity of the whole Man to the whole Law of God; to promote which will undoubtedly be the deſign of this Government of Chriſt, of which we ſpeak. *Righteouſneſs* is to do that which is *right*, in yielding both to God and Men that which of right belongs to them, or is made due by any Law of God, natural or revealed. And the Government of Chriſt, when it ſhall take place in all the World, will produce this excellent Effect, of giving to God and unto Men their due, after another manner than ever it was before among the generality of the Inhabitants of the Earth. It will do ſo,

1. In reſpect of God. Under other Governments of the World, that Honour and Worſhip which is due only unto God, was given to Creatures of ſeveral ſorts; to Saints, to Angels, and many meaner Creatures, and to Images and feigned Repreſentations of inviſible Beings. *There are* that are called *Gods many, and Lords many*, as the Apoſtle ſpeaks, 1 *Cor.* viii. But under the Government of Chriſt, Men will be better taught and better diſciplin'd. For when the Lord ſhall be King over all the Earth, then in that day, *there ſhall be one Lord, and his Name one*, as ſaith the Prophet, *Zach.* xiv. 9. One Object of Divine Worſhip, and one Way of Divine Worſhip. Idol Worſhip and falſe Worſhip will then be baniſh'd out of the World wholly, or near ſo: *In that day the Lord alone will be exalted, and the Idols he ſhall utterly aboliſh: they ſhall caſt their Idols of Silver and their Idols of Gold to the Moles and to the Bats*, Iſai. ii.

And as in thoſe times none ſhall be worſhipped as God, but he who is God indeed; ſo he ſhall then be worſhipped with no Worſhip, for the ſubſtance of it, but what is agreeable to his own Nature, Will, or Appointment. *From the riſing of the Sun even unto the going down of the ſame, my Name ſhall be great among the Gentiles; and in every place Incenſe ſhall be offered unto my Name, and a pure Offering: For my Name ſhall be great among the Heathen, ſaith the Lord of Hoſts*, Mal. i. 11. By *Incenſe* and *a pure Offering*, is meant pure Evangelical Worſhip, ſuch as was to be appointed by God, in thoſe times to which this Prophecy relates. It being a common thing in Old-Teſtament-times, to propheſie of the Worſhip to be uſed in Goſpel-times; in Old-Teſtament-ſtile the Matters propheſied of being thereby accommodated to the Capacity of People of thoſe times. This Prophecy has indeed been fulfilled in part, and but in part as yet. For Almighty God is to receive this Worſhip, according to this Prophecy, in every place, from the riſing of the Sun to the going down thereof; and according to *Pſalm* xxii. 22, 27, 28. *All the ends of the World ſhall remember, and turn unto the Lord; and all the kindreds of the Nations ſhall worſhip before thee: For the Kingdom is the Lord's, and he is Governour among the Nations.* This is a thing which we cannot ſay the World has been ſo happy as to enjoy hitherto, but in a ſmall part of it.

2. As Almighty God ſhall, under this Government of Chriſt, receive what is due to him more, and more generally, than ever he did before; ſo will Men then alſo receive that which is due from one another more, and more univerſally, than ever was done in the World before, for this very reaſon, becauſe Men will then be more generally righteous than ever they were before. Iſai. lx. 21. *Thy People alſo ſhall be all righteous; they ſhall inherit the Land for ever, the branch of my planting, the work of my hands, that I may be glorified.* In ſaying, *they ſhall be all righteous*, it is implicitly ſaid, that they ſhall all render to one another that which is their due, or which belongs to them, or which is fit or becoming to be yielded to them in the ſeveral Ranks and Orders in which God has placed Men here in this World. To be Righteous practically, is to do to God and to all Men that which is right, and what of due belongs to them; that by Inferiours which is due to Superiours of all ſorts, in Church, in State, in Families; and that by ſuch Superiours as is due from them to all their Inferiours, and that to Equals which is reciprocally due from one to another. And this yielding of Right one to another, in

which Righteouſneſs conſiſts, is to be underſtood in the largeſt Senſe as not-limited to external Words and Actions only, but as extending to internal Affections alſo: And indeed theſe Affections are primarily due to all we can call our Neighbours. For *Love* is made due from one Neighbour to another by the expreſs Law of God, which ſaith, *thou ſhalt love thy Neighbour as thy ſelf*, Lev. xix. 18. And indeed Men can be no more righteous without true Love to all Men, eſpecially to thoſe known to them, than they can be righteous without conforming to the Rule of Righteouſneſs, which is the Law of God: For *Love is the fulfilling of the Law*, and all the Commandments of the ſecond Table are comprehended in this Saying; *Thou ſhalt love thy Neighbour as thy ſelf*, Rom. xiii. 8, 9.

And therefore where it is ſaid as in the Text fore-cited, thy People ſhall be all righteous, it is principally implied; that they ſhall be all Men of great Charity towards one another, and to all Men. And indeed this will be the Root and Principle of each ones yielding unto others, whatever they can reaſonably expect or deſire from them. *For Love worketh no ill to his Neighbour*, as the Apoſtle ſays (*Rom.* xiii. 10.) but prompteth a Man to do him all the good he reaſonably can. And what a happy time then muſt that needs be, when all the People, or the Generality of them ſhall act and carry themſelves towards one another according to this Principle of Love which will reſtrain them from doing any ill to one another; and not only ſo, but alſo incline and diſpoſe them to do one another all the good they well can in reference to this Life and that which is to come. And yet ſo happy will thoſe times be, if all or the Generality of the People ſhall then be righteous, as the Text before alledged ſaith they ſhall; unleſs we reſtrain that Promiſe only to the *Jews*. For if the Church as ſuch, conſiſting of Jews and Gentiles, be ſpoken to by God when he ſays thy People ſhall be all righteous, then we may well ſuppoſe the Generality of Men which ſhall then be in the World to be thereby meant; becauſe the Generality of the World will then be brought into the Church, as may well be ſuppoſed from other Scriptures. *The Lord God will cauſe Righteouſneſs and Praiſe to ſpring forth before all the Nations*, Eſa. lxi. 11. *They ſhall uſe this Speech in the Land of Judah and the Cities thereof, when I ſhall bring again their Captivity, the Lord bleſs thee, O Habitation of Juſtice, and Mountain of Holineſs*, Jer. xxxi. 23.

And indeed we have good reaſon to hope that the Earth in general will then be repleniſhed with righteous Men, partly, becauſe the Scripture tells us, *That then the Earth ſhall be filled with the Knowledge of the Lord as the Waters cover the Sea*, Iſa. xi. 9. and partly becauſe St. *Peter* ſaith, *we according to God's Promiſe, look for new Heavens and a new Earth, wherein dwells Righteouſneſs* (if that be not meant of a new Creation after the Day of Judgment, as ſome incline to think it is) 2 *Pet.* iii. 13. that is, we look for a great and happy change in the World by reaſon of Righteouſneſs that will then be the Inhabitant of the Earth, whereas it lay in Wickedneſs before as St. *John* ſaith, and was full of the Habitations of Cruelty. And the Promiſe of this new and happy State of the World, he ſpeaks of, is in all Probability that which we have in *Iſa.* lxv. 17, 18. (none other *Promiſe* of this nature being made when St. *Peter* wrote this Epiſtle, that I have heard of) *For behold, I create new Heavens and a new Earth; and the former ſhall not be remembred, nor come into mind. But be you glad and rejoyce for ever in that which I create; for behold, I create Jeruſalem a rejoycing, and her People a Joy.* Theſe latter words are expoſitory of the former, and ſhew in what ſenſe we are to underſtand God's Promiſe of his creating new Heavens and a new Earth, to wit, of ſuch a Change in the Face of Affairs in the World, as will be matter of exceeding Joy and Rejoycing to all good Men. As it muſt needs be when the Law of Love ſhall generally obtain and be obſerved among Men: For that will cut off all occaſion of Mens being troubleſome one to another, and cauſe them to ſeek one another's Happineſs, as they ſeek their own, when they ſhall love their Neighbours as themſelves. And whenever God cauſeth ſuch a thing as this to come to paſs, he may well and truly be ſaid to create a new World in a Moral Senſe. And when his *Kingdom* ſhall thus *come*, his *Will* will be *done on Earth* in ſome good meaſure, as it is done *in Heaven:* A thing which our Bleſſed Saviour has taught us to pray for.

Theſe happy days will fall out in the *Philadelphian* Interval of the Church, as ſome wiſe and good Men have thought, which yet is next to ſucceed that Interval of it in which we now for the preſent are. Neither perhaps is the great diſtance which the Temper of this preſent Age ſeems to be at from ſuch a State of the Church as that I have been ſpeaking of, any ſufficient ground of deſpairing of its being ſo near us as the next Interval of the Church is, as perhaps I may have occaſion to ſhew afterwards.

2. Having done with this, I ſhall now proceed to ſpeak of that other excellent effect of Chriſt's Univerſal Government, I have mentioned, and ſhall ſhew that Peace among Men ſhall then take place in the World more than ever it did before. And this will follow as the natural effect of that abundance of Righteouſneſs which will be in the World in thoſe days, of which I have been already ſpeaking. For as the Prophet ſays, *The Work of Righteouſneſs ſhall be Peace, and the effect of Righteouſneſs, Quietneſs and Aſſurance for ever*, Iſa. xxxii. 17. When Righteouſneſs ſhall rule in the Hearts and Lives of Men, and mutual Love which is the Compendium of Righteouſneſs, and the Source and Spring of it, ſhall generally prevail in the World among all ſorts of Men, high and low; this muſt needs introduce an univerſal Peace into the World. Becauſe by this every one will have from other that which they ſhould have; thoſe in Authority in Church and State, will then have that which is their due from thoſe that are under them: And thoſe of inferiour Rank, that which is due to them from thoſe above them. And when it ſhall be thus, there will be no occaſion of murmuring or complaining, of Strife, contending or quarrelling. And as for this reaſon there will be no external occaſion of Unpeaceableneſs, ſo there will be nothing in the nature of Men out of which unpeaceable contending without external occaſion and provocation ſhould grow, while Love is the predominant Principle in one Man as well as another. For tho' Men will not be wholly free from all ſinful Pollutions of Nature, yet ſo long as this Corruption is not predominant, the inward Motions of it will be ſtifled by its contrary Principle, ſo that it ſhall not break forth into unpeaceable Practices. And when an inward Principle of Love governs among Men in their external Actions towards one another, there will be no outward Temptation to draw out the Remainders of inherent Corruption into act in any unpeaceable Practices. But in caſe there ſhould be in the World, a Mixture of Men of uncharitable and unpeaceable Tempers among thoſe who are better qualified, as it's likely enough there may, yet ſo long as they ſhall be comparatively but few, Shame will reſtrain them from picking Quarrels where no occaſion is given: Or if any thing of an unpeaceable Nature proceed from them, yet if it meets not with that in others which will be kindled by it into any unpeaceable Motion, the thing will die of it ſelf without any farther diſturbing the Peace, as ſparks of Fire do when they meet with no combuſtible Matter to be kindled by them. Or if one unpeaceable Man ſhould quarrel with another, yet this will little affect the publick Peace, which is kept inviolable among the Generality of Men, ſo long as ſuch Conteſt is but private; or if it ſhould make it ſelf any thing publick, we may well ſuppoſe the Government will then quickly put a ſtop to it from ſpreading any farther, as I ſhall have occaſion farther to ſhew afterwards.

I might farther illuſtrate this Matter, in ſhewing that abundance of Righteouſneſs muſt needs produce abundance of Peace, by its contrary. For unpeaceable Practices as they are Acts of Unrighteouſneſs in themſelves, ſo they proceed from Mens unrighteous and unmortified Luſts and Paſſions, ſuch as Pride, Covetouſneſs, Envy, Malice, immoderate Anger, Frowardneſs and Peeviſhneſs. *From whence come Wars and Fightings, or Brawlings among you? Come they not hence, even of your Luſts, that war in your Members?* ſaith St. *James*, Chap. iv. 1. And therefore when theſe Luſts and Paſſions of the Old Man are *put off*, and the Righteouſneſs and Charity of the New Man *put on*; Unpeaceableneſs, the unſavoury Fruit of thoſe Luſts and Paſſions, muſt needs ceaſe, and Peaceableneſs and Quietneſs, the Fruits and Effects of Righteouſneſs and Love, muſt needs ſucceed them.

Now that the World will be at reſt and in great Peace in the times of the univerſal Reign and Government of Chriſt, we may be ſufficiently aſſured of by the Prophecies of the Scriptures relating to thoſe times. Thus *Pſal.* lxxii. 7. *In his days the righteous ſhall flouriſh; and abundance of Peace ſo long as the Moon endureth.* And if there ſhall be abundance of Peace in his days; that's a Demonſtration that there will then be abundance of Righteouſneſs alſo: For true Peace cannot take place where Righteouſneſs is thruſt out. But the righteous flouriſhing in their Righteouſneſs, and the Enjoyment of abundance of Peace, will go hand in hand we ſee in thoſe days, which muſt needs make them very happy days indeed, and ſo much the rather, becauſe this Peace will endure as long as the Moon endures. Then may that Song be ſung, *Mercy and Truth are met together, Righteouſneſs and Peace have kiſſed each other*, Pſal. lxxxv. 10. Thus again, Iſa. lxvi. 12. *Thus ſaith the Lord, Behold, I will extend Peace to her like a River, and the Glory of the Gentiles like a flowing Stream:* Theſe are Metaphors ſignifying both abundance of Peace and Proſperity which ſhall be in thoſe days, and the uninterrupted Continuance of it, ſtill *flowing* down from one Generation to another as a *River* does.

This abundance of Peace which ſhall be in thoſe times, thus foretold in general, we may by other Prophecies ſee ſet forth in ſome more particular Inſtances. As,

1. National Quarrels and Wars, which have been always ſo frequent in the World, and which have been ſo deſtructive to the Peace of the World, and of the Inhabitants of it, as they have been, ſhall then utterly ceaſe: So that there ſhall not only be a good Agreement as to civil Peace among the People of the ſame Nation, nor only between ſome particular Nations in League one with another; but there ſhall be Peace and good Agreement among all Nations in general. This we have expreſly foretold by two of the holy Prophets almoſt in the ſame words, *Iſaiah* ii. 4. and *Micah* iv. 3. *And he ſhall judge among the Nations, and ſhall rebuke many People: And they ſhall beat their Swords into Plow-ſhares, and their Spears into Pruning-hooks: Nation ſhall not lift up Sword againſt Nation, neither ſhall they learn War any more.* The Nations of the World, as it ſeems by this, will have no inclination or diſpoſition to fall out with, or make war upon any of their neighbour Nations, nor be in any fear or ſuſpicion of being attack'd in a hoſtile manner by any of them. For ſo much is ſignified, by laying aſide all Weapons of War, and of beating thoſe they had by them into Inſtruments of Husbandry, as ſuppoſing they ſhall have no more occaſion for them, either to defend themſelves, or to offend others. But they (as the Prophet *Micah* adds) *ſhall ſit every Man under his own Vine, and under his Fig-tree, and none ſhall make them afraid: For the mouth of the Lord of Hoſts hath ſpoken it*, ſaith he. They will every Man quietly and ſecurely enjoy that which is his own, without any fear of being diſpoſſeſſed of it by any hand of Violence. And when both the Prophets ſay, *Neither ſhall they learn war any more*, it acquaints us with two things: The one is, the perpetuity of this Univerſal Peace among all Nations of the World; The other is, that this Prophecy extends it ſelf to Times yet to come, ſuch as the World was never yet ſo happy as to ſee ſince the time this Prophecy was firſt uttered. To which we may add a third, and that is, that the Government of the World, in all the Nations of it, will then be in the hands of Princes and Governours of one and the ſame Religion, that is, of the Chriſtian Religion; otherwiſe at one time or other, as it is highly probable, there would be more or leſs falling out among them. And, O how happy will the Nations of the World be, which have been daſh'd to pieces one againſt another by Bloody Wars, to ſee ſuch a Day! Well may the World in that Day ſing Praiſes to the Lord, and ſay, as in *Pſal.* xlvi. 9. *He maketh Wars to ceaſe unto the end of the Earth, he breaketh the Bow, and cutteth the Spear in ſunder, he burneth the Chariot in the Fire.*

2. As there will then be a Civil Peace among all Nations, ſo it's probable there will be a Religious Peace among them alſo, and that there will be a good agreement among the generality of the Inhabitants of thoſe Nations, and eſpecially in National Government in matters of Religion. For if the Earth ſhall be full of the Knowledge of the Lord, as the Waters cover the Sea; and if this new World ſhall be the dwelling-place of Righteouſneſs, ſo that the generality of Men ſhall rightly underſtand the things neceſſary to a good Life, and be ſo righteous and honeſt as to practiſe what they know; there can be little doubt but that there will be a very peaceable and comfortable agreement among the generality of Men, that will then be in the World, in matters of Religion.

Almighty God hath ſaid, that in thoſe times when he ſhall have gathered his People out of all Countries where they had been ſcattered, that *then he will give them one Heart and one Way*; *Oneneſs* of Mind and Will to walk in that one Way which he has given them to walk in, *Jer.* xxxii. 39. And after the Lord ſhall have gathered the Nations, and aſſembled the Kingdoms, to pour on them his Indignation; he will then, as he ſays, *turn to the People a pure Language, that they may call upon his Name, to ſerve him with one conſent*, Zeph. iii. 8, 9. And that will be a great Bleſſing indeed, as they can beſt tell, who have the greateſt ſenſe of the miſchief of Diviſion in the Church, and of Mens diſſenting one from another in their way of calling upon God, and of worſhipping him. When theſe deſirable Days ſhall come, *Ephraim ſhall no more envy Juda, nor Juda vex Ephraim*, about their different ways of worſhipping God: *Iſai.* xi. 13. *Say unto them*, (ſaith God to the Prophet) *Thus ſaith the Lord God, Behold, I will take the ſtick of Joſeph, which is in the hand of Ephraim, and the Tribes of Iſrael his fellows, and will put them with him, even with the ſtick of Juda, and will make them one ſtick, and they ſhall be one in my hand. And ſay unto them, Thus ſaith the Lord God, Behold, I will take the Children of Iſrael from among the Heathen, whither they be gone, and will gather them on every ſide, and bring them into their own Land. And I will make them one Nation in the Land upon the mountains of Iſrael, and one King ſhall be*

King to them all; and they ſhall no more be two Nations, neither ſhall they be divided into two Kingdoms any more at all. And David my ſervant ſhall be King over them, and they all ſhall have one Shepherd; they ſhall alſo walk in my Judgments, and obſerve my Statutes, and do them, Ezek. xxxvii. 19, 21, 22. The meaning is, that the Ten Tribes and the Two Tribes ſhould no longer be divided about their way of worſhipping God, as formerly they had been, but ſhould at the time here pointed at, be re-united under one Government, both Religious and Civil: Which yet we do not find they ever have been ſince then unto this day.

This peaceable accord and good agreement ſhall not be only among the *Jews*, but *of the increaſe of his Government and Peace there ſhall be no end*, ſaith the Prophet, ſpeaking of Chriſt, *Iſai.* ix. 7. His Government and Peace by it ſhall increaſe and ſpread it ſelf over all. And the reaſon why there is not that Peace and good Agreement now among all Chriſtians, is not for want of direction from God about the matters wherein they ſhould agree, but for want of that Righteouſneſs, Goodneſs and Charity, that will abound more in thoſe Days than it does in theſe. For I do not think we are to expect any new addition to be made to the holy Scriptures in thoſe times, for the bringing about that univerſal Peace and Unity of which we ſpeak, but a being freed from thoſe Unchriſtian Prejudices which poſſeſs Mens Minds againſt their Brethren, and againſt ſome things for their ſakes; ſo that they cannot ſee thoſe things to be what they are, though otherwiſe plain in themſelves: And a being freed likewiſe from the Love of ſome undue Intereſt of Reputation, Honour, or other Worldly Advantage, which they love more than the Peace of the Church. For the Primitive Chriſtians, which were not byaſſed by ſuch undue Intereſts or Prejudices, (as the falſe Apoſtles and their Followers that made differences were) agreed very well in matters of Religion, though they had but the ſame Doctrine for their direction therein, which we alſo have in the Scriptures. So that it muſt be a true Chriſtian Spirit and Temper which will abound more in thoſe Days yet to come, than it does in theſe, that muſt and will procure that good Agreement and general Peace, of which we ſpeak.

CHAP. IX.

The binding of Satan, the placing good Governours every where, and a plentiful Communication of Divine Aſſiſtance, will be Means conducing much to the abounding of Righteouſneſs and Peace in the Earth.

HAving ſpoken of the abounding of Righteouſneſs and Peace, as the two principal things which will make the World more happy in the times of the Univerſal Kingdom and Government of Chriſt on Earth, than ever it was before: I ſhall now proceed to ſpeak of ſome other extraordinary Privileges which will be enjoyed in thoſe times. And it ſhall be of ſuch as by which the Righteouſneſs and Peace we have been diſcourſing of, will be procured and continued in the World, till towards the end of it.

1. And I will begin with that firſt which concerns the binding of Satan, and the ſhutting him up, ſo that he ſhall not deceive and diſturb the Nations for the ſpace of a thouſand Years, as he had done in times paſt. And this we have foretold by St. *John*, Rev. xx. 1, 2, 3. *And I ſaw an Angel come down from Heaven, having the Key of the bottomleſs Pit, and a great Chain in his Hand. And he laid hold on the Dragon, that old Serpent, which is the Devil and Satan, and bound him a thouſand Years: and caſt him into the bottomleſs Pit, and ſhut him up, and ſet a ſeal upon him, that he ſhould deceive the Nations no more, till the thouſand Years ſhould be fulfilled; and after that, he muſt be looſed a little ſeaſon.*

It will be eaſie to underſtand how the binding of Satan thus will tend to the introducing of much more Righteouſneſs and Peace into the World, than was in it before, when we conſider how much the abounding of Sin, and of the many Miſchiefs and Diſturbances of the World, are owing unto him, and to his Activity in it: It is he which hath ſeduced the Nations of the World to Idolatry. Hence it is that the Sacrifices which have been offered unto Idols, are ſaid to have been *offered unto Devils*, as the Founders of that Worſhip, *Deut.* xxxii. 17. 2 *Chron.* xi. 15. And the coming of the Man of Sin introducing a new ſort of Idolatry into the World, with abundance more of *Deceivableneſs of Unrighteouſneſs*, is ſaid to be *after the working of Satan*, 2 Theſſ. ii. 9. It is he that ſtirs up the great Men of the World to raiſe up bloody Perſecutions againſt the Church of God. *The Devil ſhall caſt ſome of you into priſon*, Rev. ii. 10. It is the Devil that ſows the Tares of Strife and Diviſion and Scandal in the Church, *Matth.* xiii. *They are the Spirits of Devils that are ſent out to the Kings of the Earth and of the whole World to gather them to Battel to the great Day of God Almighty*, Rev. xvi. 14. *It is the Prince of the power of the Air, that worketh in the Children of Diſobedience*, Eph. ii. 1. *It is the great Dragon that old Serpent called the Devil and Satan, that deceiveth the whole World*, Rev. xii. 9. And if the Unrighteouſneſs and Wickedneſs of the World in general, and the Broils, Combuſtions and Slaughters that abound in it, proceed ſo much as they do, and have done, from the Inſtigation of the Devil, and from the Liberty he has had to range up and down the World, and to exerciſe his Subtilty in tempting Men, and in doing and procuring Miſchiefs in abundance; then the confining him to his Den, and the reſtraining him from exerciſing his Subtilty and Power of deceiving and tempting Men, muſt needs tend greatly to the Increaſe of Righteouſneſs and Peace in the World. If the cauſe be taken away, the effect ceaſeth. If upon the ſhutting up of the King of *Babylon*, that great Troubler of the World, in his Grave, it might be ſaid as it was, *the whole Earth is at reſt and is quiet* (Iſa. xiv. 7.) then much more may it be ſaid ſo, when Satan a far greater Troubler of the World, is ſhut up in the bottomleſs Pit.

We may gueſs how very much the Wickedneſs and Unrighteouſneſs of the World, and the unhappy and troubleſome Eſtate thereof, is owing unto the working of Satan, and to his Liberty of tempting of Men, by that ſtrange Alteration which will be made in the World by his being looſed out of his Priſon, when the thouſand Years ſhall be expired in which he had been ſhut up. For though the World had had the Experience of the Happineſs of enjoying abundance of Righteouſneſs and Peace for near a thouſand Years, yet when he comes to be at Liberty again, he deceives the Nations in the four Corners of the Earth, the number of whom will be as the Sand of the Sea, *Rev.* xx. 7, 8. And by this we may gueſs likewiſe how much the binding up of Satan for a thouſand Years, will contribute to the abounding of Righteouſneſs and Peace which ſhall be in thoſe Days.

2. The placing of *good Governours* every where in the World, above what had been in times paſt, will be another thing which will conduce much to promote Righteouſneſs, and to procure great Peace in the World. For as bad Rulers have always been obſerved to make bad People, as *Jeroboam* made *Iſrael* to ſin: And as Unrighteouſneſs is ever attended with Uneaſineſs, and that with Clamour and Unquietneſs; ſo on the contrary, good Governours tend to make the People under them to be good: *A King that ſitteth in the Throne of Judgment, ſcattereth away all Evil with his Eyes:* And when the Rulers and the People ruled are good, occaſions of complaining will ceaſe, and *the effect of Righteouſneſs will be Peace and Quietneſs*, as the Prophet hath told us, and as Experience hath taught us.

Now we have obſerved before, that Righteouſneſs and Peace ſhall abound in the World under the Government of Chriſt, when that ſhall ſpread it ſelf over the whole World, becauſe *he ſhall judge the World with Righteouſneſs, and the People with Equity.* have obſerved alſo that our Bleſſed Saviour will not adminiſter Affairs in governing the World immediately by himſelf, but by his Vice-gerents here on Earth, and by other ſubordinate Rulers. And then *his judging the World with Righteouſneſs, and the People with Equity*, will be his placing ſuch Governours all over the World as ſhall govern the People under them with Righteouſneſs and Equity, and thereby propagate and promote Righteouſneſs and Peace among them every where. In *Pſal.* lxxii. which is a *Pſalm* Prophetical of Chriſt and his Government, it is ſaid of him, at *ver.* 2. *That he ſhall judge the people with Righteouſneſs, and the poor with Judgment.* And then it follows in the next words, *ver.* 3. *The Mountains ſhall bring peace to the people, and the little Hills, by Righteouſneſs.* Meaning by *Mountains* ſuperiour Rulers, and by *little Hills*, thoſe which are ſubordinate in Government. And both theſe ſhall bring Peace to the People by Righteouſneſs: By being righteous and doing righteouſly themſelves, and by promoting and encouraging it all they can in others. But the thing I would have farther obſerved here, is, that the words in *ver.* 3. ſeem to ſhew how the *Meſſias* ſpoken of in *ver.* 2. ſhall *judge the people with Righteouſneſs, and the poor with Judgment*, to wit, by cauſing the Mountains and the little Hills to bring Peace to the People by Righteouſneſs.

Now that the Rule and Government of the World will in thoſe times be put into the hands of ſuch as ſhall be of the Church of God, I have formerly obſerved from that Prophecy, *Dan.* vii. 27. where he ſays, that the *Kingdom and Dominion, and the greatneſs of the Kingdom under the whole Heaven, ſhall be given to the people of the Saints of the moſt high.* And the *Mountain of the Lord's Houſe ſhall be eſtabliſhed in the top of the Mountains, and ſhall be exalted above the Hills*; the Church of God ſhall be uppermoſt in the World, which it could not be, unleſs the Rule and Government of the World ſhould be put into the hands of thoſe which ſhall be of the Church. And ſuch Scriptures as tell us, *That all Kings ſhall fall down before Chriſt, and that all Nations ſhall ſerve him*, as that does, *Pſal.* lxxii. 11. do ſuppoſe and imply that all Kings ſhall then be of his Church.

And thoſe Scriptures which acquaint us that Chriſt ſhall rule in Righteouſneſs in the time of his Reign, do in effect as I have ſaid, tell us that thoſe under him in the Government ſhall ſo rule for him, and that he ſhall ſo rule by them, that is, with Righteouſneſs.

And we have ſeveral Prophecies foretelling that God in his good Providence will order ſuch to rule and govern in the World, as ſhall be duly qualified for the promoting Righteouſneſs in the World, and conſequently the Peace of it. Thus, *Iſa.* i. 26. *I will reſtore thy Judges as at the firſt, and thy Counſellors as at the beginning: Afterward thou ſhalt be called the City of Righteouſneſs, the faithful City.* Judges as at the firſt, that is, as at their firſt becoming a Nation, brought under the Government of Men of God's chuſing for them, ſuch as *Moſes* and *Aaron*, *Joſhua* and *Eleazar*, &c. And after this they ſhall be called, that is, they ſhall be, or become a City of Righteouſneſs, or *a righteous Nation which keepeth the Truth*, as in *Iſa.* xxvi. ii. Thus again, *Iſa.* lx. 17. *I will make thy Officers Peace, and thine Exactors Righteouſneſs, Violence ſhall no more be heard in thy Land.* Ezek. xlv. 8. *My Princes ſhall no more oppreſs my People*; meaning as they had been wont to do without ſcruple, according to that in *Zach.* xi. 5. *Whoſe poſſeſſors ſlew them, and held themſelves not guilty.* Jer. iii. 15. *I will give you Paſtors according to mine heart, which ſhall feed you with Knowledge and Underſtanding.* By Paſtors, he means Rulers, and as we may well ſuppoſe according to common Opinion, both Civil and Eccleſiaſtical, for both have been always wont to rule. And theſe he ſays ſhall be according to his own heart; that is, ſuch as he ſhall like and approve of. And theſe will be ſuch as ſhall feed the People with Knowledge and Underſtanding; that is, rule them with Prudence and Diſcretion, as *David* as King, was ſaid to feed the Flock he was ſet over by God, *Pſal.* lxxviii. 71, 72. *He brought him to feed Jacob his People, and Iſrael his Inheritance: So he fed them according to the Integrity of his heart, and guided them by the Skilfulneſs of his hands.*

Thus again, *Jer.* xxiii. 4. *I will ſet Shepherds over them which ſhall feed them, and they ſhall fear no more, nor be diſmayed, neither ſhall they be lacking, ſaith the Lord.* Meaning by Shepherds ſuch Rulers as ſhall do by the People under them, as good Shepherds uſe to do by the Flocks under their hand: Such as ſhall charge themſelves with the Care of them, in providing for their Welfare, in protecting them from Injuries, in preventing their going aſtray, and in ſeeking to bring thoſe back which have gone aſtray, and in applying neceſſary Remedies for the Cure of Maladies, and in uſing much Tenderneſs to the weak and feeble. And thus God hath foretold that he will do, ſuppoſing ſtill by ſuch Shepherds thoſe which he will ſet over his Flock. *I will ſeek that which was loſt, and bring again that which was driven away, and will bind up that which is broken, and will ſtrengthen that which was ſick*, Ezek. xxxiv. 16.

And when it is ſaid of the Meſſiah, in reſpect of his Government in the time of his reigning univerſally over the World, *That he ſhall judge the poor of the people, he ſhall ſave the Children of the needy, and ſhall break in pieces the oppreſſor*, Pſal. lxxii. 4. *he ſhall deliver the needy when he crieth; the poor alſo and him that hath no helper; he ſhall ſpare the poor and needy, and ſhall ſave the Soul of the needy: He ſhall redeem their Soul from deceit and violence*, ver. 12, 13, 14. I ſay, when theſe things are ſaid of his Government in the time of his Univerſal Kingdom, it is to be underſtood, that they which in thoſe times he ſhall ſet up to repreſent him and to rule for him, will not ſuffer Might to overcome Right, but will be Advocates and Protectors for the poor and helpleſs in their juſt Cauſe, againſt their powerful Oppreſſors, and always be inclining to Mercy, in all compaſſionable Caſes. *With Righteouſneſs ſhall he judge the poor, and reprove* (or *argue*, as it is in the Margin) *with Equity, for the meek of the Earth*, Iſa. xi. 4. He will debate the Matter with the Adverſaries of the poor and meek, when they cannot plead their own Cauſe, or want thoſe that can; but yet with Equity, not countenancing the Poor, becauſe they are poor, in a bad cauſe. And when Rulers, Civil and Eccleſiaſtick, Magiſtrates, Biſhops and Miniſters, ſhall thus do generally throughout the World, in their reſpective Capacities; it muſt needs tend to excellent Order both in Church and State, and conſequently to great Peace in both. And ſo much touching the Rulers which ſhall be in thoſe times.

3. I have ſaid, that a plentiful Communication of Divine Aſſiſtance which will be vouchſafed in the time of Chriſt's Kingdom on Earth, will be another means or cauſe of the abounding of Righteouſneſs and Peace in thoſe Days. Such is Mens ſpiritual Impotency and Weakneſs, brought upon their Nature by Sin, as that they can never attain to Righteouſneſs of Life without God's merciful Aſſiſtance in his preventing and co-operating Grace: *For it is God that worketh in us to will and to do of his good pleaſure*, Phil. ii. 13. And the more of this Aſſiſtance is communicated to the Inhabitants of the World, the more will Righteouſneſs abound in it; and the more Righteouſneſs, the more Peace.

In *Iſaiah* xi. 9. The Prophet ſpeaking of the Time of Chriſt's Reign and Government, and having ſaid, that *then there ſhall be no hurting or deſtroying in all God's holy Mountain*, gives the Reaſon of it in theſe words, *For the Earth ſhall be full of the Knowledge of the Lord, as the Waters cover the Sea.* Thereby noting that Knowledge ſhall then be ſpread over the habitable Earth, as the Waters are over that part of the Earth which contains in it the Waters of the Sea. And that ſhews, that the Communication of Divine Aſſiſtances towards the abounding of Righteouſneſs in thoſe times, will be exceeding extenſive above what the World had enjoy'd before. For as the abounding of Righteouſneſs ſuppoſeth the abounding of Knowledge, (for Men cannot be righteous without knowledge) ſo the abounding of Knowledge ſuppoſes the abounding of thoſe Means, without which Knowledge cannot be wrought in Mens Minds; and thoſe are Divine Aſſiſtances from God, and thoſe Means or Aſſiſtances, are God's ſending his Goſpel unto Men, and the Illumination of their Minds by his Spirit, that they may underſtand it, and be made better by it.

The Angel having ſhew'd unto *Daniel* what ſhould befal his People in the latter Days, bid him *ſhut up the words, and ſeal the book to the time of the end: Many*, ſaith he, *ſhall run to and fro, and knowledge ſhall be increaſed*, Chap. xii. 4. Meaning, I ſuppoſe, that Men ſhould do ſo moſt eſpecially about the time of the end, and that then Knowledge ſhould thereby be increaſed. And how ſhall Men come to run to and fro then, more than they did before, and Knowledge in thoſe Prophecies and other Scriptures be increaſed, more than it was before? but by God's ſtirring them up to do ſo, more than he did before, and by enlightning Mens Minds more than he had done before.

Such will be God's Communication of Light and Knowledge to Men in thoſe Days by the Operation of his Spirit upon their Minds, that Divine Knowledge will more eaſily and ſooner, and with leſs labour of external Inſtruments, be attained, than in times paſt it had been, and become more common and familiar among all ſorts of Men, than ever before. And ſome ſuch thing doubtleſs is meant by that Saying, *Jer.* xxxi. 34. *They ſhall teach no more every Man his Neighbour, and every Man his Brother, ſaying, Know the Lord: For they ſhall all know me, from the leaſt of them unto the greateſt of them, ſaith the Lord.* There ſhall not need then, as in times paſt, to be *Precept upon Precept, Precept upon Precept; Line upon Line, Line upon Line*, in Teaching; for the Internal Aſſiſtance by God to bring Men to Knowledge, it ſeems, will be ſuch, as that it ſhall be attained with little labour, comparatively of external Inſtruments. The Way which ſhall be *called Holy*, will become ſo plain upon this account, *that way-faring Men, though fools, ſhall not err therein*, as the Prophet ſpeaks, *Iſai.* xxxv. 8. The Prophet, ſpeaking of thoſe happy Times of the Church, wherein *her Stones ſhall be laid with fair Colours, and her Foundations with Sapphires, and her Windows made of Agates, and her Gates of Carbuncles*, ſaith, *That then all thy Children ſhall be taught of the Lord, and great ſhall be the peace of thy Children*, Iſai. liv. 13.

I have quoted thoſe words in the New Covenant, mentioned in *Jer.* xxxi. 34. as relating to thoſe Times of the happy Reſtoration of the *Jews*; for ſo they do eſpecially, though not only, as we may eaſily perceive by the following Verſes there. For though that New Covenant is currant, in relation to us *Gentiles*, as well as to the *Jews*, throughout the whole time of the Reign of the Meſſias, yet as it was propheſied of to be *made with the houſe of Iſrael and the houſe of Juda*, it ſeems primarily to reſpect them; and accordingly the Goſpel was firſt ſent unto them. But ſince but few of them, comparatively, have as yet been married to the Lord by this Covenant; and yet ſince he deſigned by this Covenant to marry that Nation to himſelf the ſecond time, ſo as that they ſhould no more depart from him, as they had done, tho' they had been married to him by the firſt Covenant; therefore the time of the Marriage of the Lamb with that Spouſe of his by this ſecond Covenant, ſeems to be the time in which this Prophecy in *Jeremy* will be compleatly fulfilled. For then the Lord will take them again to be his People, and he to become their God, *never to remember their Iniquities any more*, by caſting them off from him, as he had done before, for the ſpace of many Generations. And this in Scripture is called *God's eſtabliſhing his Covenant with them.* For after he had threatned to caſt off the Houſe of *Juda* for breach of Covenant, ſaying, *I will even deal with thee as thou haſt done, which haſt deſpiſed the Oath in breaking the Covenant*, Ezek. xvi. 59. He preſently adds in *ver.* 60. *Nevertheleſs, I will remember my Covenant with thee in the days of thy youth, and I will eſtabliſh unto thee an everlaſting Covenant:* That is, at the time of their Reſtoration and Return, as the following Verſes ſhew.

And as Almighty God has foretold, that he will then grant them ſuch Aſſiſtance, as that *they ſhall all know him from the leaſt to the greateſt of them*; ſo he has foretold at the ſame time, that he *will put his Law in their inward parts, and write it in their hearts*, Jer. xxxi. 33. Meaning, that he would afford them greater Aſſiſtance towards keeping his Laws under this ſecond Covenant, and upon his taking them again the ſecond time to be his People, than he had done under the firſt, which they *brake*, and upon which *he regarded them not*, as he ſays. And it is from hence, and becauſe of this, among other things, that Righteouſneſs and Peace will abound in thoſe times, more than they had before.

Thus again, *Jer.* xxxii. 40. 41. *I will make an everlaſting Covenant with them, that I will not turn away from them, to do them good; but I will put my fear in their hearts, that they ſhall not depart from me. Yea, I will rejoyce over them to do them good, and I will plant them in this Land aſſuredly, with my whole Heart, and with my whole Soul.* I have recited theſe laſt words to ſhew to *what time* the making and performing of that Everlaſting Covenant forementioned does belong. And when the Lord here ſays, that he will then covenant with *Iſrael*, to put his Fear in their Hearts, after he has gathered them out of all Countries whither he had driven them, ſo as that they ſhall not depart from him, as well as he will, not to turn away from them to do them good; I take this to be in ſome ſort of the nature of an *abſolute and unconditional* Promiſe, as it reſpects that Nation in general: Not that he thereby engages ſo to put his Fear into the Hearts of all, and every one of that Nation, as that none of them ſhall at all depart from him; but that that Nation ſhould never ſo nationally and ſo univerſally depart from him, as it had done in times paſt. As when our bleſſed Saviour ſays, *the Gates of Hell ſhall never prevail againſt his Church*, he is not to be ſo underſtood, as if by that Saying he meant, that the Gates of Hell ſhould not prevail againſt any that ſhould be of the Church, in ſome ſenſe, but that they ſhould never ſo prevail againſt the Church in general, as that it ſhould ceaſe to be in the World. In like manner we may underſtand this, and other like Promiſes, made to that Nation after their Reſtoration out of their Infidelity and long Diſperſion, that they ſhall never be ſo forſaken of God again, as they had been, but that he would continue them a Nation in a very proſperous and flouriſhing Condition. And thus it is more plainly expreſſed, *Jer.* xxxi. 35, 36. *Thus ſaith the Lord, which giveth the Sun for a Light by Day, and the Ordinances of the Moon and of the Stars for a Light by Night: If theſe Ordinances depart from before me, ſaith the Lord, then the Seed of Iſrael alſo ſhall ceaſe from being a Nation before me for ever.*

But then this better Condition of theirs will proceed from greater Aſſiſtances which they will receive from God, ſo to fear him as no more to depart from him, as they had formerly done. Almighty God engages, that *he will not turn from them*, and that *they ſhall not depart from him.* But that which he aſſures them, that after that time they ſhall never depart from him, is his Promiſe of communicating ſuch Aſſiſtance to them, as by which the Fear of God ſhall always abide in their Hearts.

Another Prophecy to the ſame purpoſe, is that of *Ezekiel* xxxvi. from ver. 24, to 28. *I will take you from among the Heathen, and gather you out of all Countries, and will bring you into your own Land. Then will I ſprinkle clean water upon you, and ye ſhall be clean: from all your filthineſs, and from all your Idols will I cleanſe you. A new Heart alſo will I give you, and a new Spirit will I put within you; and I will take away the ſtony Heart out of your Fleſh, and will give you an Heart of Fleſh. And I will put my Spirit within you, and cauſe you to walk in my Statutes, and ye ſhall keep my Judgments, and do them.* Here is a Prophecy, a Promiſe indeed, of extraordinary Aſſiſtances which God will vouchſafe his ancient People, when he ſhall recover them out of their long and laſt Diſperſion, and reſettle them in their own Land. He will grant unto them ſuch an efficacious Preſence of his Spirit, as by which they ſhall have new Hearts, and lead new Lives; he will thereby cauſe them to walk in his Statutes. And from this abundance of divine Aſſiſtance, will proceed abundance of Righteouſneſs, and from that abundance of Peace.

The ſame Aſſiſtances, which theſe Prophets have foretold ſhall be vouchſafed the *Jews* by God, after their return from their long Diſperſion, were foretold long before by *Moſes*, as we may ſee, *Deut.* xxx. 4, 5, 6. *If any of thine be driven out unto the utmoſt parts of Heaven, from thence will the Lord thy God gather thee, and from thence will he fetch thee. And the Lord thy God will bring thee into the Land which thy Fathers poſſeſſed, and thou ſhalt poſſeſs it, and he will do thee good, and multiply thee above thy Fathers. And the Lord thy God will circumciſe thine heart, and the heart of thy ſeed to love the Lord thy God with all thy heart and with all thy Soul, that thou mayeſt live.* I do not find in any of the Books of *Moſes*, any ſuch Promiſe of divine Aſſiſtance as this is, made to the *Jews*, all the while they ſhould remain in the Land which the Lord had given them, or before they ſhould be ſcattered among the Nations for their Iniquities. Nor can we ſay that upon God's bringing them out of the *Babylonian Captivity* into their own Land again, he did them good and multiplied them above what he did for their Fore-fathers, which yet here we ſee is promiſed them, together with God's circumciſing their Hearts to love him. Both which things conſidered, it argues that the Promiſes here made do refer to the time of their general and final Deliverance from that Diſperſion, under which they remain until this day. And if ſo, then we may perceive by this Promiſe here made, that Almighty God will in that laſt State of the *Jews*, vouchſafe them more of divine Aſſiſtance than ever he promiſed their Fore-fathers when they were in the beſt and moſt flouriſhing Condition in the Land of *Canaan*. And if ſo, it will be eaſie to believe that Righteouſneſs will then abound among them more than ever it did before.

Unto all that hath been ſaid touching divine Aſſiſtance, we may add what the Scripture aſſures us of, touching that extraordinary Preſence of his, which God will afford among Men in thoſe latter times of the State of the Church here on Earth. In that happy time of the Church ſet forth by a new Heaven and a new Earth; and by the *New Jeruſalem*'s coming down from God out of Heaven, it may be ſaid, *Behold the Tabernacle of God is with Men, and he will dwell with them, and they ſhall be his people, and God himſelf ſhall be with them, and be their God*, Rev. xxi. 1, 2, 3. And when God ſhall pleaſe to exhibit himſelf thus unto Men, we may be well aſſured of a very plentiful Effuſion of good things, of ſpiritual good things eſpecially; and among them, divine Aſſiſtances to enrich the Souls of Men with great Meaſures and Degrees of Light and Love. And this cannot but produce much Righteouſneſs, and great Peace among Men. This Saying, *The Tabernacle of God is with Men*, &c. ſeems to ſignifie as much Happineſs thereby to be vouchſafed to Men, as they can be well capable of in this World and on this ſide Heaven it ſelf; but eſpecially in God's Communication of ſuch Benefits as will beſt fit and prepare them for the Happineſs of another World, and for the beſt Enjoyment of God's Favours in this. And when *Ezekiel* ſeems to have ſet forth the Glory and Magnificence of the new City he propheſied of, (which ſeems to be the *New Jeruſalem* deſcribed afterward in the xxi. and xxii. *Chap.* of St. *John*'s Revelations,) he concludes, *Chap.* xlviii. and laſt *ver.* with that which would commend it moſt of all, ſaying, *That the Name of the City from that day ſhall be, The Lord is there.*

Conſidering then the great Plenty of internal Aſſiſtance which God will vouchſafe unto Men in the happy times we ſpeak of: And conſidering the excellent Order and Government which will then be obſerved both in Church and State, by Princes, Biſhops, and Rulers well qualified for it; it will be no hard matter to believe, *That their Peace then will be as a River, and Righteouſneſs as the Waves of the Sea*, as the Prophet ſpeaks. Then it may be truly ſaid, as in *Pſal.* lxxxv. 10.—*Mercy and Truth are met together: Righteouſneſs and Peace have kiſſed each other. Truth ſhall ſpring out of the Earth; and Righteouſneſs ſhall look down from Heaven. Yea, the Lord ſhall give that which is good; and our Land ſhall yield her Increaſe. Righteouſneſs ſhall go before him, and ſhall ſet us in the way of his ſteps.*

And that ſuch excellent Effects as Righteouſneſs and Peace are, will be plentifully produced by that inward Aſſiſtance from God, and outward good Government by Men, which will then be enjoyed, will yet more eaſily be believed when we conſider, that in that time Satan will be reſtrained and bound up, as has been ſhewed, from tempting and deceiving Men, as he had done in all Ages of the World preceding thoſe bleſſed times. For if the divine Aſſiſtances which ſhall then be enjoyed, ſhould be but equal to what God has afforded at ſome other times, yet they would produce the good Effects, Righteouſneſs and Peace, more abundantly than the like did in ſuch times when Satan was at liberty to reſiſt and Counter-work the Operation of thoſe Aſſiſtances by his Temptations, evil Influences and Infuſions. For the Ineffectualneſs of God's Aſſiſtances vouchſafed unto Men, is very much owing to the contrary Operation of the Devil upon their Minds by his Infuſion, as I have before in part ſhewed. And therefore when the divine Aſſiſtances ſhall not only be more than ordinary in thoſe happy times, but alſo free from thoſe Oppoſitions and Interruptions from the Devil, which were wont to obſtruct their good effect in Men more or leſs; it is but reaſonable to expect that their Productions of Righteouſneſs and Peace in the World, ſhould greatly exceed, what the World had in that kind enjoy'd before.

CHAP. X.

Of the Earthly Proſperity which Almighty God, as it is probable, will vouchſafe in the latter Ages of the World.

IF there ſhall be ſo great an Alteration and Change in the *World Moral*, in reference to Moral Rectitude, as upon Enquiry we have found cauſe to expect there will; then it ſeems but reaſonable to hope that there may be at the ſame time, ſuch an Alteration and Change in the *World Natural* alſo, as may hold ſome good Proportion with the Renovation which will be made in the World Moral. *Let the People praiſe thee, O God, let all the People praiſe thee.* And what then when they ſhall do ſo? Why, *then the Earth ſhall bring forth her Increaſe, and God even our own God ſhall bleſs us. Pſal.* lxvii. 5, 6. It was a general Corruption and Degeneration in the World in Morals, which brought a general Decay and Languiſhment upon it in Naturals. And therefore it may be hoped that a general *Reformation* of the World in things moral, may be accompanied with a general *Reſtauration* of it in things natural.

And this very thing we find promiſed in reference to one Nation of the World, to wit, the *Jews:* Which may be ſome good ground of hope, that ſomething of like Nature may befal the World in general in like caſe. God Almighty threatned that Nation in caſe of their Diſobedience, to bring a Curſe upon their Land, and to make it barren; and upon their Bodies by Sickneſs and Diſeaſes, and Captivity, and upon their Cattel, *Deut.* xxviii. and all this has come upon them accordingly. But yet for all that, he at the ſame time promiſed alſo, that if after all this Evil ſhould come upon them, they ſhould yet return unto him and become obedient, he told them by *Moſes*, ſaying, *The Lord thy God will make thee plenteous in every Work of thy hand, in the Fruit of thy Body, and in the Fruit of thy Cattel, and in the Fruit of thy Land, for good: For the Lord will again rejoice over thee for good, as he rejoyced over thy Fathers*, Deut. xxx. 1——9.

God has indeed *turned their fruitful Land into Barrenneſs, for the Wickedneſs of them that dwelt therein*, and it is become a *Deſolation of many Generations.* But the time will come when they ſhall turn to the Lord, and the Veil which is upon their Heart will be taken away; and when the Spirit of Grace and Supplication ſhall be poured out upon them: And then there ſeems to be deſigned them by God, a Reſtitution of the ancient Fertility of their Land, and of Plenty of all things; or rather that which ſhall much exceed whatever it had been heretofore in its greateſt Glory, *Iſa.* xxxii. 13, 15. *Upon the Land of my People ſhall come up Thorns and Briars, yea upon all the Houſes of Joy in the joyous City—until the Spirit be poured upon us from on high, and the Wilderneſs be a fruitful Field.* This wonderful Alteration expreſſed by a Wilderneſs becoming a fruitful Field, is we ſee to be made, when the Spirit ſhall be poured on them from on high, and not till then. Thus again, *Iſa.* li. 3. *The Lord ſhall comfort Zion; he will comfort all her waſte places, and he will make her Wilderneſs like Eden, and her Deſart like the Garden of the Lord: Joy and Gladneſs ſhall be found therein, Thankſgiving and the Voice of Melody*, Iſa. lv. 13. *inſtead of the Thorn ſhall come up the Fir-tree, and inſtead of the Briar ſhall come up the Myrtle-tree: And it ſhall be to the Lord for a Name, for an everlaſting Sign that ſhall not be cut off.* The Stile of the

Prophets in this matter is ſometimes very lofty: *It ſhall come to paſs in that day, that the Mountains ſhall drop down new Wine, and the Hills ſhall flow with Milk, and all the Rivers of Judah ſhall flow with Waters*, Joel iii. 18. that is, the Hills and Mountains ſhall be ſo fruitful as to produce, by the Cattel and by the Vines, very great plenty of Wine and Milk. The like we have *Amos* ix. 13. *Behold the days come, ſaith the Lord, that the Plow-man ſhall overtake the Reaper, and the treader of Grapes, him that ſoweth Seed; and the Mountains ſhall drop ſweet Wine, and all the Hills ſhall melt.* In the Days when the Meſſiah ſhall judge the People, *there ſhall be an handful of Corn in the Earth upon the top of the Mountains; and the fruit thereof ſhall ſhake like Lebanon, and they of the City ſhall flouriſh like Graſs of the Earth*, Pſal. lxxii. 16.

And as there will be great plenty of the Fruits of the Earth, ſo there will be of Cattel alſo, and of Men, to make uſe of that great plenty. *Behold the days come, ſaith the Lord, that I will ſow the houſe of Iſrael, and the houſe of Juda, with the Seed of Man, and with the Seed of Beaſt*, Jer. xxxi. 27. *I will multiply upon you Man and Beaſt, and they ſhall increaſe and bring fruit, and I will ſettle you after your old eſtates, and will do better unto you than at your beginning*, Ezek. xxxvi. 11. *I will multiply them, and they ſhall not be few; I will alſo glorifie them, and they ſhall not be ſmall*, Jer. xxx. 19. *A little one ſhall become a thouſand, and a ſmall one a ſtrong Nation: I the Lord will haſten it in his time*, Iſai. lx. 22.

And then, together with this great plenty, there will, as it is very probable, be added the Bleſſings of Health, and Length of Days, that Men may enjoy, and long enjoy thoſe other Bleſſings. *Iſai.* xxxiii. 24. *The Inhabitant* (to wit, of *Zion*) *ſhall not ſay, I am ſick.* God had promiſed of old to his People, that if they would diligently hearken to him, and do that which is right in his ſight, that then he would put none of thoſe Diſeaſes upon them which he had brought upon the *Egyptians*, ſaying, *For I am the Lord that healeth thee*, Exod. xv. 26. And this, as it is probable, God will return to make good to them at this time, when they ſhall generally ſo return to him, as to perform the Condition on which that Promiſe was made.

And the like may be ſaid touching God's Promiſe of *multiplying their Days as the Days of Heaven upon Earth*, upon the ſame Condition, *Deut.* xi. 21. For in that time in which God hath ſaid by his Prophet, that he will *create new Heavens and a new Earth*, he hath ſaid, *That there ſhall be no more thence an infant of Days, nor an old Man that has not filled his Days: for the Child ſhall die an hundred Years old, but the Sinner being an hundred Years old ſhall be accurſed*, Iſai. lxv. 20. The plain meaning of all which, according to a good Author, ſeems to be this, That there ſhall no Child *ordinarily* die by any untimely Death, and before he has fulfill'd his Days, nor an old Man that has not lived ſo long as in the courſe of Nature he might well reach: And that the Child ſhall be an hundred Years old when he dieth; not that he ſhall be a Child when he dies an hundred Years old, as ſome Jewiſh Doctors have fancied. But though a Man ſhould in thoſe Days enjoy the then common Bleſſing of long Life, and not die till he be an hundred Years old, yet if he die a Sinner, a Man of an unreformed Life, he ſhall die accurſed. Men ſhall then live long to enjoy the fruit of their Labour in great plenty, which they ſhall then alſo ſecurely poſſeſs, without any danger of being bereaved thereof by Enemies. For ſo it follows in the 21ſt Verſe, and ſo on: *They ſhall build Houſes, and inhabit them; and they ſhall plant Vineyards, and eat the fruit of them. They ſhall not build, and another inhabit; they ſhall not plant, and another eat: For as the days of a Tree, are the days of my People, and mine Elect ſhall long enjoy the work of their hands. They ſhall not labour in vain, nor bring forth for trouble: for they are the Seed of the bleſſed of the Lord, and their Off-ſpring with them.*

Saint *Paul* ſays, *The Creature it ſelf alſo ſhall be delivered from the Bondage of Corruption, into the glorious Liberty of the Children of God*, Rom. viii. 21. And if he hereby means a Deliverance which the animate and inanimate Creatures ſhall one time or other receive from the vanity, weakneſs and hurtfulneſs which is come upon their Nature by reaſon of Man's Sin, as it is generally held he does: Then the great Proſperity we have been ſpeaking of, is not likely to be peculiar to the Nation or People of the *Jews* only, when they ſhall be reſtored, but ſeems to be a thing more generally to be enjoyed in the World in thoſe happy times. For if that be St. *Paul*'s meaning, then the Deliverance of the Creature from the Bondage of Corruption, of which he ſpeaks, muſt be its Deliverance in a great meaſure from that Curſe that came upon the Earth for the Sin of Man, and that was extended to the other parts of the Earth, as well as to the Land of *Canaan*; and therefore the removal of this Curſe muſt concern the other parts of the World as well as that.

And if the Creature, or whole Creation, which groaneth and travaileth in pain until now, ſhall be delivered from this Bondage one time or other; when can it be ſo reaſonably expected, as in thoſe times in which the Reign and Government of Chriſt will make them ſo happy, as we have ſeen ſet forth? It cannot reaſonably be thought to be at the Judgment of the great Day, for then will be the *Conflagration* of the World by Fire; and that will not be a Deliverance to the Creatures, but a Deſtruction of them.

I know it is ſuppoſed by ſome, that the Conflagration will be but a *Purgation*, and not the *Deſtruction* of the Creatures; becauſe the *Pſalmiſt* ſpeaking of the Earth and Heavens, ſays, *They ſhall wax old as a Garment, and as a Veſture, be folded up and changed*, Pſal. cii. 25, 26. But I would ask, how it does appear that the Pſalmiſt ſpeaks of the Change which ſhall be by the Conflagration, rather than that which we ſuppoſe ſhall be made by delivering the Creatures from the Bondage of Corruption, in the time of Chriſt's Kingdom and Government upon Earth? I am ſure what the Scriptures ſay ſhall befal the Earth and lower Heaven, or the Elements, at the Day of Judgment, ſeems much more likely to ſignifie a Deſtruction or Annihilation of them, than a Mutation of them by Purgation. *The Element ſhall melt with fervent heat, and the Earth with the Works thereof, ſhall be burnt up*, at the Day of the Lord, ſaith St. *Peter*, 2 Epiſt. iii. 10. And St. *John*, ſpeaking of the Judgment-Day, ſays, *I ſaw a great white Throne, and him that ſat on it, from whoſe Face the Earth and Heaven fled away, and there was found no place for them*, Rev. xx. 11. St. *Peter's* words put the matter beyond all doubt or diſpute, that the Conflagration will be at the laſt Judgment of ungodly Men, when he ſays, *The Heavens and the Earth which are now by the ſame Word kept in ſtore, reſerved unto Fire againſt the Day of Judgment, and Perdition of ungodly Men*, 2 Pet. iii. 7. And if the Creatures Deliverance from the Bondage of Corruption ſhall not be at the Day of Judgment; then there is no time can be aſſigned for it ſo likely, as the time of Chriſt's univerſal Kingdom upon Earth; nor do I know any other but the Day of Judgment, that in the Judgment of Men ſtands in competition with it.

And that Deliverance of the unreaſonable Creatures, which St. *Paul* here ſpeaks of, ſeems to be foretold by the Prophet *Eſaiah* long before in two of his Prophecies, both of them to the ſame effect. The former of them we have, *Iſai.* xi. 6—9. in theſe words, *The Wolf alſo ſhall dwell with the Lamb, and the Leopard ſhall lie down with the Kid: and the Calf, and the young Lion, and the Fatling together: and a little Child ſhall lead them. And the Cow and the Bear ſhall feed, their young ones ſhall lie down together: and the Lion ſhall eat ſtraw like the Ox. And the ſucking Child ſhall play on the hole of the Aſp, and the weaned Child ſhall put his hand on the Cockatrice Den. They ſhall not hurt nor deſtroy in all my holy mountain: For the Earth ſhall be full of the knowledge of the Lord, as the Waters cover the Sea.* The other Prophecy we have in *Iſai.* lxv. 25. *The Wolf and the Lamb ſhall feed together, and the Lion ſhall eat ſtraw like the Bullock: and duſt ſhall be the Serpent's meat. They ſhall not hurt nor deſtroy in all my holy mountain, ſaith the Lord.* From what goes before from the 17th Verſe, it appears, that the time to which this Prophecy relates, and in which it is to be fulfilled, will be the time in which there will be new Heavens and a new Earth. And the time to which the former Prophecy relates, and in which it will be fulfilled, is the time when the *Earth will be full of the knowledge of the Lord, as the Waters cover the Sea.* And both belong unto the ſame time.

Theſe two Prophecies do ſeem primarily and properly to ſignifie and ſhew, that in thoſe times here pointed at, the ravenous and ſavage Qualities of the Wolf, the Leopard, the Lion, and the Bear, and the miſchievous Qualities of the Aſp and Cockatrice ſhall be taken away ſo, as that they ſhall have no inclination or diſpoſition to prey upon, or hurt ſuch harmleſs Creatures as Lambs, Kids, Calves, Kine, and little Children, but that they may dwell, feed, and lie down together, without any hurt or danger.

I know theſe Prophecies are underſtood by many in a figurative and myſtical Senſe, as if thereby were ſet forth the wonderful and happy Change which the Goſpel in the Days of the Meſſiah ſhall make in the Nature of Men, when it ſhall be kindly received by them: So that Men of ſavage and fierce Diſpoſitions, by the power of the Goſpel, ſhall be made meek and gentle, innocent and harmleſs. And although it's true, that the Goſpel does work ſuch a Change in ſome Men; yet whether this be the Doctrine intended in theſe Texts, ſeems doubtful for theſe Reaſons.

1. Becauſe the Wolf, the Leopard, the Lion, and the reſt of the hurtful Creatures here mentioned, are ſuppoſed to retain their original and proper Natures ſtill, when they ſhall become thus harmleſs: They are not to be made Lambs, Kids, Kine, Calves, or Children, to make them harmleſs company for thoſe that are ſuch. But when the Goſpel has made ſuch a Change in Men, as that forementioned, the Wolf then does not

dwell with the Lamb, nor the Leopard lie down with the Kid; but the Wolf then is become a Lamb, and the Leopard a Kid, and ſo Lamb dwells with Lamb, and Kid lies down with Kid. But here, according to theſe Prophecies, the Wolf, while a Wolf, ſhall dwell with the Lamb; and the Leopard, while a Leopard, ſhall lie down with the Kid; and ſo of the reſt. And this makes ſo great a diſparity between the things ſignifying, and the things ſignified, in caſe we ſhould underſtand the Prophecies in the myſtical ſenſe, that the one cannot well and commodiouſly be repreſented by the other.

2. We cannot well imagine for what other reaſon that Saying, *The Lion ſhall eat ſtraw like the Ox*, ſhould be added to what had been ſaid before touching thoſe ſavage Creatures not preying upon Lambs, Kids, *&c.* but only to give ſome account how thoſe Creatures ſhall live, and how they ſhall be fed, when they ſhall ceaſe to prey upon other living Creatures. And by that one Inſtance of *the Lion's eating ſtraw like the Ox*, it ſeems to be intimated, that when that Change ſhall be made in thoſe ravenous Creatures, that then they ſhall live upon Paſture and Fodder, as other Beaſts do, and as was originally appointed by God before Man's Sin did introduce a miſchievous Quality into their Natures, *Gen.* i. 30. And if to give an account how thoſe Creatures ſhould be fed and ſubſiſt when they ſhould ceaſe to prey upon other living Creatures, was the reaſon of ſaying, *The Lion ſhall eat ſtraw like the Ox*, then it will be a ſufficient reaſon alſo why we ſhould underſtand theſe Prophecies in their proper ſenſe, only allowing for the Rhetorick of the Prophetick Stile.

3. That to ſhew how Beaſts of Prey ſhall live when they ſhall ceaſe from their preying Quality, was the reaſon of the Prophet's ſaying, *The Lion ſhall eat ſtraw like the Ox*, becomes yet the more credible, becauſe he gives account alſo how the Serpents ſhall live when they ſhall become ſo inoffenſive and harmleſs, as that a weaned Child may put its Hand upon their Den without any danger; for he ſays, *Duſt ſhall be the Serpent's meat.* That part of the Curſe is ſtill to lie upon them which God inflicted upon the Serpent for being inſtrumental in Man's Fall, *Gen.* iii. 14.

If theſe Prophecies had been deſigned for ſuch a myſtical ſenſe as ſome have put upon them, I cannot imagine for what reaſon this Paſſage concerning the Serpent's eating Duſt, ſhould accompany that of the Wolf's feeding with the Lamb, and the Leopard's lying down with the Kid, which yet we ſee it does. Nor did ever any, ſo far as I know, eſſay to accommodate this to a myſtical ſenſe, when they have done ſo with the other parts of the Prophecy in conjunction with it. And I muſt needs ſay, that they who have eſſayed to put a myſtical ſenſe upon *the Lion's eating ſtraw like the Ox*, have made but ſorry work of it.

It's likely it may ſeem ſtrange to moſt, that any Man ſhould ſo much as ſuppoſe that ever any ſuch Change ſhould be made while this World ſtands, in noxious and noiſome Creatures, as now has been diſcourſed of. But ſurely he who expects ſuch a mutation and alteration in the World, as is ſignified by God's creating new Heavens and a new Earth, cannot but expect ſtrange things to be done when that ſhall be done. And indeed the thing is in it ſelf ſo ſtrange, that had not St. *Paul* told us, that *the Creature it ſelf ſhall be delivered from the Bondage of Corruption into the glorious Liberty of the Children of God:* And had not I alſo found that the ableſt Commentators have not been able to make the parts of theſe Prophecies to hang well together, while they have laboured to limit them to a myſtical ſenſe, I ſhould have been far enough from ſo much as ſuggeſting any probability of ever having thoſe Prophecies literally fulfilled. Nor do I aſſert they ſhall: I only have taken liberty to ſhew what may be ſaid to make it probable that they ſhall. The great Reverence I have for the Divines that have underſtood theſe Prophecies in a myſtical ſenſe, is ſufficient to make me ſo modeſt as to keep me from aſſerting any thing poſitively contrary thereto.

I might add to theſe Prophecies in *Eſay*, that in *Hoſea* ii. 18. where God by his Prophet ſays, *In that day will I make a Covenant for them with the Beaſts of the Field, and with the Fowls of Heaven, and with the creeping things of the Ground. God will reduce them to the Rule of their firſt Creation, to obey and ſerve us, as they did Adam,* ſays one upon the place. The Promiſe of God here is comprehenſive, engaging to ſecure his People from all harm, from all ſorts of noxious Creatures: Which muſt be by taking from them their hurtful Qualities, or by reſtraining them from acting according to them, which is much what the ſame.

But that which I think is not a little conſiderable in this matter, is *Acts* iii. 21. where St. *Peter* ſpeaking of our bleſſed Saviour, ſaith, *Whom the Heaven muſt receive, until the times of Reſtitution of all things, which God hath ſpoken by the mouth of all his holy Prophets, ſince the World began.* And when will this Reſtitution of all things be? Will it be at the Day of Judgment? That indeed will be to all good Men, more than a time a time of Reſtitution to the happy State from which Man fell by Sin: It will be a time of their glorious Exaltation to a far better State. And then the Apoſtle here does not ſpeak of the Reſtitution of Men only, but of the Reſtitution of all things; which is not likely to be at the Day of Judgment, as I have already ſhewn. And farther, he does not ſpeak of the *Time* of Reſtitution, in the ſingular Number, as the Day of Judgment is ſpoken of in Scripture, but of the *Times* of Reſtitution of all things; that is, I ſuppoſe, of all thoſe Times or Ages unto which the Reſtitution of all things will reach; which doubleſs will be until the Day of Judgment. And then theſe Times of Reſtitution here ſpoken of, are ſuch as God has ſpoken of by the Mouth of all his holy Prophets: And that's another Reaſon inducing us to believe it's meant of the Time of Chriſt's Government in his Kingdom, rather than of the Time of the laſt Judgment. Becauſe it ſeems much more queſtionable whether all or moſt of the Prophets have ſpoken of the laſt Judgment of the World, than it is whether they have ſpoken more or leſs of the Happineſs of the World under the Reign and Government of Chriſt.

So that in fine, the Reſtitution of all things here ſpoken of, ſeems to be the Recovery of the World in a great meaſure, from that great Diſorder and Confuſion, and from the manifold Calamities which the Sins of Men from Age to Age had brought upon it: And the Earth from that Curſe in a great meaſure likewiſe, which lay upon it, upon occaſion of Man's Sin: And the ſeveral Creatures from that Bondage in which they were to the Luſts of Men, and from the hurtfulneſs of their Nature, which made many of them miſchievous and deſtructive to Men, and to one another: And to reduce all, in ſome good degree, to that Order, Subordination and Uſefulneſs, for which they were firſt made and ordained by God.

To do all which, it cannot be deny'd to be moſt worthy and becoming the great Undertaking of our bleſſed Saviour for the recovery of the World, in a great meaſure, from that ſad State and Condition into which it was fallen and ſunk by the Sin of Men, and and to continue it being ſo recovered, for many Generations, before he deſcend from Heaven to judge the World. And ſo much ſeems to be imply'd in ſaying, the Heaven *muſt* receive him *until* the Reſtitution of all things: As if all the Work for which he came into the World, would not be done till that ſhould be done; and that it would not be a proper ſeaſon for him to return from Heaven to judge the Word, until he had put it into ſuch a Condition firſt, as would ſomewhat anſwer and ſhew forth, not only the Merit and Vertue of his Sufferings, but alſo the Wiſdom and Goodneſs of his Government.

And I little doubt but that which the Apoſtle here calls the *Reſtitution of all things*, is the ſame which the Prophet foretold in other words, when Almighty God by him ſaid, *Behold, I create new Heavens and a new Earth*, Iſai. lxv. 17. By which is meant, not that God would make a new Heaven and Earth out of Nothing, as he did in the beginning: But that he would make ſuch an alteration in the influence of the Heavens upon the Earth, and ſuch an alteration in the Earth thereby, and in the Quality and Condition of the Creatures upon it, as ſhould make it in ſome ſort a new World, of a new Appearance, and in a new Dreſs. And it is not unuſual in Scripture to call that a new Creation, which is but a renewing of things, by putting in them new and better Qualities, by which their Nature is to a good degree perfected in compariſom of what it was before. Inſtances of this Nature we have in *Pſal.* civ. 30. 2 *Cor.* v. 17. *Epheſ.* ii. 10. and divers other places.

And that this new Creation of Heaven and Earth is to be made in the time of the Reſtoration of the *Jews*; and that they, with other parts of the World, ſhall in their ſeveral Generations here on Earth, enjoy the benefit of it, appears, as from what I have ſaid formerly on *Iſai.* lxv. 16, 17, 18. Verſes, ſo alſo from *Iſai.* lxvi. 22. where it is ſaid, *For as the Heavens and the Earth which I will make ſhall remain before me, ſaith the Lord, ſo ſhall your Seed and your Name remain.* They ſhall run parallel one with the other, they in their ſeveral ſucceſſive Generations ſhall live to enjoy that new Creation, as long as it ſhall laſt and continue.

The Reaſon which is given by the Prophet, why there ſhall be ſo great and excellent a change in the World Natural, and in the Creatures thereof, in thoſe times of Reſtitution, ſo that from thenceforth there ſhall be no more hurting or deſtroying by them, as there had been in times paſt, is the abounding of the Knowledge of God in the Earth, as the Waters cover the Sea, *Eſai.* xi. 9. By the [abounding of the Knowledge of God in the Earth, as the Waters cover the Sea] is meant, I ſuppoſe, the abounding of true Religion and Vertue every where. By that the World, in a *moral* Conſideration, ſhall then in a very great meaſure be recovered from that Sin and Diſobedience which brought a Curſe upon the Earth for Man's ſake, and which ſet thoſe Creatures to rebel and make head againſt him, and to be miſchievous to him, (like as Man had rebelled againſt his God, and made head upon him;) which otherwiſe at the firſt were made ſubject unto Man, and ordained to ſerve him. But now when the World in general ſhall be reduced to a due Acknowledgment of God, and to a due Obedience to his Government; ſo good is Almighty God, as perhaps, to reduce the Creatures again to a due Subjection unto Man, and to his Service. And if ſuch things as theſe ſhall come to paſs in the latter Ages of the World, under the new Creation of it, it will be *a time of the Reſtitution of all things* indeed.

CHAP. XI.

The beginning of thoſe happy times which are expected in the latter part of Chriſt's Kingdom and Government on Earth, are probably at no great diſtance from us.

I Have in a former Chapter been ſhewing out of the 7th *Chap.* of *Daniel*, That where the Kingdom or Reign of the fourth Beaſt as Antichriſtian ends, there the Kingdom of Chriſt in the *Extenſiveneſs* of it begins. I ſay in the *Extenſiveneſs* of it: For otherwiſe the Kingdom and Government of Chriſt in his Church as Chriſtian began, not long after the fourth Kingdom it ſelf began, to wit, the *Roman* Monarchy. But the time of bringing the World in general under the Government of Chriſt in his Church as Chriſtian, will not be till thoſe oppoſite Powers which have ſtood in the way and hindred it, be removed and taken out of the way.

Now the time appointed by God for the removing thoſe Powers, and conſequently the beginning of thoſe happy times which are to ſucceed, ſeems not to be very far off. We will ſuppoſe then as well we may, that the Beaſt with ten Horns which both *Daniel* and St. *John* ſaw in their reſpective Viſions, repreſented the ſame Kingdom or Monarchy, to wit, the *Roman*. And to the end we may know when the Kingdom and Reign of this Beaſt will *end*, upon the ending of which the Kingdom of Chriſt in its extent will begin, we muſt enquire into two things, 1. When that Reign did begin. 2. How long it was to continue.

For the Continuance or Length of this Beaſts Reign, we have it ſet down in *Rev.* xiii. 5. where its ſaid *Power was given unto him to continue forty and two Months*, underſtood in the ſame ſenſe as *Daniel*'s ſeventy Weeks are, to wit, each Day for a Year, *Dan.* ix. 26. Which is a Prophetical Computation ſometimes uſed in Scripture, *Ezek.* iv. 6. And the things which are to be done in the time of this Beaſts Continuance, do neceſſitate us not to underſtand the forty two Months for no more than three Years and a half properly. For in the time that the Whore rides this Beaſt, the Kings of the Earth commit Fornication with her, and the Inhabitants of the Earth are made drunk with the Wine of her Fornication, and the Merchants of the Earth are made rich by trading with her: And all both ſmall and great, rich and poor, bond and free, are made to receive the Mark of the Beaſt, or elſe not ſuffered to buy or ſell; and all the World wonder after the Beaſt; who makes war alſo with the Saints, and overcomes them. Now all theſe things are not to be done in forty two Months time properly underſtood. Underſtand we therefore as Expoſitors do by the forty two Months, twelve hundred and ſixty Years; each Day in forty two Months for a Year; for ſo many Days are in forty two Months.

But the time when to begin this account is not ſo eaſily found out; which is the other thing we are to enquire into, and about which, great Miſtakes have been committed, and poſſibly more may be: And therefore nothing is to be undertaken in this but with caution. That which I conceive will be our beſt Guide in this Search and Enquiry, is the Saying of the Angel unto St. *John* in *Rev.* xvii. 12. *The ten Horns which thou ſaweſt, are ten Kings, which have received no Kingdom as yet; but receive Power as Kings one hour with the Beaſt.* Which words ſhew that as the Ten Kings received Power as Kings one Hour with the Beaſt, ſo the Beaſt received his Power one Hour with them. That is, the Beaſt and the Ten Kings, and the Ten Kings and the Beaſt, came into being as ſuch, at or about the ſame time.

The next ſtep therefore which we muſt take towards attaining Satisfaction touching the *time* when the Beaſt begun his forty two Months Reign, is to enquire when thoſe

Ten Kings ſignified by the Ten Horns of the Beaſt, received their Power as Kings. And this time of receiving this Power, muſt needs be, I conceive, when the Empire became divided into Ten Kingdoms. And this Diviſion was not made all at once, but gradually, there being about forty ſix Years between the beginning of that Diviſion and the Completion of it into Ten Kingdoms.

From the Year 365 to 410, there were ſeveral furious Aſſaults and violent Inrodes made into the Empire, by vaſt numbers of People of barbarous Nations, which brake in and ſeated themſelves in it, at leaſt very many of them in the very Heart and Bowels of it, and became advanced ſome of them to Places of Command in their Armies. And about the Year 410 *Alaricus* King of the *Goths*, took and ſack'd the City of *Rome* it ſelf; not long after which, five or ſix new Kingdoms are ſaid to have appeared in the Territories of the Empire. And about the Year 455. *Genſericus* the *Vandal*, took the City again, plundered and fired it, carrying away innumerable Multitudes of the *Romans* captive.

I have conſulted ſeveral good Authors, who have laboured to find out exactly when and at what time the Diviſion of the *Roman* Empire into Ten Kingdoms was compleated: And they all agree, that about a Year after *Rome* was taken by *Genſericus*, that Diviſion into Ten Kingdoms was compleated. One ſaying that *Honorius* was forced to begin this Diviſion by his Covenant with *Alaricus* for the gaining of the City of *Rome* again; and ſo the Empire was more and more divided, till about the Year 455. when *Rome* was again ſack'd by *Genſericus* the *Vandal*, or a little after it was plainly divided into Ten Kingdoms. Another that in the Year 456. the Diviſion of the Empire into Ten Kingdoms was compleat. And then Mr. *Joſ. Mede* gives a particular account of the Names of the Ten Kings which in the Year 456. reigned in the Empire, and of the ſeveral Provinces in which they reigned, *lib.* 3. *pag.* 661. of the 4th *Edition*.

If to this 456. then you add 1260. which is ſuppoſed to be the Number of the Years of the Beaſts reign, we ſhall find according to this Computation, that we are at no great diſtance from the Period of that Reign. This is the beſt and moſt probable account from Scripture and Hiſtory which I can meet with in this matter. But whether it be ſolid or no, I ſhall ſubmit to them to judge who are beſt able. For I will not be *dogmatical* in this matter, but only take notice of what meaſures ſeem to be afforded us by which to make a Conjecture in this matter, always allowing ſome convenient Latitude therein, and not confining the account to a Year.

Nor is there reaſon we ſhould; for the Computation we have gone upon, has been but at the rate of thirty Days to a Month, and ſo of but three hundred ſixty Days to a Year, according as others account in this matter. But if we reckon three hundred ſixty five Days to a Year, as we generally do in other caſes, then it will ſet us at ſeventeen Years diſtance more from the end of the Beaſt's Reign, than was mentioned before. But if the Beaſts forty two Months, and the Witneſſes propheſying in Sack-cloth, a thouſand two hundred and threeſcore Days, do exactly *ſynchronize*, then that will juſtifie the Computation after the rate of thirty Days only to a Month; for forty two times thirty makes one thouſand two hundred and ſixty.

But yet I will add to this Prophecy by St. *John*, another by St. *Paul*, farther to ſhew what reaſon we have to date the beginning of the Beaſt's Reign from the time in which the Empire became divided into Ten Kingdoms. And that is in the 2 *Theſſ.* ii. 6. *and now ye know what withholdeth, that he might be revealed in his time.* St. *Paul* having ſaid that there would come a *falling away*, and that the *Man of Sin* would be *revealed, the Son of Perdition, who oppoſeth and exalteth himſelf above all that is called God, or that is worſhipped*; and that he had told *them theſe things when he was with them, ver.* 3, 4, 5. he adds here in the 6th *Verſe.* And now ye know what with-holdeth, that he might be revealed in his time.

Now by *him* or *that* which did then *lett* and would hinder the riſing of this Man of Sin, until taken out of the way, *Commentators* generally both Ancient and Modern, do underſtand the *Roman Empire* in its entire and flouriſhing Condition, before it was broken in pieces and divided into Ten Kingdoms. Thus *Tertullian*, *Chryſoſtom*, *Jerome*, and the Fathers generally are ſaid to expound it. And Mr. *Mede* brings in St. *Jerome*, ſaying, (when he heard of the taking of *Rome* by *Alaricus*) *he who hindred, is taken out of the way; and we conſider not that Antichriſt is at hand*, lib. 3. p. 657.

The Myſtery of Iniquity doth already work, ſaith St. *Paul*, ver. 7. For then in the Apoſtles days there were falſe Apoſtles, who to carry on a Worldly Deſign, taught the Chriſtians that together with the worſhipping the God of Heaven and Earth, they ſhould worſhip Angels alſo as Mediators to God (*Col.* ii. 18.) and together with their *partaking* *of the Lord's Table*, to *partake of the Table of Idols*, which the Apoſtle termeth a *partaking of the Table of Devils*, 1 Cor. x. 21. So that there was then ſet on foot and begun a mix'd Worſhip, which had as well *Creatures* as *God himſelf* for its *Object*: Which was, I conceive, the chief part of the Myſtery of Iniquity which began then to work. This was the ſame thing for kind with that which afterward in the time of the Church's Apoſtacy was made the eſtabliſhed Religion of the Empire by the procurement of the Man of Sin when he came to be revealed. But this Corruption conſiſting of a *mixture* of ſomething of *Chriſtianity* with ſomething of *Paganiſm*, could never obtain publick Countenance or Authority from the Imperial Power, ſo long as the Government of the Empire in point of Religion continued purely Pagan: Nor yet when it became Chriſtian neither, until there came a falling away in the Church from the purity of Worſhip. But when this falling away had taken place, then the Empire became broken, and to be divided into ten Kingdoms, which very thing gave the *Man of Sin* opportunity to get up.

Now if the diviſion of the *Roman* Empire into ten Kingdoms, was that *taking out of the way* the entireneſs of the Imperial Power and Sovereignty which had been the *lett* by which the Man of Sin had been hindred from riſing and getting up; then we may well date the beginning of the Reign of the Beaſt, from the time in which the Empire was broken into ten Kingdoms, eſpecially conſidering that St. *Paul* ſays, *Then* ſhall that *wicked be revealed*, when that which did *lett* is taken out of the way, *ver.* 7, 8.

I have not, you ſee, begun the account of the Beaſt, receiving his Power and beginning his Reign, from the time in which the Empire began to be divided, and ſome of the Ten Kings were riſen up and did appear; but from the time in which the whole number of Ten became compleated. And there is great reaſon why I ſhould do ſo: For otherwiſe the forty two Months Reign of the Beaſt would be run out, and paſt already, which yet we ſee is not come to paſs. Though it's true, the *entireneſs* of the Kingdom of the Beaſt ceaſed, when the *Reformation* in ſeveral Kingdoms in *Chriſtendom* took place. For then in part, and to a good degree, his Kingdom fell in the *Earthquake* ſpoken of, as may be ſuppoſed, in *Rev.* xi. 13. when the *outward Court of the Temple* was in part cleanſed, which had been trodden down of the *Gentiles*, and the *Witneſſes* in part *raiſed*, which had been ſlain in a Political ſenſe (as the Reverend Doctor *More* has judiciouſly obſerved) for theſe *ſynchronize* and run parallel both in their beginning, partial accompliſhment, decreaſe, and total ending.

As the Empire, after it became Chriſtian, did not relapſe into that Superſtition, Idolatry and Cruelty all at *once*, by which it became ſuch a thing as St. *John* deciphered it to be by a Beaſt reſtored after the deadly Wound it received under its former Head, but became ſuch by degrees, as the ten Horns of the Beaſt roſe up one after another; ſo that the Empire, figured by that Beaſt, does not ceaſe from being ſuch all at *once*, nor loſe that exorbitant Power and Dominion it once acquired, but by degrees neither. There were ſeveral of the Horns of this Beaſt knock'd off by the Reformation that was made in ſeveral Nations in *Chriſtendom*.

And it is worth obſerving, that the beginning of that Reformation fell out juſt about the ending of the *time and times*, or the three Years, or thirty ſix Months of the forty two, which was to be the meaſure or length of the Beaſt's Reign, as may eaſily be computed, if the Beaſt began his Reign about the Year 456. And conſequently that from the beginning of the Reformation to the end of the forty two Months of the Beaſt's Reign, there was only then to come but *half a time*, or ſix Months of the forty two. By which we may ſtill ſee, in all probability, that the time of the Church's great *Deliverance*, and the World's great *Reformation*, cannot be very far off. To make which appear upon a Rational Account, I have uſed ſo many Words as I have done about it, for our encouragement under any contrary Appearances which may happen.

And yet before I go off from this Argument and Head of Diſcourſe, I think it not amiſs to add ſomething farther, to ſhew how and by what means this Beaſt St. *John* ſpeaks of, became ſuch as he is deſcribed to be: Becauſe this will, I conceive, give us the more Light and Satisfaction about the Time from which the Beaſt's forty two Months did commence. In doing of which I only premiſe, That by the Beaſt deſcribed by St. *John* in *Rev.* xiii. 1, 2. we are to underſtand the *Roman Empire* under ſuch a Conſtitution of Government, by which the Religion of the Empire, otherwiſe Chriſtian by Profeſſion, became mix'd with Idolatry and Superſtition, enjoyn'd to be obſerved under cruel Penalties.

And this was brought to paſs by the procurement of a *ſecond Beaſt with two Horns like a Lamb, who yet ſpake as a Dragon*, as he is deſcribed, *Rev.* xiii. 11, 12. By which is meant, according to the ſenſe of *Expoſitors*, a ſort or order of Men in the Empire, diſtinct from the ſecular Rulers, who pretended to have a double Power from Chriſt (ſignified by the two Horns like a Lamb) both to *Teach*, and to *Govern* Men in matters of Religion. Theſe in *Rev.* xvii. 3. under another Denomination, are ſaid to *ſit upon* or to *ride* the Beaſt with ten Horns; that is, to ſteer and govern the ten Kings, and the People of their Dominions, as a Man does the Beaſt he rides on, which way he would have him go.

Now this ſort or order of Men in the Empire, of which the Pope of *Rome* became the Head, ſignified by this Beaſt with two Horns like a Lamb, did (as St. *John* foretold *that they would) ſay to them that dwelt upon the Earth, that they ſhould make an Image to the Beaſt which had the wound by a Sword, and yet did live*, Rev. xiii. 14. That is, they did counſel, adviſe and perſuade the Inhabitants of the Empire, both the Kings and their Subjects, to do that which being done, made the Government of the Empire in point of Religious Worſhip, to become in a great meaſure *like* to what it had been formerly, when *Paganiſm* was by the Government of the Empire eſtabliſhed for the Religion of the Empire: For ſo *Paganiſm* was under the ſixth Head of the Beaſt, before that Head received a wound by the Sword of *Conſtantine*, who put down *Paganiſm*, and eſtabliſhed *Chriſtian Religion* in the Empire. And in that the ten Kings followed the Counſel and Advice of the two-horned Beaſt, in making an Image of the wounded Beaſt, by reſtoring Idolatrous Worſhip again in the Empire by publick Authority, the Beaſt under the ſixth Head was thereby healed of the Wound he received by *Conſtantine* and ſome of his Succeſſors.

The Counſel and Perſuaſion of the two-horned Beaſt, was not to reſtore the *ſame* Idolatrous Worſhip again into the Empire, which was the publick Worſhip of the Empire under the ſixth Head of its Government, but only to make an *Image* of it; that is, to uſe and order to be uſed ſuch a Worſhip, which being appointed and eſtabliſhed by publick Uſe and Authority, would be, as after it was, very *like* it, though not in all reſpects the ſame: As an Image or Picture is ſomewhat like the Perſon whom it repreſents, though it be not the Perſon it ſelf.

This ſort of Men, repreſented by the two horned Beaſt, did not reſtore, nor adviſe to reſtore the Worſhip of the ſame Gods whom the Pagans had worſhipped; but yet did adviſe to that which was equivalent to it. They did not adviſe to worſhip the *Pagan Heroes*; that is, thoſe dead Men among the Pagans, which had been renowned among them while they lived; which yet was practiſed under the Reign of the Dragon. But yet this two-horned Beaſt did adviſe to pay the ſame Honour, and to perform the ſame Worſhip to Saints departed, to renowned Chriſtians after they were dead, which is due only to God. The giving of which Honour, and performing of which Worſhip to dead Men, is the Idolatry into which the *Iſraelites* fell in the buſineſs of *Baal-peor*. *They joyned themſelves to Baal-peor, and did eat the Sacrifices of the dead*; that is, they did eat of ſuch Sacrifices as were offer'd to dead Men, and thereby worſhipped them, *Pſ.* cvi. 28.

If it be demanded how it does appear that a new ſort of Idolatry, reſembling the old Pagan Idolatry, was introduced into the Empire at the time when it was divided into ten Kingdoms? I anſwer, that it is a thing well known, and ſuch as many Writers have given account of, that the cuſtom of worſhipping of dead Men in praying to Saints departed, begun and was brought into practice in the Empire by Men profeſſing Chriſtianity in the fourth Century, and not before: And that it was a Corruption which took its firſt Riſe from a Cuſtom of the Chriſtians meeting at the Burying-places and Tombs of the bleſſed Martyrs, and their praying to and praiſing Almighty God and our Saviour there. This Saint-worſhip taking its beginning in the fourth Century, and ſpreading more and more in the fifth; it ſhews that this corrupt practice got up in the Empire at the ſame time in which the Empire became divided, and in which ſeveral new Kings ſtarted up one after another: So that by the Year 456. which was not much more than the middle of the fifth Century, the number of ten Kings in it was filled up and compleated, as I ſhewed before. All which is a good addition of proof, that the falſe Worſhip publickly authorized by thoſe that did then bear Rule in the Empire, gave being to the Beaſt, and made it to become ſuch as is deſcribed by St. *John*; and likewiſe that the ten Kings and the Beaſt roſe up together, the *one hour with the Beaſt*, and the Beaſt one hour with them, as St. *John* had foretold they would.

And if we conſider what way was made for falſe Worſhip to become in part the Religion of the Empire, by the practice of many going before, in praying to Saints departed, and the condition of the Empire at that time in other reſpects; it will be eaſie to conceive, how that ſort of Men ſignified by the Beaſt with two Horns like a Lamb, might without any great difficulty prevail with the ten Kings to conſtitute ſuch a Government in their reſpective Kingdoms in relation to Religious Worſhip, or Irreligious rather, as made the Empire become an Idolatrous Beaſt under a ſeventh Idolatrous Head, and with the People, too generally to conſent to it. The Empire at that time had been over-run with ſeveral Nations, ſuch as *Goths*, *Vandals*, *Hunns*, *Alans*, *Samaritans*, *Quades*, *Picts*, *Scots*, *Saxons*, *Marcomans*, *Herules*, *Suedes*, *Almains* and *Burgundians*: All which, or near all, were Barbarous and Paganiſh People, (Mr. *Mede* indeed ſaith ſome part of the *Goths* were Chriſtian) and had ſeated themſelves in the Empire. Now they being Enemies to Chriſtianity, which had been the Religion of the Empire for ſome good ſpace of time paſt, they muſt needs be very troubleſome to the ancient Inhabitants of the Empire, upon the account of Religion, as well as otherwiſe.

To avoid which, and the many other Evils which the Chriſtians might ſuffer from them upon that account; a corrupt *Clergy* in the Empire, ſignified by the Beaſt with two Horns like a Lamb, who deſigned more a Worldly Intereſt, than the propagation of Chriſtianity in its Power and Purity, propoſed and perſuaded (as it's very probable) to a method of reconciling theſe two different Parties, which now muſt live together, whether the Chriſtians would or no. And in order to that, as we may well ſuppoſe, they would propoſe ſome yielding and compliance to one another from both Parties, to pleaſe both, and to make both their Friends and Admirers, by whom they might riſe to that Greatneſs they aimed at. And ſo contrived a mix'd way of Worſhip and Religion, conſiſting partly of ſomething of the Chriſtian Religion and Worſhip; and partly of ſomething which ſhould be ſomething like the Pagan way of Worſhip, and yet not altogether the ſame: Like as their Predeceſſors the falſe Apoſtles had done before them, upon account whereof the Myſtery of Iniquity was ſaid by St. *Paul*, then to begin to work.

And to this end (as the event ſhews) they propoſed that together with God and our Saviour, Saints departed might be prayed to, as being a likely way to draw over the *Pagans* to them, as being ſo like their Worſhip performed to their *Dæmons*, their *Heroes*; that is, to their *renowned Men after they were dead.* Conſidering then how much by this time the Empire was become degenerated from the Power of Chriſtianity and Primitive Zeal, which was found in the Chriſtians when the Government of the Empire firſt became Chriſtian: And conſidering how far that ſuperſtitious Cuſtom of praying to Saints departed had by this time ſpread, taken root, and prevailed in the Empire: And conſidering alſo that the enjoyning this to be uſed in their publick Worſhip would be one likely means of uniting at laſt the Pagans with the Chriſtians in one way of Worſhip, and of peaceable and obedient living one with another under the Government of their new Kings: And conſidering likewiſe what deference the Laity made to the Clergy in ordering and regulating them in matter of Religion: I ſay, conſidering all theſe things, it is no difficult thing to conceive or believe, that thoſe ten Kings would not refuſe to conſent to the Advice and Direction of the depraved Clergy for the enjoyning the uſe of Prayer to Saints departed in their publick Worſhip; eſpecially if we add thereto the Conſideration of thoſe *Miracles* which St. *John* ſaith the Beaſt with two Horns like a Lamb, *had power to do in the ſight* of the other Beaſt with ten Horns; and by means of which Miracles, he ſaith, *he ſhould deceive them that dwell upon the Earth*, Rev. xiii. 14. To which agrees that other Prophecy by St. *Paul* touching the *Man of Sin*, *whoſe coming*, as he ſaith, *ſhould be after the working of Satan*, *with all power*, *and ſigns*, *and lying wonders*, *and with all deceiveableneſs of unrighteouſneſs*, 2 Theſſ. ii. 9, 10.

And that this Counſel and Advice of the Beaſt with two Horns like a Lamb, ſhould take place and prevail with the ten Kings, St. *John* foretold, when ſpeaking of thoſe ten Kings, he ſaith, *Theſe have one mind*, *and ſhall give their power and ſtrength unto the Beaſt*, to wit, to farther and promote his deſign; and the event declares that accordingly it came to paſs, *Rev.* xvii. 13.

This Saint-worſhip entring into the Church in the declining eſtate of it, a conſiderable time before the ten Kings appear'd in the Empire; and having ſpread it ſelf conſiderably by that time they did appear, I think we may reaſonably ſuppoſe that this corrupt Practice gave great advantage to the two-horned Beaſt to prevail with the ten Kings to eſtabliſh by their authority the Invocation of Saints in their publick Worſhip: And this in conjunction with that ſtrange mixture of Carnal Chriſtians and Paganiſh People which then inhabited and filled the Empire, did much facilitate the naughty deſign of the two-horned Beaſt. For by gaining this point, he opened a way for the bringing in a multitude more of Paganiſh Superſtitious Cuſtoms; by which thoſe ſignified by the two-horned Beaſt made themſelves very popular in the Empire, and eſpecially among the barbarous People which now domineer'd and bore a great ſway there.

For having laid this Foundation of a myſtical *Babel*, they eaſily proceeded to raiſe up a ſutable Structure by degrees, though not all at once. And ſo as the Pagans had been wont to *inrol* deceaſed Men that had been famous among them, into the number of their *Gods*, and then to worſhip them: So the Mongrel Chriſtians have been taught to *canonize* ſuch for Saints after their deceaſe, who had been renowned among them while they lived, and then to pray to them. As the Pagans did erect Temples, Altars and Statues to their Gods; ſo have the Paganizing Chriſtians been directed to do the like to their *canonized Saints.* As the Pagans richly adorned the Images of their Gods, and brought Oblations to them: So theſe have been taught to do the like to their canonized Saints. As the Pagans bowed down themſelves, and lifted up hands and eyes before the Images of their Gods; ſo have the other, to the Images of their Saints. As the Heathen had their *Tutelar Gods* over Kingdoms, Provinces and Cities; ſo have the Paganizing Chriſtians their Tutelar Saints over the like. Theſe and abundance more Inſtances of ſuperſtitious Uſages among the Paganizing Chriſtians in Imitation of the Cuſtoms of the Pagans, you may find mentioned at large by the Reverend Dr. *Hen. More* in his *Synopſis Prophetica*, lib. 1. chap. 17. So that the Event hath opened to us the meaning of St. *John*'s Prophecy concerning the two horned Beaſts, ſaying to the Dwellers on the Earth, that they ſhould make an Image to the Beaſt which had the Wound by a Sword, and did live.

I have inſiſted the longer on this thing, that it might appear, that the Beaſt deſcribed by St. *John* in *Rev.* xiii. 1, 2. *ver.* could not be ſaid to exiſt compleatly, or come to be ſuch as he was Prophetically deſcribed to be, until the ten Kings ſignified by his ten Horns, were themſelves in being; by whoſe Power and Authority ſuch Laws were made for the introducing Idolatry again into the Empire, as made it become ſuch a thing as was and is ſignified by a Beaſt with ſeven Heads, and ten Horns, with Crowns upon them, and the Name of Blaſphemy or Idolatry upon his Heads: And that it might appear likewiſe that the Beaſt received his Power *one Hour* with the ten Kings, as they did theirs one Hour with the Beaſt. And by what has been ſaid in this matter, I think it does appear alſo what reaſon there is not to date the beginning of the Beaſts forty two Months reign ſooner than the Diviſion of the Empire into ten Kingdoms did appear, as likewiſe what reaſon there is to date it from that time. And if we have reaſon to date the beginning of the Beaſts Reign from that time, I think we have then reaſon to think that the Period of that Reign, can be at no very great diſtance from us, nor conſequently the beginning of thoſe happier times before diſcourſed of.

If any ſhall think that when the Diſciples demanded of our Saviour, *Whether he would at that time reſtore the Kingdom to Iſrael*, (*Acts* i. 6.) that his Anſwer in ſaying, *It is not for you to know the times or the ſeaſons, which the Father hath put in his own power* does lie as an Objection againſt the Enquiry we have made into the time when or where about the great Deliverance of the Church from the power of her known Enemies, will fall out, together with the greater Enlargement of Chriſt's Kingdom and Government in the World which is then to ſucceed: I ſhall briefly return this for an Anſwer. That though it is very true that the times and ſeaſons of Events which God hath reſerved to himſelf, and put in his own Power, do not belong to us to know, or to enquire when they ſhall be; yet ſo far as he has revealed the times and Seaſons of his accompliſhing ſuch great things as thoſe aforeſaid, they are due and proper Subjects of our Enquiry. The ſecret things belong to God, yet things revealed belong to us, *Deut.* xxix.

Now that the times of the Reign and Ruine of the Beaſt, and the taking of the Kingdom by Chriſt thereupon, and giving it to the People of the Saints of the moſt high, are things revealed, and ſo are Matters which belong to us to look into and to make uſe of, is that which I have been endeavouring to prove and to make plain.

CHAP. XII.

Contrary outward Appearances in the World, are no certain ſign of any great diſtance of thoſe good times from us, which have been diſcourſed of.

THat ſuch contrary Appearances are no certain ſign of any very long diſtance of thoſe good days from us in the beginning of them, of which many of the divine Prophecies gives us notice, will appear if we conſider but this one thing, which I ſhall endeavour to clear. There may be ſuch Inequality between the viſible Power and Strength of the Church and of her Enemies, as may deprive the Church for the moſt part of it, at leaſt, of all Expectation of any near hand Deliverance; and free her Enemies from all fear of Deſtruction, even then when the Deliverance of the one and the Deſtruction of the other, are at no great diſtance from them. Thus it may be, and as it's likely enough will be the caſe of both, but a little before the great and general Deliverance of the Church, and Subverſion of her Enemies.

The Effects of pouring out the Seventh Vial, which will be the laſt Plague of the ſeven, will probably produce the total and final Ruine of the Kingdom of the Beaſt, and thereby work out the great Deliverance of the Church. And yet juſt before this, in the times of the ſixth Vial, the Kings of the Earth and of the whole World will be gathered togethered in *Armageddon* againſt the Church: Which probably will make ſo great a viſible Strength as by reaſon of which the declining Eſtate of the Kingdom of the Beaſt produced by the pouring out of the former Vials, will ſeem to be repair'd, and the Enemies fluſh'd with Confidence of Victory, and thoſe of the Church reduced to great ſtraits in outward Appearance. For if that Prophecy in *Dan.* xii. 1. refer to the ſame time, as it ſeems to do by the Congruity of Events, to wit, the Greatneſs of the Trouble immediately preceding the greateſt Deliverance of the Church; then the Power and Strength of the Enemy juſt before that Deliverance will be ſo great and conſiderable, as to cauſe ſuch *trouble as never was ſince there was a Nation upon Earth*, as is there ſet forth. *At that time ſhall Michael ſtand up, the great Prince which ſtandeth for the Children of thy People; and there ſhall be a time of Trouble, ſuch as never was ſince there was a Nation, even to that ſame time: And at that time thy People ſhall be delivered.*

There are other Scriptures which ſeem to intimate, that the Downfal of the Churches Enemies and of her Deliverance ſhall come ſuddenly and unexpectedly, and unforeſeen to come at that time when they ſhall come; and perhaps when leaſt feared by the Enemy, or looked for by many of the Church.

Our Bleſſed Saviour, in his Application of the Parable of the unjuſt Judge, and importunate Widow, ſaith thus: *And ſhall not God avenge his own Elect, which cry Day and Night unto him, though he bear long with them? I tell you that he will avenge them ſpeedily. Nevertheleſs, when the Son of Man comes, ſhall he find Faith on the Earth?* Luke xviii. 7, 8. The Scope of the Parable is as we are told at *ver.* 1. to encourage Men *to pray always, and not to faint.* That is, that they ſhould not be diſcouraged ſo as to break off or give over praying upon occaſion of God's delaying to anſwer them in that they pray for. The thing in ſpecial here intended, as it ſeems by the Application of the Parable, is to perſuade the Church and People of God, not to be diſcouraged from holding on to pray for their Deliverance from Oppreſſion and Perſecution of their Enemies, though God bear never ſo long with them in it before he comes to deliver them out of their hands, and though Deliverance to outward Appearance, ſeem never ſo far off. And for their Encouragement herein, our Saviour tells them, that though God bear *long* with them, yet he will avenge them *ſpeedily.* Now though to do a thing ſpeedily, ordinarily ſignifies to do it without any long delay; yet here, for God to avenge his People ſpeedily, when withal he bears long with their Enemies in ſuffering his People to be oppreſſed by them, ſeems to ſignifie another thing than to deliver them without delay. And God may be ſaid to avenge, or to deliver his People *ſpeedily* after he hath ſuffered them long to be oppreſſed, when their Deliverance at laſt ſhall come all on a ſudden, and when they ſhall be under ſuch Circumſtances, as little to expect it at that time when yet it ſhall come. And this ſenſe and meaning ſeems to be intimated in thoſe next words of our Saviour when he ſays, *Nevertheleſs when the Son of Man cometh, ſhall he find Faith on the Earth?* The meaning of which words, as they refer to the former ſeems to be this; That the State and Condition of the Church will be ſo low at that time when Chriſt ſhall come to deliver it, as that there will be ſcarce any Faith among his People to believe that Deliverance ſhall be wrought for then at that time, when indeed the Son of Man will come and bring it to them.

Almighty God in Scripture is ſaid to have *come down*, when he has done ſuch things for his Church and againſt their Enemies as they looked not for, ſuch as they had no viſible ground ſo much as to hope for or expect, eſpecially at that time when yet they were ſuddenly brought to paſs. *When thou didſt terrible things which we looked not for, thou cameſt down*, ſaith the Prophet, *Iſa.* lxiv. 3. And it ſeems ſo it will be when Chriſt ſhall *come* down to avenge his People: He will do ſuch things for them and ſo ſpeedily, as but few of them, will have Faith to believe, they will be ſo ſurpriſing. That will be an avenging his People *ſpeedily*, when he does great and marvellous things for them ſuddenly, and in a little time when once he begins, though in the mean time he bears long with their Enemies before he goes about it roundly.

In *Rev.* xviii. we have a deſcription of the deſtruction of myſtical *Babylon*, with whom God had born long in their oppreſſing his faithful People; and this will be one notable Act of God's avenging his Church of her Enemies. For it's ſaid at the 20th Verſe, *Rejoyce over her thou Heaven, and ye holy Apoſtles and Prophets, for God hath avenged you on her.* And it will be his avenging his People on her *ſpeedily* too, as that ſignifies *ſuddenly* and in a little time, tho' we ſee he bears long with her before he goes about it. For at the 8th Verſe it's ſaid, *That her Plagues ſhall come in one day.* And at Ver. 10. *Alas, alas, that great City Babylon, that mighty City! for in one hour is thy Judgment come.* And at Ver. 17. *For in one hour ſo great Riches is come to naught.* And Ver. 19. *For in one hour is ſhe made deſolate.*

In *Zach.* xiv. 5, 6, 7. it's ſaid, *The Lord thy God ſhall come; and all the Saints with thee. And it ſhall come to paſs in that day, that the Light ſhall not be clear nor dark; but it ſhall be one day which ſhall be known unto the Lord, not day nor night: But it ſhall come to paſs that at evening-time it ſhall be light.* It is an obſcure Prophecy of the uncertain and uneven Condition of the Church for ſome time; and that time foreknown unto the Lord, but little foreſeen by Men. And indeed one would think by the ſuitableneſs of Events to this Prophecy hitherto, that it pointed at the State and Condition of the Church after the firſt Reformation from Popery, unto the time of the downfal of Popery it ſelf; and that in reſpect both of her Political and Moral State and Condition. In which time the Church has been in a kind of mix'd Condition of Fear and Hope, Safety and Danger, Peace and Trouble: In an uncertain and uneven poſture, ſometimes better and ſometimes worſe; her Power and Intereſt in the World ſometimes increaſing, and ſometimes declining; ſo that it has been neither clear nor dark with her, neither perfect Day nor perfect Night.

And it may poſſibly ſo be, that before the time of the Church's more perfect Deliverance comes, her Power and Intereſt in the World may be ſo far declined, and ſunk ſo low, as to bring upon her a fear that a dark Night of Calamity is at hand. And yet then God may all on a ſudden, by ſome means or other, ſo alter the face of Affairs in the World, in reference to his Church, that at Evening-time it ſhall be light: So that in the ſame time in which thoſe of the Church feared and expected to be quite overwhelmed with a ſad and gloomy Night of Adverſity, a clear Day of Deliverance and Salvation to the Church may break forth and appear.

And in a *moral* reſpect, the Day of the Church's Reformation has been neither clear nor dark, but between both, and of a mixture of both; partly becauſe ſome Nations remained ſtill unreformed, when others became reformed; and partly by reaſon of the imperfection of it in ſome of the Churches, and in ſome reſpect perhaps in all of them. The hot and unchriſtian Conteſts and Diviſions about ſome Doctrines of leſſer moment, but eſpecially about Church-Government and Diſcipline, with the great neglect of Diſcipline it ſelf: And moſt of all the unſuitableneſs of Men's Lives to the Reformed Religion which they profeſs, has greatly obſcured the Glory of the Reformation it ſelf, and made the Day of it to be neither clear nor dark, neither perfect Day nor perfect Night. And indeed the great Degenerateneſs of the Reformed Churches from the Power of Chriſtianity, gives too much cauſe to fear leſt Almighty God ſhould chaſtiſe that Decay, by letting the Reformed Churches fall once more under the power of that which is unreformed.

And if Almighty God ſhould, in his Providence, let things run on towards ſuch a thing, until the Reformed Churches ſhould be brought to ſuch a *Criſis* as to be almoſt paſt hope of eſcaping ſuch a Bondage, and yet ſhould at ſuch an *Evening-time* as this may be, cauſe it to be Light, both by delivering the Churches by ſome unexpected method of Providence from ſo imminent a Danger; and by the ſame to awaken them to a more thorow Reformation of Life and Manners, it would be a great and wonderful Mercy indeed, and not altogether impoſſible; though we have little reaſon to expect it, unleſs we do repent and amend.

For it is not unuſual with the Almighty, before he works ſome great and notable Deliverance for his People, to ſuffer them to be brought very low by their Enemies, to be reduced to great ſtraits, and to be deprived of all viſible help: That thereby they may be brought to a ſenſe of their Sins, of the ill requital they have made for all the Goodneſs and Kindneſs which God has ſhew'd them, and of their Barrenneſs and Unprofitableneſs under all the excellent means he has afforded them, of becoming better than all other People, and of their childiſh ſquabbling and falling out about little things, and thereby to bring them to Humiliation and Repentance for all their Miſcarriages. And when he has done ſo, then to do ſome great and extraordinary thing for their Deliverance. When they are brought to Repentance by being brought into ſuch ſtraits, then God will repent likewiſe, ſo as not to continue or prolong their Miſery, but will then make haſte to their relief, and avenge them *ſpeedily*. *For the Lord ſhall judge his People, and repent him for his Servants, when he ſeeth that their ſtrength is gone, and there is none ſhut up or left*, Deut. xxxii. 36. When the Children of *Iſrael*, under the Power and Oppreſſion of their Enemies, *ſaid unto the Lord, We have ſinned, do thou unto us whatever ſeemeth good unto thee, only deliver us we pray thee this day*; and when *they put away their ſtrange gods from among them, and ſerved the Lord*, then it's ſaid, *his Soul was grieved for the miſery of Iſrael*, Judg. x. 15, 16. Beſides this, God ſometimes ſuffers his People to be brought to greater ſtraits juſt before he intends to deliver them, than ever before, eſpecially when he intends to do ſome extraordinary thing for their Deliverance; to the end that by delivering them at ſuch a time, and in a way and manner extraordinary, the World round about might thereby know, that he is God indeed, and that he can and will do greater things for them that worſhip him, than any of the Idol-gods can do for thoſe that worſhip them. And thus he brought *Iſrael* out of *Egypt* with a high Hand and ſtretch'd-out Arm, and with great Terror, at that very time when their Bondage was made more grievous by their Oppreſſors than ever it was before. And this he did for this very end, *that his Name might be declared throughout all the Earrh.* And when in the latter days *Gog* ſhall come up againſt God's *Iſrael* with ſuch huge Armies and numerous Bands, as ſhall (as a Cloud) cover the Land, whoſe very Weapons and Inſtruments of War ſhall afterwards furniſh *Iſrael* for Fire-wood ſeven Years: Then, as God declares, he will plead againſt him, not in an ordinary way, but by raining upon him, and upon his Bands, and upon the many People that are with him, an overflowing Rain, and great Hail-ſtones, Fire and Brimſtone: *And thus ſaith God, will I magnifie my ſelf, and will be known in the eyes of many Nations, and they ſhall know that I am the Lord*, Ezek. xxxviii. 22, 23.

There are certain Caſes and Circumſtances under which, and Reaſons for which Almighty God ſometimes does not think it fit to delay the Deliverance of his People any longer from under the Power and Oppreſſion of their Enemies, altho' they are not ſo prepared and made fit for it by their Suffering, as might well have been expected they ſhould. As,

1. When the times of the Enemies of God's Church are fulfilled, and the ſet-time of their domineering run out, and come to a *period*, we cannot then ſay that the Unworthineſs that is among thoſe which be of the Reformed Churches will cauſe Almighty God to *defer* the Deliverance of the one, or the Deſtruction of the other, to any longer time. We ſee it did not cauſe him to defer the Deliverance of his People *Iſrael* out of the *Egyptian* Bondage, when once the four hundred and thirty Years, whereof God had ſpoken to *Abraham* concerning his Peoples being in Bondage, were run out: No, but he brought them out thence the ſelf-ſame day in which thoſe four hundred thirty Years came to a period, their Unworthineſs and Unpreparedneſs notwithſtanding, *Exod.* xii. 41. *And it came to paſs at the end of the four hundred and thirty years, even the ſelf-ſame day, it came to paſs, that all the Hoſts of the Lord went out from the Land of Egypt.* And yet there was then Sin and Provocation more than enough among them, to have cauſed God to have prolonged their Bondage there, as we may ſee by what God has ſaid by his Prophet, *Ezek.* xx. 6, 7, 8. *In that day that I lifted up my hand unto them to bring them forth of the Land of Egypt——Then ſaid I unto them, Caſt ye away every Man the abomination of his Eyes, and defile not your ſelves with the Idols of Egypt, I am the Lord God. But they rebelled againſt me, and would not hearken to me: they did not caſt away every Man the abomination of their Eyes, neither did they forſake the Idols of Egypt.*

It's true indeed, God did not, after he had delivered them out of *Egypt*, bring them ſo ſoon into the Land of *Canaan*, as he might have done, but cauſed them to wander in the Wilderneſs forty Years. But this was for a new Guilt contracted by their Miſcarriages in the Wilderneſs after their Deliverance out of *Egypt*. This gives ſome hope that when the Beaſt's forty two Months are come to an end, that God will not defer the Deliverance of his Church any longer from that Enemy, becauſe of their Unworthineſs.

2. Almighty God ſometimes brings down the Enemies of his Church, to the great benefit and advantage of his People, upon account of the greatneſs and long-continued Wickedneſs of thoſe Enemies, tho' his People for the generality of them are unworthy of that Deliverance which accrues to them thereby. Thus God deſtroyed the Kings of *Canaan* and their People, and gave their Countries to his People *Iſrael* upon this account, *Deut.* ix. 5. *Not for thy Righteouſneſs or Uprightneſs of thy Heart doſt thou go to poſſeſs their*

Land; *but for the Wickedneſs of theſe Nations the Lord thy God doth drive them out from before thee*; the reaſon which God gives why he will plead with the Nations in the Valley of *Jehoſaphat* for his Heritage *Iſraël*, and command the *Sickle* at that time to be put in to cut them down, is becauſe the *Harveſt* will be then *ripe*, *their Wickedneſs great*, or come to its full growth, *Joel* iii. 2, 13.

And this is like to be the caſe of thoſe who ſhall be found to be of the Kingdom of the Beaſt when the time of his Reign ſhall come to its end, whatever the condition of the reformed Churches may then be touching their Preparation for ſuch a Deliverance as they ſhall thereupon receive. Almighty God has not only born very long with thoſe of that Kingdom, but has alſo afforded them ſufficient and abundant means of Conviction, by which they might have ſeen and been ſenſible of the evil of their way, and the danger of their condition. Such has been the propheſying of the Witneſſes all along in Oppoſition to the Beaſt, and the way of that Party. Such were thoſe Judgments and grievous Calamities ſent upon them by God under the two former of the three Wo-Trumpets. And it is remarked, that yet *they repented not* for all this, *of their worſhipping of Idols, nor of their Murders, Sorceries, Fornications and Thefts*, Rev. ix. 21. And ſuch means of Conviction in ſpecial has been the Reformation from Popery, in which ſeveral Nations fell off from the *Apocalyptick* Beaſt, and have ſince juſtified the neceſſity of their doing ſo, and of the neceſſity of the reſt to do the like, by unanſwerable arguing.

And then under the ſeventh Trumpet, which is the laſt of the three Wo-Trumpets, follows the pouring out of the ſeven Vials, which are called the ſeven laſt Plagues: Theſe are poured out ſucceſſively upon the Kingdom of the Beaſt to awaken them as a farther Call to Repentance. Notwithſtanding all which, it ſeems they will ſtill remain obſtinate in their way. For after the pouring out of the fourth Vial it is notified, that they repented not for all that, *Rev.* xvi. 9. and ſo it is again after the pouring out of the fifth, *ver.* 11. And in the 14th *Rev.* at *ver.* the 6th and ſo on, in general Terms the means which ſhould be uſed for the reclaiming thoſe of the Kingdom of the Beaſt, repreſented by an Angel flying through the midſt of Heaven having the everlaſting Goſpel, calling upon all Men to fear that God that made Heaven and Earth, and to worſhip him, becauſe the Hour of his Judgment is come. And another declaring the Fall of *Babylon*, for making all Nations to drink of her Cup. And a third denouncing the Torment of Fire and Brimſtone againſt all ſuch as ſhall worſhip the Beaſt, or receive his Mark.

But when none of theſe means will prevail with them, neither thoſe under the Trumpets, nor thoſe under the Vials for their Reformation; tho' God in the uſe of theſe means, hath with Patience and in vain expected it, and waited for it for the ſpace of one thouſand two hundred and ſixty Years: Then mark what follows at the 14th and 15th *ver.* of this *Chap.* St. *John* ſees one like the Son of Man upon a white Cloud with a ſharp Sickle in his hand: And another Angel crying to him with a loud Voice to thruſt in his Sickle and to reap, for this reaſon; becauſe *the time was come to reap, and the Harveſt of the Earth was ripe*. Then in *ver.* 17, 18, 19. St. *John* declares another Viſion which he ſaw, to wit, of a Vintage which follows that of the Harveſt. For he ſaw an Angel coming out of the Temple with a ſharp Sickle, to whom another Angel cried with a loud Voice, ſaying, *thruſt in thy Sickle and gather the Cluſters of the Vine of the Earth*; *for her Grapes are fully ripe*. Which being done accordingly, *the Vine of the Earth was caſt into the Wine-preſs of the Wrath of God, and Blood came out of the Wine-preſs even to the Horſe-bridles*. The Treader of the Wine-preſs is the Rider on the white Horſe, (*Rev.* xix. 15.) at that time when the Beaſt and the Kings of the Earth, and their Armies, ſhall be gathered together againſt him (*ver.* 19.)

Conſidering then that as in the former *Chap.* the Reign of the Beaſt is deſcribed, ſo in the former part of this the means which Almighty God us'd to recover ſome, and to prevent others from ſubmitting to, and complying with the Beaſt in his Exorbitancies, is likewiſe deſcribed: It ſeems moſt congruous to underſtand by this *Harveſt*, as well as by the *Vintage*, the Deſtruction of thoſe to be prefigured, who after all ſhall ſtill remain incorrigible, and thereby become fully *ripe* for Judgment. And then by the *Harveſt* which in order of Nature goes before the *Vintage*, to underſtand as ſome Expoſitors do, the Deſtruction of the great City *Babylon*, deſcribed *Chap.* xviii. and by the Vintage the following Deſtruction of the Beaſt and Kings of the Earth with their Armies, by the Rider on the white Horſe, deſcribed *Chap.* xix. The Harveſt as well as the Vintage thus underſtood, the *Antitype* will then commodiouſly anſwer to the *Type*: For the Deſtruction of old *Babylon* was threatned under the Notion of a Harveſt to come, *Jer.* li. 33. *Yet a little while and the time of her Harveſt ſhall come*. And the

Deſtruction of the Churches Enemies when ripe in ſin, is foretold under this Prophetical Scheme of a Harveſt and a Vintage joyntly in the forementioned words of *Joel*, *Ch.* iii. 13. (to which that in St. *John* ſeems to allude) *put in the Sickle, for the Harveſt is ripe; come, get you down, for the Preſs is full, the Fats overflow, for their Wickedneſs is great.*

Theſe Viſions of St. *John* thus underſtood, the Matter will come up cloſe to our point in hand, *viz*, to ſhew that Almighty God will not, as it's probable, defer the bringing down the Enemies of his Church that had been wont to oppreſs them, when once their ſin is come to its Height and full Growth, whatever Condition the Church ſhall then be in as to her Worthineſs or Fitneſs to receive ſuch a Favour. For the Ripeneſs of the Harveſt of the Earth, and the Grapes of the Vine of the Earth their being fully ripe, is we ſee the reaſon why the Sickle is called for, and why the time to reap the one, and to gather the Cluſters of the other, is ſaid to be come: The Enemies Ripeneſs in Sin is that which will make them ripe for ruine, and when they are ſo, the Sickle will be called for.

3. Almighty God ſometimes thinks fit to deliver his People from the Oppreſſion of their Enemies, out of reſpect to his own Honour, and for the Reputation of his own way of Worſhip, when otherwiſe his People for the Generality of them, are much unworthy of ſuch a Deliverance. Thus when God by his Prophet had declared his Reſolution to deliver his People the *Jews* from among the Heathen, whither he had ſent them for their Iniquities, he adds theſe words; *Thus ſaith the Lord God, I do not this for your ſakes, O Houſe of Iſrael, but for my holy Name ſake, which ye have profaned among the Heathen whither ye went*, Ezek. xxxvi. 22. And again, *ver.* 32. *Not for your ſakes do I this, ſaith the Lord, be it known to you: Be aſhamed and confounded for your own ways, O Houſe of Iſrael.* They had ſo miſbehaved themſelves among the Heathen, as that they cauſed the Religion which they profeſſed, to be evil ſpoken of, and that God who was the Author of it to be diſregarded for their ſakes. The Heathen tauntingly ſaid, *Theſe are the People of the Lord, and are gone forth out of his Land*, *ver.* 20. Their being continued ſo long under the Power of the Heathen, made the Heathen the more bold to think that the God of *Iſrael* neither would nor could deliver them out of their hands, and that he was no greater nor better than the Gods they worſhipped and ſerved. The Scripture intimates that it was the manner of the Heathen when God's People were under their Power, to inſult and to ſay one to another, *Where is their God? Joel* ii. 17. and to the People of God themſelves, *Where is your God?* Micah xvii. 10. By which Sayings they reproached God himſelf, *Pſal.* lxxix. 10, 12. The Heathen in doing thus, did but what God foreſaw they would do, which made him bear with his People long before he would ſend them among the Heathen, though they had long before provoked him to ſend them ſooner. *I ſaid*, ſaith God, *that I would ſcatter them into Corners, I would make the remembrance of them to ceaſe from among Men, were it not that I feared the Wrath of the Enemy, leſt their Adverſaries ſhould behave themſelves ſtrangely, and leſt they ſhould ſay, our hand and not the Lord hath done all this*, Deut. xxxii. 26, 27.

Now to undeceive them, and to let them know that it was not becauſe he could not have ſaved his People out of their hands, had they not provoked him by declining to their Wickedneſs to ſend them among them; and likewiſe to vindicate himſelf and the Religion he had taught his People from the Reproach of the Heathen; he reſolves to bring his People out from among them, and from under their Power, and to ſettle them again in their own Land, and in their way of worſhipping him. *I will ſanctifie my great Name*, ſaith God, *which was profaned among the Heathen, which ye have profaned in the midſt of them; and the Heathen ſhall know that I am the Lord*, ver. 23. of that 36th *Chap.* of *Ezek.* But by what means would God make them to know this? He tells that in the next words, *ver.* 24. *I will take you from among the Heathen, and gather you out of all Countries, and will bring you into your own Land.* By reſcuing his People out of their hands whether they would or no; and in ſuch a way as none of their Gods could do the like (*no other God that can deliver after that ſort*, as *Nebuchadnezzar* was forced to confeſs upon ſuch an account, *Dan.* iii. 29.) he would make his Enemies to have other Thoughts of him, and to know he is a God above all Gods, and therefore to be feared above all.

So that we ſee when the Churches Enemies think the better of themſelves, and of their own ways of Idol-worſhip and Superſtition; and come to reproach God himſelf by reproaching that Religion and that way of Worſhip of which he is the Author, for this reaſon and upon this account, becauſe he ſuffers them ſo long as ſometimes he does, to domineer over his People, and to uſe them at their pleaſure; when things I ſay come to this iſſue, then that becomes another reaſon why Almighty God then thinks fit no longer to delay the Deliverance of his People who worſhip him, and him only, out of the hands and from under the power of their Enemies; but it is ſtill for his own ſake, and for the Honour of his Worſhip, that he ſets them above the reach of their Power and Malice; though when they for their parts are too unworthy of ſuch a Favour.

And now let it be conſidered, whether thoſe of the Kingdom of the Beaſt, have not thought the better of themſelves and of their idolatrous and ſuperſtitious ways of Worſhip, and been imboldened to reproach its contrary, to the Diſhonour of that God who hath commanded, ſaying, *Thou ſhalt worſhip the Lord thy God, and him only ſhalt thou ſerve*; and all becauſe he has ſuffered them ſo long as he has done, to hold his People in Bondage that oppoſed them in their corrupt way of Worſhip; and for a long time to carry all before them as it were, and to flouriſh and proſper in the World. For what elſe does their boaſting of the extent of their Domination, Univerſality, and outward Glory and Proſperity ſignifie? When theſe are made Signs and Marks of their being the True Church? And if ſo, then it would be conſidered whether this be not another ground why it may be hoped that Unworthineſs in the reformed Churches, ſhall not hinder their Deliverance, from what they ſuffer from thoſe Adverſaries when once the time permitted for the Beaſt to reign, ſhall come to an end.

And till it does come to an end, there is no great cauſe for any to think the better of themſelves, or of their way in Religion and Worſhip, meerly becauſe thoſe of their party and way bear the greateſt ſway in the World, of all who call themſelves Chriſtians. For thoſe who in general have done ſo in the time of the Reign of the Beaſt, are the more likely thereby to be of the Kingdom of the Beaſt: Becauſe it was foretold that in his time and Reign, *all the World ſhould wonder after the Beaſt*, and cry out and ſay, *who is like unto the Beaſt? Who is able to make war with him?* Rev. xiii. 3, 4. And alſo becauſe *the Woman was to abide in the Wilderneſs for a time, times, and half a time*, which repreſented the more obſcure condition in which the True Church would be, in the time of the Reign of the Beaſt, *Rev.* xii. And likewiſe becauſe *the outward Court of the Temple* which was much larger than the inner Temple, was to *be given to the Gentiles*, (or thoſe who ſhould Gentilize in the way of their Worſhip) *and that they ſhould tread the holy City under foot, forty and two Months*; which is the time of the Reign of the Beaſt, and the Witneſſes to propheſie in Sack-cloth in the ſame time, *Rev.* xi. 2, 3.

CHAP. XIII.

Of Prayer to God to haſten thoſe good times we hope for; and for the Converſion of the Jews in particular.

IT is well becoming all good Chriſtians to apply themſelves to God by Prayer, for the Accompliſhment of his declared purpoſes of good to the World in the latter Ages of it. God's Declarations of his Intentions of good to Men, by Promiſes and Prophecies; as they miniſter Matter to our Faith and Hope; ſo they ſerve to draw out our Deſires after them, and to invite our Application and Addreſſes to God, for the Performance of them. For that which Almighty God would have us deſire and long for, that he would have us ſeek unto him for.

And thus he would have us do in reference to the haſtening of thoſe good times, of which we have been ſpeaking, *Eſa.* lxii. 6, 7. after God by his Prophet had in former Chapters, and in this, declared at large what great and wonderful things he was reſolved to do for his Church and People in the latter Days: He tells them in theſe Verſes what he expected from them that make mention of him, or which are his *Remembrancers*, (for ſo they are called in the Margin) *ye that make mention of the Lord, ye that are his Remembrancers, keep not ſilence, give him no reſt, till he eſtabliſh, and till he make Jeruſalem a Praiſe in the Earth. Jeruſalem* in Scripture, is frequently put for the Church of God ſtiled in the New Teſtament, the *New Jeruſalem*, the *Heavenly Jeruſalem*, eſpecially in reference to its future glorious State in the latter Ages of the World; and ſo here. And he had declared that he would do ſuch things for his Church, as ſhould make them renowned throughout the World. Now we ſee here that he would have thoſe that make mention of him, to be his Remembrancers in this matter, and not to keep ſilence, nor give him any reſt until he hath done thoſe great things for his Church, which will make her the Glory of the World, and the Subject of Mens Praiſe throughout the Earth. Theſe words, *Keep not ſilence*, *give him no reſt*, ſhew that Almighty God would have his People ſeek him in this matter, both inceſſantly and importunately, and never to give over until he has brought thoſe great things to paſs. This is one great buſineſs required of them eſpecially who are meant by the *Watchmen* which God has ſet upon the Walls of his *Jeruſalem: I have ſet Watchmen upon thy Walls, O Jeruſalem, which ſhall never hold their peace day nor night*, ver. 6. Theſe are that to the Church, which Watchmen are to a City, to obſerve and diſcover all Motions of Providence relating to the Church, as Watchmen do the Actions and Motions of Men relating to the hurt or ſafety of a City. Theſe are they who more eſpecially apply themſelves to God continually in behalf of the Church, as Providence directs; as Watchmen do to the Governour of a City for the ſecurity and proſperity of that. Theſe are the Lord's Remembrancers, that in a Petitionary way put him in mind of his Promiſes to his Church, ſtill ſeeking from him continually that which tends to the greateſt Security and Felicity of it. And tho' Prophets heretofore were, and Spiritual Paſtors now are ſuch Watchmen more properly; yet I dare ſay the more good any other Men are, the more they will be concerned for the good of the Church in general, and the more apply themſelves to God for it. *If I forget thee, O Jeruſalem, let my right hand forget her cunning: If I do not remember thee, let my Tongue cleave to the roof of my Mouth; if I prefer not Jeruſalem above my chief joy*, Pſal. cxxxvii. *Pray for the Peace of Jeruſalem: they ſhall proſper that love thee*, Pſal. cxxii.

But to proceed; when God by his Prophet *Ezekiel* had told his People how abundantly he would at laſt bleſs them, both with Spiritual Bleſſings, in cleanſing them from their Filthineſs, and giving them a new Heart, and putting his Spirit in them; and with Temporal Bleſſings, in reſtoring them to their own Land, and making it like the Garden of *Eden*, after it had been ſo long deſolate before: I ſay, after all this, he adds at *Chap.* xxxvi. 37. ſaying, *I will yet for all this be enquired of by the Houſe of Iſrael to do it for them.* Which ſhews that God, by declaring his gracious Purpoſes towards his Church by Promiſes, never intended thereby to prevent their application to him for the ſame things, but the better to direct and encourage them therein, and to oblige them to it thereby.

Our Bleſſed Saviour has taught us to pray to God, ſaying, *Hallowed be thy Name.* By which he directs us what to deſire, namely, that God's Name may be hallowed throughout the World; and how we may obtain this deſire, *viz.* by praying him to cauſe it to be ſo, who has Dominion and Power to do it, as we aſcribe to him in the concluſion of that Prayer. Now this Petition reaches as far as the bleſſed *Millennium*, (tho' it does not begin there) in which time the Name of our God will be ſo hallowed throughout the World, as it never was before. And therefore in order to this, he would have us pray for the coming of his Kingdom alſo. For his Name will be hallowed by Men no farther than his Government is acknowledged and received. And therefore, as I ſay, we are to pray that *his Kingdom may come*, to wit, that his Government adminiſtred by the Evangelical Laws may be made to increaſe and ſpread it ſelf more and more among Men, until it be received and ſubmitted to by all Nations; and that the time may haſten and come, wherein all Dominions ſhall ſerve and obey him, as is foretold by Prophets that it ſhall. And by the coming of this Kingdom, the *Name* of God will be more generally *hallowed*, and his *Will* more generally *done* by Men on Earth, as it is univerſally done in Heaven by all the Inhabitants thereof, both Angels and Men, as we are taught to pray it may, in the following Petition.

Now as by our Saviour's teaching us to pray this Prayer daily and continually, and by the other Scriptures forementioned, we ſee what Ground we have, nay what Obligation we are under, to apply our ſelves to God for the haſtening on thoſe good times yet to come, which we are taught to expect and long for, by his giving his Church notice of them ſo long before-hand; ſo the *near approach* of them now is a great Motive and Encouragement to us to ply the Throne of Grace, ſo much the more for the bringing theſe great things to paſs, wherein the Glory of God and the Good of the World is ſo much concerned. This was St. *Paul*'s Motive in another caſe; *For now is our Salvation nearer than when we believed*, Rom. xiii. 11.

When the Prophet *Daniel* underſtood by Books the time of the Deliverance of God's People, the *Jews*, out of their Babyloniſh Captivity, drew on, he ſet himſelf to ſeek God by Prayer and Supplication with Faſting, not to *defer* their Deliverance beyond the time he had mentioned by *Jeremy*, for their continuance in that Captivity, *Chap.* ix. 19. *O Lord, hear; O Lord, forgive; O Lord, hearken and do; defer not for thine own ſake,* *O my God.* It ſeems *Daniel* was afraid leſt God ſhould *defer* the Deliverance of his People beyond the expected time of it, upon account of their undue Behaviour under the Rod, and while they were in Captivity. For he ſaith, *All this evil is come upon us, yet made we not our Prayer before the Lord our God, that we might turn from our Iniquities, and underſtand the Truth,* ver. 13. They were not made teachable and tractable, he thought, by all they had ſuffer'd, which yet was the end God aimed at in bringing them thus low. And this it ſeems made him doubtful, whether God might not think fit to retard their Deliverance, and prolong their Suffering, and not to take off the Plaiſter until the Sore was healed by it. It ſeems *Daniel* thought this People ſo ſtupid under their Sufferings and Bondage, as never to ſeek to God to help them to underſtand the cauſe of it, and the way to get out of it. Otherwiſe they did Pray to God, and added Faſting to it too, in a formal way, and for the removal of the Burthen under which they groan'd: But not that they might by their Suffering be brought to underſtand their own Duty better, and to humble themſelves truly for thoſe things by which they had provoked God to bring them into this Condition. This Almighty God himſelf upbraided them with, ſaying, *When ye faſted and mourned in the fifth and ſeventh Month, even thoſe ſeventy Years, did ye at all faſt unto me, even unto me?* Zach. vii. 4. And therefore *Daniel,* as we ſee, made a large Confeſſion before God, as of the Sins for which they were ſent into Captivity, ſo alſo of their Impenitence and Unprofitableneſs under it; and withal prays very earneſtly unto God, that he would for his own Name's ſake not *defer* their Deliverance, their Unworthineſs notwithſtanding.

I could heartily wiſh, that for the great unſuitableneſs of Life in the Reformed Churches, to that excellent Religion which they profeſs, there were not too much cauſe to fear leſt God ſhould adjourn and put off thoſe happy times farther from us than we expect, and have otherwiſe ground to expect to be at no very great diſtance from us. And that he may not, we and all good Chriſtians ſhall do well to follow this Example of holy *Daniel* now mentioned, and to intercede with God in behalf of the Reformed Churches, that he would be pleaſed to forgive their Barrenneſs and former Miſcarriages, and to rouze them up, and awaken in them a more excellent Spirit and Temper: And in doing ſo, we may hope for like ſucceſs which *Daniel* found. For tho' there was ſuch Unworthineſs in that People, as *Daniel* confeſſed there was, yet God did not for that cauſe prolong their Captivity, nor defer their Deliverance out of it, when once the ſeventy Years, of which God had ſpoken, were expired.

Although the Reformed Churches in the groſs are, as may juſtly be feared, too much unworthy indeed of thoſe good times we hope for; yet it may well be hoped, that there is ſuch a competent number of good Men among them, as have a great intereſt in God's Favour: And ſo it may be hoped likewiſe, that Almighty God will not deprive theſe of the Bleſſing and Benefit of thoſe better Days, for the ſake of the more unworthy, among whom they are, when once the time for them is otherwiſe come. But it may be much rather hoped, that the worſe and more unworthy in the Churches, will in this reſpect fare the better for the ſake of thoſe who are worthy and well prepared, when linked with them in Society. And ſo, as we may well think, it has been formerly in the Deliverance of *Iſrael* out of *Egypt,* and of the two Tribes out of the Babyloniſh Captivity.

And this we may the rather hope for, when we conſider how Almighty God has at times declared his readineſs to ſhew favour to very many unworthy and wicked Men, for the ſake of a few good indeed. As when he would have ſpared the City of *Sodom* for the ſake of ten righteous Perſons, if they could have been found in it. And ſo for *Jeruſalem: Run to and fro through the ſtreets of Jeruſalem, and ſee now and know, and ſeek in the broad places thereof, if ye can find a Man, if there be any that executeth Judgment, that ſeeketh the Truth, and I will pardon it,* Jer. v. 1. And ſo again, *I ſought for a Man among them that ſhould make up the hedge, and ſtand in the gap before me, for the Land, that I ſhould not deſtroy it,* Ezek. xxii. 30.

II. Now as touching the Converſion and Reſtoration of the *Jews,* there are weighty Reaſons why we ſhould greatly deſire it, and conſequently why we ſhould heartily pray for it. For that will uſher in a greater Happineſs to the World in general, than ever it yet ſaw, or is ever like to ſee, till that be done, as may be diſcerned by our former Diſcourſes. *If the fall of them be the riches of the World, and the diminiſhing of them the riches of the Gentiles, how much more their fulneſs?* ſaith St. *Paul, Rom.* xi. 12. The former, to wit, their Fall, was an *occaſion* of inriching the World in great part, with Treaſures of Wiſdom unto Salvation: How much more then ſhall their Recovery and Reſtoration be an *Inſtrument and procuring Cauſe* of enriching it with the ſame Treaſure more diffuſively, and in all parts of the World? *If their caſting away were the reconciling of the World*; *what ſhall the receiving of them be but Life from the dead?* ver. 15. Both theſe Sayings of St. *Paul* beſpeak this, that the Converſion and Recovery of the *Jews* will bring a greater Happineſs to the World by far, than ever their Fall was an occaſion of, though that occaſioned the ſending of the Goſpel to the *Gentiles* in moſt known Parts of the World. And if we were affected with the Fall, and Unbelief of the *Jews*, as St. *Paul* was, and with the Foreſight of the Benefit the World as well as themſelves will receive by their Recovery; we ſhould as affectionately pray for them as he did, who tells us, *That his hearts deſire and prayer to God for Iſrael, was, that they might be ſaved*, Rom. x. 1. He profeſſed with great Seriouſneſs, that *he had great heavineſs, and continual ſorrow in his heart for them*, Rom ix. 1, 2. And if like Compaſſion and Charity towards them lodged in our hearts as did in his, we ſhould pray for them as well as he did.

That People pray'd for us *Gentiles* when we lay in Darkneſs and in the Shadow of Death, *That God would make his way known on Earth, and his ſaving Health among all Nations*; *and that the People, yea, that all the People might praiſe him*, Pſal. lxvii. 2, 3. And ſhall not we who are under greater Motives, and more powerful means of Charity than they were, pray for them, as they did for us? God hath heretofore ſingled out that Nation from all the reſt of the World to bring them nigh unto himſelf, and hath done great things for them, and hath ſpoken of great things he will yet do for them and by them; and hath declared, that as touching the Election they are yet beloved for the Father's ſake, though for the preſent they are Enemies. And it is they of whom Chriſt the Saviour of the World came, as concerning the Fleſh. And if Almighty God hath ſhew'd ſuch reſpect to them above other Nations, and hath it ſtill in his Heart farther to ſhew them in due time: Will it not become us herein to be Followers of God, and will it not be well taken by him for us to have ſomewhat a more ſpecial reſpect for them, and to make a more particular Application to him for them, than for any other Nation of the unbelieving World beſides?

And if we are to pity their ſad condition while we hate their ſin; and to become Interceſſors to God for them to deliver them from it, and to ſave them out of it; then we Gentiles had need to take heed of inſulting over them in this their preſent low and deplorable condition, and of behaving our ſelves unkindly towards them, leſt God complain of us, as ſometimes he did of their Enemies, ſaying, *I am very ſorely diſpleaſed with the Heathen that are at eaſe: For I was but a little diſpleaſed, and they helpt forward the Affliction*, Zech. i. 15. We *Gentiles* ſhould always remember St. *Paul*'s Admonition; *boaſt not thy ſelf againſt the Branches* (againſt the unbelieving *Jews* which are broken off) *but if thou boaſt, thou beareſt not the Root, but the Root thee*, Rom. xi. 18.

Though theſe are for the preſent under ſore and ſevere Correction from God, for their Unbelief and Diſobedience, yet he will at laſt raiſe to himſelf a glorious Church out of their Poſterity, and thoſe that ſhall come out of them. And for this very reaſon we Chriſtian Gentiles who know this, ſhould forbear deſtroying them, or dealing cruelly with them. *Thus ſaith the Lord, as the new Wine is found in the Cluſter, and one ſaith, deſtroy it not, for a Bleſſing is in it: So will I do for my Servants ſake, that I may not deſtroy them all. And I will bring forth a Seed out of Jacob, and out of Judah an Inheritor of my Mountain: Mine Elect ſhall inherit it, and my Servants ſhall dwell there*, Eſa. lxv. 8, 9. And it is a terrible word which God has ſpoken concerning thoſe that ſhall cruelly inſult over this People of his, though under his Diſpleaſure. *Thus ſaith thy Lord the Lord, and thy God that pleadeth the Cauſe of his People*; *Behold I have taken out of thy hand the Cup of Trembling, even the dregs of the Cup of my Fury*; *thou ſhalt no more drink it again*, (which ſhews this is ſpoken of their laſt and greateſt Deliverance) *But I will put it into the hands of them that afflicted thee*; *which have ſaid to thy Soul, Bow down, that we may go over: And thou haſt laid thy Body as the ground, and as the ſtreet to them that went over*, Iſa. li. 22, 23. But as for thoſe on the contrary, who have laid to heart the ſad Condition of this People, and mourned for them, and prayed for them, and ſhall out-live the Day of their Sorrow, they ſhall be called to rejoyce with them, and to ſhare with them in their great Conſolation, *Eſa.* lxvi. 11, 12. *Rejoyce for Joy with her, all ye that mourn for her*; *that ye may ſuck, and be ſatisfied with the Breaſts of her Conſolation.*

A
DISCOURSE
OF THE
Nature, Series, and Order of Occurrences:
As they are Prophetically repreſented in the Eleventh Chapter of the *Revelation.*

BRITISH MUSEUM

A DISCOURSE OF The Nature, Series, and Order of Occurrences, *&c.*

FOR our better underſtanding the Nature and Order of the things Prophetically repreſented in the 11th of the *Revelation*, the firſt thing obſervable is, the Order of Time, in which the Occurrences mentioned from *ver.* 1. to *ver.* 14. of that Chapter, were ſhew'd unto St. *John* in Viſion, and there placed in their Order: And that Time is between the beginning and ending of the ſixth Trumpet.

In *Chap.* ix. *ver.* 13. the ſixth Trumpet ſounded; and a conſiderable part of the Event of that Trumpet is ſet down in the following Verſes to the end of that Chapter, which Expoſitors underſtand to be meant of the Turks conquering and poſſeſſing themſelves of the Eaſtern Part of the Roman Empire: And the Calamities cauſed thereby were a great part of the ſecond Wo, which was the Wo of that Trumpet. The Deſign of which Judgment of God upon the Empire, was to awaken the Inhabitants thereof, and eſpecially thoſe of the Weſtern Empire (upon whom that Storm had not fallen, or but very little of it) and to excite them to repent of the Work of their hands, ſuch as was their worſhipping of Devils or Demons, and Idols of Gold, Siver, Braſs, Stone and Wood, and of their Murthers, Sorceries, Fornications and Thefts, *ver.* 20. But this Judgment produced no ſuch good Effect, for they repented not, as appears, *ver.* 21.

Whereupon in *Chap.* x. 1. another mighty Angel comes down from Heaven with a little Book open in his hand: And he cried with a loud Voice as when a Lion roareth. And when he had ſo done, ſeven Thunders uttered their Voices. But St. *John* was forbidden to write what thoſe Thunders uttered. But inaſmuch as this Lion-like roaring of the Angel, and alſo theſe thundring Voices fall in here, upon the declared Impenitency of the Weſtern Empire, upon whom the former Plague, which had befallen the Eaſtern, had not much lighted; it is highly probable, that thoſe thundring Voices contained Matter of dreadful Import againſt the Weſtern Empire eſpecially. And it ſeems likely by what next follows, that the reaſon why thoſe terrible things uttered by the thundring Voices, were at that time ſealed up, might be, becauſe the Execution of them was not to fall out under this ſixth Trumpet, but under the ſeventh; and therefore not ſo proper to be declared under the ſixth Trumpet, otherwiſe than by Hints and Intimations in general. And indeed *Biblia Regia*, *Andreas*, and others, render the Angels words from the Original thus: *Seal up thoſe things which the ſeven Thunders have uttered, and thou ſhalt write them hereafter*, (not, *and write them not*) as the Author of the Notes, framed out of the Expoſitions of Dr. *H. More*, has obſerved upon the place. Some lighter Plagues were to befal this Empire, under this ſixth Trumpet, in order ſtill to their Amendment, if poſſible; but thoſe failing of that end, the greater ſtroke which will make an end of that Power by which the Church had ſo long ſuffered, is reſerved to the times of the ſeventh Trumpet. And therefore under that Trumpet it is more particularly and expreſly declared to St. *John* by Viſion, *That the time of God's Wrath will then be come, in which he will deſtroy them which had deſtroy'd the Earth:* Which Viſional Prophecy is accompanied with Voices and Thunders as here, and with Lightning and Earthquake and great Hail, *Chap.* xi. 18, 19.

And that the things here uttered by the Thunders and the Execution of thoſe things did appertain to the time of the ſeventh Trumpet, is ſtill the more likely, not to ſay apparent; becauſe that which next and immediately follows upon thoſe ſeven Thunders, and the ſealing of them up, is a moſt ſolemn Oath which the Angel took, That there ſhould be delay of time no longer for execution of thoſe things, but only until the Days of the ſeventh Angel when he ſhould ſound, but that then the Myſtery of God ſhall be finiſhed which had been declared to the Prophets concerning the full and final Deſtruction of the Enemies of the Church, and the glorious Enlargement and Exaltation of the Church it ſelf, as is farther to be ſhewn when we come to the ſeventh Trumpet.

I here make uſe of that reading [*there ſhall be delay of time no longer*] becauſe I find ſeveral Expoſitors prefer it before that other reading [*there ſhall be time no longer*] and becauſe alſo it beſt ſuits with the ſcope of the place, and the coherent Verſes. Though 'tis true, the common reading duly conſidered, ſignifies the ſame thing the other does, though it does not ſo plainly expreſs it. For according to that reading, the time when God will finiſh his Myſtery declared to the Prophets, ſhall be no longer but till the days of the ſeventh Angel, when he ſhall ſound.

After this St. *John* is bid to take the little Book out of the Angel's hand, and to eat it; and when he had done ſo, the Angel told him he muſt propheſie again, to wit, what ſhould farther befal the Empire under the ſixth Trumpet, and the ſeventh alſo, beſides what he had propheſied of already. And accordingly the very next things he propheſied of, after he had eaten the little Book, are the Occurrences ſet down between the firſt and fourteenth Verſe of *Chap.* xi. Which things were to fall out in whole or in part, in the times of the ſixth Trumpet: Which appears in that the Period of thoſe times falls after thoſe Occurences, as we find at the 14th Verſe, the ſecond Wo is paſt, meaning then, and not till then.

And therefore, though the firſt Viſion we meet with after it was ſaid to St. *John*, *Thou muſt propheſie again*, which concerns the meaſuring of the Temple, the leaving unmeaſured the outward Court thereof, and concerning the Propheſying of the two Witneſſes one thouſand two hundred and ſixty Days, does commence as high as from the firſt ſtated Defection, Corruption and Degeneracy of a great part of the Church; yet this Viſion being ſeen by St. *John*, under his Viſion of the ſixth Trumpet (as it is manifeſt it was) that Viſional Prophecy muſt in all reaſon receive its fulfilling and accompliſhment, in part, in times of the ſixth Trumpet. For this I take as a ſure Rule, That the fulfilling the Viſions in whole or in part, received under each of the ſeven Trumpets, does belong to the times of thoſe Trumpets under which St. *John* had thoſe Viſions, unleſs there be ſome plain intimation to the contrary. As there was when St. *John* had a Viſion under the ſixth Trumpet concerning the finiſhing of the Myſtery of God under the ſeventh; for the Nature of the Viſion was an expreſs Declaration of it, *Chap.* x. 7. And the Nature of the Viſion of the holy City's being trodden under foot forty two Prophetical Months, and the Witneſſes propheſying in Sack-Cloth one thouſand two hundred and ſixty Prophetical Days, will not admit of a compleat fulfilling of them in leſs time than ſix of the ſeven Trumpets will take up, or very near it; and therefore could be fulfilled but in part under the ſixth Trumpet; and in part they were fulfilled under each of the five former Trumpets.

Under theſe Limitations, I think we may take it for a general Rule which will always hold true, That the ſeveral Viſions of the Trumpets will be fulfilled in the times of thoſe Trumpets under which they were ſeen. To deny this, is to deny the proper End and Uſe of the ſeven Trumpets, which are as ſo many Signs by which to know the Succeſſion, Place and Order of the ſeveral Events of the ſeveral Viſions under thoſe Trumpets. Without which we ſhould be at a loſs to know what Time or Age of the World the things ſignified by ſuch or ſuch a Viſion might be expected, or to underſtand when ſuch Viſional Prophecies were fulfilled when they are paſt.

I have ſaid thus much to ſhew why we ſhould not think that the reaſon why St. *John* was told by the Angel that he muſt *propheſie again*, was, becauſe thoſe Prophetical Viſions, contained in the xith Chapter, from Ver. 1, to 14. though they were the very next he received after he received the open Book from the Angel, were ſuch a new *ſet* of Prophecies, as that the fulfilling of them did not at all belong to the times of the ſixth Trumpet, or as if they contained no part of the Wo of that Trumpet. But now I ſhall ſhew why, as I conceive, St. *John* might be ſaid to *propheſie again* in thoſe very Prophecies, though the fulfilling of them were part of the Event of the ſixth Trumpet, and part of the Wo of it. And the Reaſon reſpects partly the Nature of the Wo to be farther brought upon the Empire as corrupt and impenitent, as different from what had been propheſied of, and brought upon it before, both under the ſixth Trumpet, as alſo under the five precedent Trumpets: And partly in reſpect of the Agents by whom this latter part of the Wo of this ſixth Trumpet was to be brought on the corrupt Empire, as different from thoſe by whom the former part of that Wo was brought upon it, and from thoſe alſo who were Executioners of the Plagues of the former five Trumpets.

The Viſions of the five precedent Trumpets, repreſented ſo many *hoſtile* Calamities, which were to beſal the Empire ſucceſſively for their Idolatry and Cruelty to the Church of God, with other their Abominations. And although the Wo of the ſixth Trumpet began *thus* likewiſe by the Turkiſh Invaſion and Conqueſt; yet the other part of that Wo which was to follow, was quite of another nature. For although the Wo of the ſixth Trumpet in its beginning, as well as the Plagues of all the former Trumpets, was brought upon the Empire by thoſe who were Enemies to the Church of God, as well as to the Empire it ſelf, yet the other part of that Wo contained in Viſions in the xith Chapter, was to be brought upon the Empire, the Popedom eſpecially, (continuing ſtill impenitent) by thoſe of the Church of God. And this not in an hoſtile manner, as the former part of the Wo was, but by the Witneſſes propheſying, and by the Reformation, and by pouring out ſeveral of the Vials of God's Wrath, of a more Spiritual Nature than the Calamities of War, as is deſcribed and repreſented by the Viſions in the xith Chapter.

The Viſions then in the xith Chapter, though under the ſixth Trumpet, differing ſo much as they do, both from the Viſions of the former Trumpets, and from the firſt Viſion of the ſixth Trumpet it ſelf, repreſenting as it were a new Scene of Affairs, might well be a reaſon, not only of the Angel's ſaying unto St. *John*, Thou muſt *propheſie again*, but alſo of ſuch a ſolemn Preparation to it as is contained in the xth Chapter. And yet ſince in the xiith Chapter, there begins a new *ſet* of Prophecies commencing from the firſt State of the Chriſtian Church, it's poſſible the Angel in ſaying, Thou muſt *propheſie again*, might have reſpect to that alſo. But this was not until St. *John* had done with his Viſions of all the ſeven Trumpets. And indeed it is in it ſelf a very unlikely thing, that before he had done with thoſe Viſions of the Trumpets, the thing he had in hand, he ſhould break off from them to begin a new *ſet* of Prophecies, and finiſh them; and after all to return again to the Viſions of the laſt Trumpet, to make an end of his Prophetical Viſions under all the Trumpets.

Having thus prepared the way, I ſhall come now briefly to conſider the Viſions and Prophecies themſelves, as they are orderly repreſented in this xith Chapter; and I ſhall begin with the Viſion of meaſuring the Temple, with which that Chapter begins.

Ver. 1. *And there was given me a Reed like unto a Rod; and the Angel ſtood, ſaying, Riſe and meaſure the Temple of God, and the Altar, and them that worſhip therein.* This, we muſt note, is not a Hiſtory of things then done, but a Viſional Prophecy of what was to be done in time then to come.

The Temple, Altar, and Worſhippers in Old-Teſtament-time, did ſummarily comprize God's publick Worſhip: For the publick Worſhip was performed by the Worſhippers in the Temple and at the Altar. And by theſe may be here meant the Chriſtian Church-worſhip, it being frequent in this Book to ſhadow out the Antitype by an Old Teſtament-Type.

Meaſuring when apply'd to Temple and Altar, as here it is, is wont to be in order to the building or rebuilding of them; it being a Metaphor borrow'd from the Cuſtom of Architectors, who uſe to meaſure the Dimenſions of Ground, and of the Materials of an Edifice to be erected. And by it may be ſignified and meant in this place the rebuilding or re-eſtabliſhing a Chriſtian Temple, or a pure and undefiled Church-worſhip and Worſhippers, according to the firſt Inſtitution of theſe.

But for our better underſtanding the matter of this Viſion, we muſt conſider from what time the thing ſignified by this Viſion did commence; and that was from the time in which the groſs Corruptions in Worſhip, (ſuch as was the Invocation of Saints, and the giving that Honour to Creatures, which is due only to God) which had crept into the Church by degrees, had got ſuch an Head, as to be owned and maintained by the Sovereign Powers in the Empire. For this meaſuring of the Temple, and the beginning of the Beaſt's forty two Months Reign, ſynchronize, as I ſhall ſhew on the next Verſe: And ſo does the meaſuring of the Temple, and the leaving the outward Court of it unmeaſured. And the leaving the outward Court, which was much larger than the Temple, unmeaſured at the ſame time the Temple was meaſured, argues plainly, that the greateſt part of the Church, as it had been reputed, was at that time grown very corrupt, as the Reaſon given in the next Verſe, why the outward Court ſhould not be meaſured, does likewiſe ſhew. And by this Defection the ſound Chriſtians were reduced to much the ſame neceſſity of abſtaining from Communion in the publick Worſhip of the Empire, though called Chriſtian, as they had been in of forbearing Communion in the Pagan Worſhip, before Chriſtianity became publickly owned for the Religion of

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the Empire. And therefore as they were obliged to hold and practiſe the Communion of Saints in Church-worſhip; ſo they were, by way of neceſſity, obliged to hold and practiſe that Communion more privately and a part from the more publick Aſſemblies.

Now this being the State and Condition of the Church, at the time to which this Viſion of meaſuring the Temple, Altar and Worſhippers, did primarily refer, it fairly intimates, that Almighty God, in his Providence, would at this time begin to ſet on foot a reformed Worſhip among a reformed People, or ſuch as had not been corrupted, as differenced from the People and Worſhip which continued ſtill corrupt, and which were likely ſtill to continue ſo. And this was as it were a rebuilding of the Chriſtian Temple, the Chriſtian Church-worſhip, and Worſhippers: Being much of the ſame Nature, and carried on much after the ſame manner, and under the ſame difficult Circumſtances as it was at the firſt, while Paganiſm was profeſſed as the publick Religion of the Empire. And this new reformed State of the Church and of its Worſhip, having the Sovereign Powers of the Empire againſt it, and far the greateſt part of the People likewiſe: It did ſubſiſt and was carried on in a more private way and manner than the corrupt Worſhip by a corrupt People was, and that all along until the time of Reformation; and the difference between the *Inner* Temple and the *Outward* Court, may be a fair Indication of it.

And to this pure and reformed Eſtate of the Church, that Viſion ſeems to refer, which is ſet down in the five firſt Verſes of the 14th *Chap.* of the *Revelations*, where St. *John looked, and lo a Lamb ſtood on Mount Sion, and with him an hundred forty and four thouſand, having his Fathers Name written in their Foreheads——Theſe are they which were not defiled with Women, for they are Virgins. Theſe are they which follow the Lamb whitherſoever he goeth: Theſe were redeemed from among Men, being the firſt-fruits unto God, and to the Lamb.* 1. This Viſion is next adjoined to the Viſion of the Riſe of the firſt and ſecond Beaſt, the ten horned, and the two horned, related in the former Chapter. And that the Riſe of the Beaſt, and the leaving the outward Court of the Temple unmeaſured at the ſame time the Temple it ſelf was meaſured, do ſynchronize, I have been ſhewing already, and ſhall farther ſhow. 2. The place where the Lamb and his Company are here ſeen apart from the Beaſt and his Followers, is Mount *Sion*, the very place where the meaſured Temple ſtood, in which the true Worſhippers worſhipped. 3. The difference between the two Parties is made viſible and notorious, by the different Marks of them to whom they do belong; the Lamb's Followers having his Father's Name written on their Forehead, and the Slaves of the Beaſt, his Mark in their Forehead or right hand. 4. Theſe were not defiled with Women, to be guilty of ſpiritual Fornication in Worſhip, as thoſe enticed by the Mother of Harlots were; but were Virgins, chaſt in their Worſhip, not giving out themſelves therein to more than one Object of Worſhip. 5. Theſe were redeemed from among Men; that is, they were reſcued from among the Multitude and Rabble that followed the Beaſt, and were the Firſt-fruit to God and to the Lamb, to wit, the firſt pure Worſhippers that followed the Lamb after the Apoſtaſie came to be a *ſtated* Buſineſs. Theſe things are great Signs, that the Viſion of them belongs to the ſame times in which the reſtoring the Chriſtian Worſhip to its Purity, firſt began after the Apoſtaſie, and which was ſignified by meaſuring the Temple and Worſhippers.

And as I do not doubt but that this State of the Church, from the time aforeſaid down to the Reformation, was the fulfilling of this Prophetical Viſion to a degree, and in the firſt inſtance of it; ſo I as little doubt but that the more compleat, and in ſome reſpect the more eminent Accompliſhment of it was brought to paſs by the Reformation begun by *Luther*, when the *Publickneſs* of the true Chriſtian Worſhip was reſtored in ſeveral Kingdoms, States and Principalities in the Empire, and became owned, maintained and defended by the Sovereign Powers in them. For as this Viſion was ſeen by St. *John* under the ſixth Trumpet, or among the Viſions of that Trumpet, and not before; ſo the compleat fulfilling of it muſt needs reach down to the times of that Trumpet, and be effected by the Reformation which was brought to paſs in thoſe times. The reaſon of this I have already ſhown, and ſhall now proceed to ſome other reaſons which may facilitate our Belief, that the former Reformation begun about the beginning of the Beaſt's forty two Months Reign, and the latter begun by *Luther*, were the fulfilling of this Viſion and Prophecy of meaſuring the Temple, Altar and Worſhippers.

1. Such Viſional and Prophetical meaſuring as this here is, has been wont in other of the Prophets to prognoſticate and foreſhow by way of ſign the Reſtauration of God's publick Worſhip, after it has for a time been ſuppreſs'd. Thus the meaſuring of *Jeruſalem*, and the Temple, after ſome of the Jews return out of their ſeventy Years Captivity,

tivity, was a ſign to aſſure them, that their City and Temple ſhould be rebuilt, and their publick Worſhip reſtored. *Zech.* ii. 1, 2. *I lift up mine eyes again and looked, and behold a Man with a meaſuring Line in his hand; then ſaid I, whither goeſt thou? And he ſaid unto me, to meaſure Jeruſalem, to ſee what is the length thereof, and what is the breadth thereof.* And Chap. i. 16. *Therefore thus ſaith the Lord, I am returned to Jeruſalem with Mercies; my Houſe ſhall be built in it, ſaith the Lord of Hoſt, and a Line ſhall be ſtretched forth upon Jeruſalem.* The meaſuring of the Temple of *Jeruſalem* deſcribed in *Ezek.* xl. 3. and the Chapters following: Prefigure and foretel a far more famous Reſtauration of God's publick Worſhip among the Jews at laſt, than what was vouchſafed them after their return from *Babylon*, and after a far longer Captivity. The erecting the holy City, the new *Jeruſalem* Church State, as excelling all that had been before it, and this after the Deſtruction of the City of *Babylon*, or corrupt Church State, is ſignified and fore-ſhow'd by its being meaſured with a *golden* Reed, *Rev.* xxi. 15.

The Reſtitution then of God's publick Worſhip being uſually the thing intended to be foreſhown in other Prophets, by a Viſion of meaſuring the wonted places of God's publick Worſhip, after they have long lain deſolate, is a very good reaſon why we ſhould underſtand the ſame thing to be prefigured by this Viſional meaſuring of St. *John*. This Harmony in prophetick Schemes of this nature, is ſuch a reaſon and ground of fixing upon this ſenſe of this Viſion of St. *John*, as no other Interpretation of it can, I preſume, pretend to.

2. The Reformation begun by *Luther*, by which God's publick Worſhip was reſtored in many Kingdoms, States and Principalities, is moſt likely to be the final Event of this Viſional meaſuring the Temple and Altar, becauſe it fell out at ſuch a time as did exactly correſpond with, and anſwer to that order of time in which St. *John* had this Viſion. And I have ſhow'd before, that the Events of Viſions ſeen by St. *John* under the ſixth Trumpet, were in whole or in part, to fall out in the times of that Trumpet at leaſt, if not in the ſame order they were ſeen, as this we are upon ſeems to have done. For St. *John* had this Viſion not only under the ſixth Trumpet, but alſo after that Viſion of the *Euphratean* Horſemen's over-running the Eaſtern Empire. Now that the Reformation was the next great Event of Providence which fell out in the Weſtern Empire, after the Ruine of the Eaſtern by the Turks, appears plainly in Hiſtory. For the Turks had prevailed ſo far in that Conqueſt, as that in the Year 1453. they had made themſelves Maſters of *Conſtantinople*, the Capital City of the Eaſtern Empire. And after this the time ran on for more than fifty Years in completing their Conqueſt, by ſubduing *Syria*, *Paleſtine*, and part of *Egypt*, and ſome other places which had eſcaped them before.

And that which followed a little after theſe things, was the Reformation begun by *Luther* in the Year 1517. So that this exquiſite Agreement in time and order, between the Viſion and the Event of meaſuring the Temple, is little leſs than a Demonſtration, that the Viſion was as it were the Type, and the Reformation the Antitype of it. It muſt be remembred that it is much more eaſie for us who come after the time to which the place and order of this Viſion points, to underſtand with ſome Certainty, what Occurrence is, or has been the fulfilling of it, than it was for thoſe who lived before it to determine what Occurrence ſhould afterwards be the proper Event of it. For when we have ſeveral Events of Providence before us which have fallen out in the time of this ſixth Trumpet, we may the better judge which of them beſt anſwers to the nature of the Viſion that was to be fulfilled in that time. The fulfilling of Prophetical Viſions do in a great meaſure expound them. To theſe reaſons I might add

3. That it may farther appear, that the Reformation was prefigured by meaſuring the Temple, by the two Witneſſes (by whoſe propheſying it was brought about) being repreſenting by three pair of famous Reformers under the Old Teſtament, to wit, *Moſes* and *Aaron*, *Elias* and *Eliſha*, *Zerubbabel* and *Joſhua* the High Prieſt. For the two Witneſſes here ſpoken of, are made the Antitype in their reforming Work, to *Moſes* and *Aaron* in bringing the People out of the Bondage of Myſtical *Egypt*, as they had *Iſrael* out of the Bondage of Literal *Egypt*, and to them they are compared, *ver.* 6. In this work alſo they reſembled *Elias* with *Eliſha*, in recovering the People from Antichriſtian Idolatry, as they had *Iſrael* from *Baaliſh* Idolatry, and to them they are compared, *ver.* 6. But the pair of Old Teſtament-Reformers, to which the two Witneſſes are firſt compared, *ver.* 4. are, we ſee, *Zerubbabel* and *Joſhua*, under the Symbol of two Olive Trees, and two Candleſticks. Which ſeems to be a fair Intimation, that what was foreſhow'd by meaſuring the Temple and Altar juſt before mentioned, ſhould be brought to paſs by the two Witneſſes reſembling therein *Zerubbabel* and *Joſhua*, in

their rebuilding the Temple, and reſtoring God's publick Worſhip. And that it was an Intimation of ſuch a thing is the more likely, becauſe this pair of Old-Teſtament-Reformers, though laſt in order of Hiſtory of the three made uſe of in this Chapter, are yet firſt in the Compariſon here made between them and the Witneſſes. And why ſo? But becauſe this pair of Reformers, in their rebuilding the Temple, and reſtoring God's publick Worſhip in their time, did beſt ſerve to exhibit in a figure what the two Witneſſes were to do in reſtoring God's publick Worſhip by the Reformation This Reaſon ſhews the Senſe given of meaſuring the Temple and Altar, to be agreeable to the general Scope and Deſign of the following Viſions, as well as this, which all run upon Reformation-work to be brought about by the Witneſſes. This Conſideration, together with the Agreeableneſs of this Senſe, with other Prophetick Schemes concerning the Reſtitution of God's publick Worſhip, prefigured by a like meaſuring the Temple, do render the Senſe given to be the moſt natural, and the moſt eaſie.

Ver. 2. *But the Court which is without the Temple, leave out and meaſure it not, for it is given to the Gentiles; and the holy City ſhall they tread under foot forty two Months.*

This ſeems to be a Viſional Prophecy, that the Reformation and Reſtoration of God's publick Worſhip, ſignified by meaſuring the Temple, ſhould be brought to paſs but in part of the Weſtern Empire, and that in the reſt of it, the former Corruptions which had been brought into the Church, ſhould ſtill prevail until the forty two Months of Years ſhall be run out. Which forty two Months are to be reckoned to commence from the time in which thoſe Corruptions having crept into the Church more privately, and by degrees had got ſuch an head, and had ſo far prevailed, as to be owned and maintained by the Sovereign Powers of the Empire. This appears in that the ten-horned Beaſt had power given him, as to make War with the Saints, and to overcome them, ſo to continue forty two Months, *Chap.* xiii. 5, 7. So that the beginning of this forty two Months is to be dated from the beginning of this Beaſt's Reign, and to laſt no longer than till the Reformation firſt took place: For this outer Court was not to be meaſured in order to its being rebuilded as the Temple was.

I cannot but take notice here, that the meaſuring the Temple and Altar cannot refer to the pure State of the Church before it fell into groſs Corruption, as ſome would have it, who ſuppoſe this meaſuring to import the Church at this time to be commenſurate to the Divine Rule. But if by the outward Court of the Temple, and the Gentiles which were to tread the holy City under foot, be meant the corrupt and degenerate part of the Church, as is generally held it is; Then the meaſuring of the Temple here cannot refer to ſuch a time or ſtate of the Church in general, wherein it continued as yet pure and uncorrupt, and commenſurate to the holy Rule. And the reaſon is, becauſe at the ſame time to which the meaſuring the Temple and Altar do refer, the outward Court of it was incommenſurate; that is, the greateſt part of the Church was ſo corrupt, as made them uncapable of being taken into the number of the Worſhippers in the inner Temple which was meaſured. And thus it was with that part of the corrupt Church which continued ſtill unreformed in the time of that Reformation begun by *Luther*, when this Viſional Prophecy was compleatly fulfill'd, and eminently alſo, in that the pure and uncorrupt Worſhip was reſtored to an open and publick Enjoyment of it.

Ver. 3. *And I will give Power to my two Witneſſes, and they ſhall propheſie a thouſand two hundred and threeſcore days, clothed in ſackcloth.*

The time of theſe Witneſſes propheſying, we ſee, is equal to the time of the Gentiles prophaning the holy City: Their Propheſying began with that, and runs parallel with it to the end of its Race. They baſe their Teſtimony for God, and for his Truth and pure Worſhip, and againſt the contrary Corruption which had got into the Church. And this Propheſying of theirs all along, from the beginning of the Beaſt's Reign, produced at laſt the happy Reformation and Reſtitution of God's publick Worſhip in many Kingdoms, States, and Principalities within the Weſtern Empire, and is ſtill carry'd on by their Propheſying.

Which Reformation was a great Victory obtained over the Beaſt, wherein he loſt a great part of his Dominions and of his Power, and was celebrated with a Triumphant Song, called, *The Song of Moſes and the Lamb*, Chap. xv. 2. And this Victory, and the loſs ſuſtained by it, was one conſiderable part of the Wo of the ſixth Trumpet upon the *Beſtian* Party in the Weſtern Empire, as the Turkiſh Conqueſt was another on the Eaſtern. For it was, and has been a ſore cut to them, being no leſs than a partial downfal of the Kingdom of the Beaſt. And unto this part of the ſecond Wo has been and will be added under this Trumpet, a great part of the Plagues of the Vials, called the *ſeven laſt Plagues*.

Ver. 4. *Theſe are the two Olive-Trees, and the two Candleſticks, ſtanding before the God of the Earth.* Meaning, that theſe two Witneſſes in their Work were like unto *Zerubbabel* and *Joſhua* in theirs, who ſtrengthened the hands of the Jews in their rebuilding their City and Temple in a troublous time, and under very great Oppoſition; upon account whereof they were repreſented to the Prophet *Zachary* in a Viſion, as two Olive Trees, and in the midſt a Candleſtick with two Branches receiving Oil from the Olive-Trees; by theſe in feeding the Lamps, the Tabernacle in the Wilderneſs was made lightſome in the darkeſt Night, *Zach.* iv.

Ver. 5. *And if any Man will hurt them, Fire proceedeth out of their mouth, and devoureth their Enemies: And if any Man will hurt them, he muſt in this manner be killed.*

This ſeems to ſet forth in general the effect which the Propheſying of the two Prophets, after the Reformation, ſhould have upon their Adverſaries; they ſhould be devoured by the Fire which proceeded out of their Mouths. Not that it ſhould make an end of them preſently; ſuch Prophetick Schemes are not ſo to be underſtood. But the meaning rather is, That the Word of their Prophecy, which is the Fire which proceedeth out of their Mouth, ſhould ſeize on their Adverſaries, and arreſt them in the Name of the Lord; from which they ſhould never get themſelves diſcharg'd, until it ſhould bring them into utter ruin, they continuing impenitent. Thus the Word of the Prophets of old was ſaid to take hold of the Sinners againſt whom it was denounced, *Zach.* i. 6. *But my words, which I commanded my Servants the Prophets, did they not take hold of your Fathers?* Yes moſt certainly they did, ſo that they were never diſcharged after, until the Evil denounced againſt them was actually brought upon them, as it there follows. Thus again, *I have hewed them by the Prophets, I have ſlain them by the Words of my Mouth*, ſaith God, *Hoſ.* vi. 5. Fire as here proceeding out of the Mouth of the Witneſſes, and devouring their Adverſaries, is to be underſtood as that in *Jer.* v. 14. *Behold, I will make my Words in thy mouth Fire, and this People Wood, and it ſhall devour them.*

And whereas it is added here, with a redoubling of Words, *If any Man will hurt them, he muſt in this manner be killed*, it affords us a good Reaſon why we ſhould the rather believe what I hinted formerly, which was that the latter part of the Wo of the ſixth Trumpet is of a much different nature from the former part of it. The former part of it, conſiſted in a Plague of War, as I ſhew'd: But this latter part of it, of a Torment and Vexation of a more Spiritual Nature, ſuch as is the proper effect of the Witneſſes propheſying, or a being devoured by Fire proceeding out of their Mouth. And in ſaying, *If any Man will hurt them, he muſt in this manner be kill'd*, he ſeems thereby to deſcribe the Nature of the Plagues of thoſe Vials, or of the moſt of them, which were to be poured out under the ſixth Trumpet upon the Enemies of the Witneſſes.

Now that the Propheſying of the Witneſſes againſt their Adverſaries, has been and is matter of preſent Wo and Torment to their Minds, and ſuch as has greatly inraged them from time to time, may eaſily be conceived. For the Witneſſes are wont to denounce from the Word of the Lord the approaching Ruin and utter Deſtruction of myſtical *Babylon*, with all its Pomp and Glory: And not only ſo, but alſo, that whoever they be that worſhip the Beaſt and his Image, and receive his Mark in their Forehead or in their Hand, the ſame ſhall drink of the Wine of the Wrath of God which is poured out without mixture into the Cup of his Indignation, and ſhall be tormented with Fire and Brimſtone, in the preſence of the holy Angels and of the Lamb, and the like. Now this and ſuch-like Fire, which proceedeth out of the Witneſſes Mouth, will be apt more or leſs to kindle in the Minds of their Adverſaries, and to flaſh like Lightning into their Conſciences, as not knowing, whatever Face they ſet upon it, but that theſe and ſuch-like Threatnings belong to them. They may, as there is the greateſt Reaſon they ſhould, be jealous whether there be not ſome ſmell of the Fire of Hell in their Conſciences, when that Fire is darted into them which proceedeth out of the Mouth of the Witneſſes, and whether it may not prove a ſavour of Death unto Death to them. And if ſuch Propheſying of the Witneſſes produce any ſuch Fears and Jealouſies in their Adverſaries, it muſt needs make their Lives very uneaſie to them: *For Fear hath Torment*, ſaith St. *John*: *And a wounded Spirit who can bear?* ſaith *Solomon*. And that the Propheſying of the Witneſſes is wont to *torment* their Enemies, is very evident from the 10th Verſe of this Chapter, where it's ſaid, Theſe two Prophets tormented them that dwelt upon the Earth.

Ver. 6. *Theſe have power to ſhut Heaven that it rain not; in the days of their Prophecy, and have power over Waters to turn them to Blood, and to ſmite the Earth with all Plagues, as often as they will.*

In this Verſe we have ſome Inſtances of the way and manner of the Witneſſes tormenting their Enemies; as firſt in ſhutting Heaven that it rain not in the days of their Prophecy. Herein alluding to what *Elias* did in the days of *Ahab*, in cauſing it not to rain in three Years and ſix Months. But the Witneſſes thus ſhutting Heaven that it rain not in the days of their Prophecy which laſteth three Years and a half alſo of Prophetical Years, is not to be underſtood literally as that was, but myſtically. And by the Rain here ſaid to be reſtrained by the Witneſſes, is probably meant the great and rich Conſolations of the Goſpel, which revive and refreſh penitent Souls, as Rain from Heaven doth the parched and thirſty ground when it falls upon it. And the Witneſſes reſtrain this Rain from falling upon the Followers of *Baal*, by teſtifying and pronouncing from the word of the Lord, that the Heavenly and Evangelical Conſolations do not at all belong to them while they continue in their idolatrous, and other enormous Practices. But if they would once ceaſe from deſtroying the Lord's Prophets, and put away *Baal*'s Prieſts, and return to worſhip the true Eternal God only, they might expect abundance of this Rain from Heaven, as the *Iſraelites* had of the other as ſoon as they became reformed.

And have power over Waters to turn them to Blood.

This Power of the Witneſſes in bringing theſe Plagues upon the great City ſpiritually called *Egypt*, *v.* 8. is in Alluſion to one of the *Egyptian* Plagues by the hand of *Moſes*. But it is not litterally to be underſtood, as the Act of *Moſes* is, but ſpiritually, or myſtically, as the great City is when ſpiritually called *Egypt*. And it contains two of the ſeven laſt Plagues, called the Plagues of the Vials, to wit, the ſecond and third of them, as we may ſee by comparing theſe words with thoſe in *Chap.* xvi. 3. and 4. *Verſes. And the ſecond Angel poured forth his Vial upon the Sea; and it became as the Blood of a dead Man; and every living Soul died in the Sea. And the third Angel poured out his Vial upon the Rivers and Fountains of Waters, and they became Blood.*

But we are not to underſtand Waters here in a proper Senſe, as thoſe in *Egypt* were, but in a ſpiritual and Myſtical Senſe, as *Egypt* it ſelf is here, as was but now ſhow'd. And by Waters in a myſtical Senſe, we can underſtand nothing more properly than Doctrines concerning ſpiritual things, things which concern the Life of the Soul, if ſound and wholſome, or the Death and Deſtruction of it, if corrupt. Even as the Waters in *Egypt* concerned the Life and Health of the Body before they became Blood, but afterwards tended to the Deſtruction of both, if any were ſo mad as to drink of them. I need not give Inſtances to ſhow how frequently in Scripture we are to underſtand Doctrines and Ordinances of Worſhip, covered with the Metaphors of Water, it being a thing ſo well known. Here we ſee are two ſorts of Water turned to Blood, the Waters of the Sea, and the Waters of the Rivers and Fountains: The former as the Effect of the Effuſion of the ſecond Vial, and the latter as the Effect of the Effuſion of the third. By the Waters of the Sea may be underſtood the corrupt Doctrines of the Council of *Trent*, impoſed upon Men to be received as Waters of Life drawn out of the Wells of Salvation, as things neceſſary to be believed and practiſed, in order to the obtaining Salvation. The Sea in a proper Senſe, is a Collection of many Waters flowing into it, into one Body: All the Rivers run into the Sea, ſaith *Solomon*. And thus the Council of *Trent* might be a Sea in a myſtical Senſe, becauſe of the flowing of Biſhops and Doctors into it, from all Popiſh Quarters to bring into one Body a Multitude of corrupt Doctrines and Poſitions which were ratified and confirmed by their Authority, as if they had been indeed Waters of Life, and ſuch as whoſoever ſhould drink ſhould live for ever.

And the Witneſſes, Biſhops, Doctors, and other of the Reformation, turned theſe Waters into Blood, like the corrupt Blood of a dead Man, not by making them ſuch, but by diſcovering and proving them to be ſuch by preaching and writing, and that Men could no more live eternally by drinking thoſe Waters, than Fiſh can live in the Sea, in caſe it were turned into Blood, like the Blood of a dead Man. And by doing thus they juſtified the Work of Reformation, and their own Separation from the Church of *Rome*, and ſtrengthened the reformed Intereſt more and more, to the great Vexation and Torment of their Adverſaries.

But then hereupon, the choiceſt of the Men of Learning and Parts among the unreformed Party, undertook the Vindication and Defence of the corrupt Doctrines of the Council of *Trent* againſt our reformed Divines. And theſe were but as Rivers and Fountains, deriving their Streams from their Sea, and returning them back again into it. But then our reformed Authors did moſt effectually confute them, and thereby turned thoſe Waters into Blood alſo in the Senſe aforeſaid.

Theſe Tranſactions falling out in the times of the ſixth Trumpet, under which Trumpet the Viſion of theſe things was ſeen, and that in courſe after the Viſion of the Reformation alſo; it may incline us the rather to think this Event of Providence to be the proper Event and fulfilling of this Viſion.

The Interpretation of the third Vial concerning the turning the Rivers and Fountains into Blood, others carry another way, who would have the ſhedding the Blood of ſome few Jeſuits and Prieſts, by virtue of ſome ſanguinary Laws made againſt their labouring to ſeduce Subjects to own a foreign ſuperior Power over their lawful Sovereigns, to be meant by turning the Rivers and Fountains into Blood. To which they add the Overthrow and Deſtruction which the *Spaniſh Armado* received in attempting to reduce this Nation to the *Romiſh* Yoke. Which Interpretation ſeems to receive Countenance from the ſaying of the Angel upon the Rivers and Fountains becoming Blood: *Thou art righteous, O Lord, which art, and waſt, and ſhalt be; becauſe thou haſt judged thus: For they have ſhed the Blood of Saints and Prophets, and thou haſt given them Blood to drink, for they are worthy*, Chap. xvi. 5, 6. But this Senſe does not ſeem to agree with the myſtical Nature which has been obſerved in theſe Viſions all along. And beſides, the foreſaid Saying of the Angel is capable of a myſtical Senſe as well as all the reſt which were before it. For it is juſt with God, after all the means uſed, to bring thoſe to Repentance who ſtill perſiſt in their malicious ſhedding the Blood of Saints, when they have opportunity, to give them up to ſuch an injudicious mind, as to drink down thoſe corrupt Doctrines, as believing them to be Waters of Life, when indeed they are deſtructive of the Health of their Souls. It's foretold of the Followers of the Man of Sin, that becauſe they received not the Love of the Truth, that they might be ſaved, that for this Cauſe God ſhall ſend them ſtrong Deluſion, that they ſhould believe a Lie; that they all might be damned who believed not the Truth, but had Pleaſure in Unrighteouſneſs, 2 *Theſſ.* ii. 10. And whether of theſe Senſes is moſt likely to be the right, or whether both may not be intended, I leave to be conſidered.

And to ſmite the Earth with all Plagues as often as they will.

Theſe words contain another part of the Power of the two Witneſſes; they have Power not only to turn Waters into Blood, but alſo to ſmite the Earth with all Plagues as often as they will. Which argues ſtill, that the latter part of the Wo of the ſixth Trumpet, conſiſteth much in ſuch Plagues as the Adverſaries of the Witneſſes ſuffer by their Propheſying, rather than from any hoſtile Attempts, either from them, or from any others. For with this ſort of Plagues it may moſt properly be ſaid, they had Power to ſmite them as oft as they have a mind to it.

This general Aſſertion touching their power of ſmiting the Earth with all Plagues, following immediately upon that particular Aſſertion of their having power to turn Waters into Blood, the words ſeem to intimate, that as they have power to inflict thoſe two Plagues of the ſecond and third Vial, by turning the Waters into Blood, ſo they have Power alſo to ſmite the Earth with the reſt of the Plagues of the Vials in courſe, though they be not here particularly named. For if they have power to ſmite the Earth with *all* Plagues, then the Plagues of the Vials muſt needs be included in that *all*, if not only meant by it. Beſides, if we compare *Chap.* xvi. 1. with the Text in hand, it may farther incline us to think the Plagues of the Vials were the Plagues wherewith the Witneſſes had power to ſmite the Earth. For it's ſaid there, *I heard a great Voice out of the Temple, ſaying to the ſeven Angels, Go your ways and pour out the Vials of the Wrath of God upon the* Earth. For to ſmite the *Earth* with Plagues, and to pour out the Vials of Wrath upon the *Earth*, ſeem to ſignifie the ſame thing. This has reſpect to the Plagues of the Vials in general.

But more particularly, by the ſmiting the *Earth* by the Witneſſes here, the Effuſion of the firſt Vial may be hinted at, which was poured out upon the *Earth*, Rev. xvi. 2. Upon which there fell a grievous and noiſome Sore upon the Men which had the Mark of the Beaſt (as they eſpecially have who are in Orders under the Beaſt, and have the indelible Character) and upon them that worſhipped his Image. By which may be meant not only their Envy and exulcerated Fury againſt the Witneſſes; but alſo the *Un-*

cleanneſs and other Lewdneſs of thoſe Men, together with their groſs Hypocriſie, which upon diſcovery thereof then made by the Witneſſes, appeared as ſo many foul Botches upon them, to their great Shame and horrible Vexation, and to the weakning of their Intereſt; ſo that they could no more ſtand before the Wineſſes, than the Magicians of *Egypt* could ſtand before *Moſes* when the Boyl was upon them.

If it be matter of doubt to any, whether thoſe Evils I have mentioned can be the proper effect of the Vials, ſince they are of ſo Spiritual a nature, and ſo little affect and ſtrike the Senſes. Let ſuch conſider, That there is a great difference between the Plagues of the Trumpets, in their firſt appearance, and thoſe of the Vials that follow, as we find under this ſixth Trumpet. The Plagues of all the Trumpets which have yet been blown, have been uſher'd in, and made their entrance with an awakening Noiſe and Obſervation, making themſelves to be taken notice of by all. For they have ruſh'd in upon the Empire by ſix ſucceſſive Judgments of War, as the common Interpretation of the Events of thoſe Trumpets ſhew. And indeed the very ſounding of a Trumpet, is very ſignificant of ſuch a thing. The blowing of a Trumpet is frequently uſed in Scripture, as an Alarm of War approaching, and of the Calamities which uſually attend it.

But the Plagues of the Vials which have been already poured out, have fallen in a more ſilent way, and leſs diſcernable by moſt, being of a more Spiritual nature. For, as I formerly obſerved, when the dreadful Judgment of the conquering War of the Turks, by which the Wo of the ſixth Trumpet made its entrance into the Empire, did not work Repentance in the degenerate Chriſtians of their Idolatries and other enormous Practices: Then there follow'd other means of Conviction and Cure of a more Spiritual Nature, ſuch was the Reformation, the Witneſſes propheſying and pouring out ſome of the Vials, and the like. Which proving ineffectual, as to their Cure, through their own Obſtinacy, became ſo many tormenting Plagues to them, but not ſo viſible to all as the Turkiſh Conqueſt was. But when I ſay, this has been the Nature of the Vials already paſt, I dare not ſay but thoſe to come may be of ſomewhat a different Nature, in whole or in part, eſpecially the laſt of them, which is like to produce both great and viſible Judgments.

The things hitherto inſiſted on, conſidered, do I conceive, afford us a ſufficient ground to conclude that part of the Vials (and probably the greateſt part of them) were to be poured out between the time of the Reformation, and the ending of the ſixth Trumpet. For the order of Time in which the Viſions of theſe Occurrences were ſeen, and the order and ſucceſſion of the Occurrences themſelves, direct us to this Concluſion, according to the Rule formerly laid down for the underſtanding the proper time and order of Events, and fulfilling Prophetical Viſions, by the time when and under what Trumpet they were ſeen. And the Viſion of the Witneſſes turning the Waters into Blood, and of their ſmiting the Earth with all Plagues as often as they will, is next or near next the Viſion of meaſuring the Temple, and the other parts of that Viſion, and of the Reformation ſignified thereby; and yet is before the ending of the ſixth Trumpet, which comes not to a period till after the Slaughter and Reſurrection of the Witneſſes, which follow after that of the Witneſſes turning Waters into Blood.

Beſides, we may ſee that the beginning of the Effuſion of the Vial does preſently follow upon the Victory obtained over the Beaſt, by comparing *Chap.* xv. with *Chap.* xvi. and yet that Victory (as is granted) was obtained by the Reformation. Since then this Reformation fell out under the ſixth Trumpet, and the turning Waters into Blood follow'd preſently upon the Reformation; yet before the ending of the ſixth Trumpet, it is a plain and pregnant intimation that thoſe Vials were poured out in the times of the ſixth Trumpet, by the Effuſion of which the Waters were turned into Blood.

But it may be it will be ſaid, That if the Viſion of the Witneſſes turning Waters into Blood was ſeen under the ſixth Trumpet, and that the ſecond and third Vial were thereby meant, and that this Viſion and Prophecy was accordingly to be fulfilled in the time of the ſixth Trumpet; Then why are they not here mentioned by their name *Vials*, as they are in *Chap.* xvi. which is their proper place?

To this I anſwer, It was not neceſſary, nor indeed convenient, to have them deſcribed by their Name in this place; becauſe, if they had, we ſhould have had them but in piece-meal; for they were not all to take place under the ſixth Trumpet, and therefore not to be all mentioned in this Viſion, which was a Viſion, or part of a Viſion of that Trumpet. It was moſt meet to reſerve the Name and Number of the Vials unto the Time and Place where they are all ſet down in their proper order, to the end it might be the better known which was to take place firſt, and which next, and ſo on to the laſt. The xvith Chapter does not at all acquaint us under what Trumpet, or about what Time this or that Vial was to be poured out; that is to be learned from the Viſions of the Trumpets themſelves. How ſhould we have known, for inſtance, that the ſecond and third Vials, beſides others, were to be poured out in *time* of the ſixth Trumpet, if we had not met with their *Character* in a Viſion of the ſixth Trumpet, by which they are deſcribed in the xvith Chapter.

If it were any good Argument to prove, that none of the Vials were to be poured out in the time of the ſixth Trumpet, inaſmuch as they are not mentioned by their Name and Title in any of the Viſions under that Trumpet, it would as well be an Argument to prove, that none of them will be poured out in the time of the ſeventh Trumpet neither, and conſequently, that there ſhall be no Effuſion of the Vials at all. For there is not any one of the Vials mentioned by Name in the Viſions of the ſeventh Trumpet. But if the mentioning of the laſt Vial, under its proper Character, in one of the Viſions of the ſeventh Trumpet, be an Argument to prove, that the laſt Vial will be poured out in the time of the laſt Trumpet, as moſt certainly it is, (*Chap.* xi. 19. with *Chap.* xvi. 18.) Then the mentioning the ſecond and third Vial under their proper Character, in one of the Viſions of the ſixth Trumpet, muſt needs be a good Argument to prove, that thoſe Vials were to be poured out in the times of that Trumpet. I do not mention the ſecond and third Vial here, as if there were no more to be poured out in the time of the ſixth Trumpet; but I mention theſe only, becauſe the Character of theſe is expreſs and unexceptionable, though there is ſufficient intimation of more of the Vials in the ſame Viſion, though not ſo expreſs.

I add yet farther, that to have deſcribed the ſeven Vials by their Name, Number and Order, as in *Chap.* xvi. before the Viſions of the ſeven Trumpets had been brought to an iſſue, and the Rehearſal of them finiſhed, would have been a confounding one ſeven with another, the ſeven Trumpets with the ſeven Vials, and a breaking the Line of Diſcourſe concerning the Trumpets. For the avoiding of which perhaps it was, that when in the time of the ſixth Trumpet ſeven Thunders utter'd their Voices, the Angel would not ſuffer St. *John* to write them, and to ſet down in particular what each Voice declared: He would not have the things of the ſeven thundring Voices mingled with the things of the ſeven Trumpets, no otherwiſe than by ſome hints in general.

There is another Objection which is levied againſt any of the Vials at all, being poured out in the times of the ſixth Trumpet; and the Reaſon and Ground on which it is founded, is this. The ſeven Vials are called the ſeven *laſt* Plagues, which yet they could not be, unleſs the *firſt* Plagues, which are the Plagues of the Trumpets, were to take place before them.

But I anſwer, That the ſeven Vials are not ſaid to be the ſeven *laſt* Plagues for that reaſon, becauſe they ſucceed the Plagues of the Trumpets; but for another reaſon, which the Text it ſelf aſſigns, in which they are ſtiled the *laſt* Plagues, and that is, becauſe in them *is filled up the wrath of God*, Rev. xv. 1. *And I ſaw another ſign in Heaven, great and marvellous, ſeven Angels having the ſeven laſt Plagues*; for *in them is filled up the wrath of God.* They are called the laſt Plagues therefore, becauſe no more ſhall ſucceed them, but they ſhall finiſh the Work deſigned to be done by Plagues; in them is filled up the Wrath of God, or in them is *finiſhed* the Wrath of God; ſo Doctor *Hammond* reads it. And accordingly upon the pouring out of the laſt of the ſeven Vials, it's ſaid, *There came a great Voice out of the Temple of Heaven from the Throne, ſaying, It is done*, Rev. xvi. 17. The Vials then are not called the ſeven laſt Plagues, becauſe other Plagues went before them, but becauſe no other ſhall follow after them for the finiſhing the Work, for which the Plagues both of the Trumpets and the Vials were deſigned. And indeed if any other Plagues had been to ſucceed them, they could not have been the laſt. Which ſtill ſhews, that the proper reaſon why they are called the laſt Plagues, is, becauſe no more are to follow: In them will be filled up the Wrath of God to the full.

But having ſaid this in way of Anſwer, I ſhall now ſhew, that the Plea for placing all the Vials under the ſeventh Trumpet, in oppoſition to Mr. *Mede*, who placeth moſt of them under the ſixth, is built on a great overſight, or miſtake. For though the Author of the Plea makes two Sets of Plagues ſucceeding one another, that of the Vials to follow that of the Trumpets, yet he does not make that of the Trumpets to conſiſt of ſeven Plagues anſwerable to the ſeven Trumpets, (which he ought to have done, if he would make one entire Set of them) but only of ſix of them. For in one place he ſaith, *The Trumpet-Plagues are juſt ſix, as well as the Vial-Plagues ſeven.* And again he ſaith, *The whole Set or Number of the laſt Plagues of the Vials are ſo called, in reſpect of the whole Set or Number of the Plagues of the ſix Trumpets.* And then

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in another place he argueth to this effect. For it being ſaid of every one of the ſeven laſt Plagues, that it is the laſt, it muſt be ſo in reſpect of all the foregoing Plagues in the former conceived *Series*, elſe it will be falſly called the laſt, nor would there be ſeven laſt Plagues in number. For no more of the ſeven can be ſaid in reſpect of the precedent Plagues to be the laſt, than ſuch as *follow all the Plagues precedent*, after they have expired, that is to ſay, unleſs the firſt of the laſt Plagues expire after the laſt of the former Series, the Enunciation is falſe. Again, he ſays, It is plain to every one at firſt ſight, that is not blinded with Prejudice, That every one of the ſeven laſt Plagues muſt be later than any of thoſe Plagues, in reſpect of which they are termed the laſt.

This arguing ſeems plauſible upon Suppoſition, that the Plagues of the Trumpets had been but ſix, and the Plagues of the Vials, called the ſeven laſt Plagues for that reaſon, becauſe they ſucceed the Plagues of the ſix Trumpets. But ſuppoſing what will preſently be proved, that all the ſeven Plagues of the ſeven Trumpets make but one entire Sett of Plagues, as the Vials do another, the foreſaid reaſoning, if grounded thereon, would be moſt abſurd and falſe. For then to ſay, that every one of the ſeven laſt Plagues muſt be later than any one of thoſe Plagues, in reſpect of which, they are termed the laſt, would be to ſay, that every one of the Plagues of the ſeven Vials muſt be later, and follow after the Plague of the ſeventh Trumpet it ſelf, which to affirm, what can be more abſurd, or more untrue?

And ſhould we inſtead of the Author's calling the Trumpet-plagues the foregoing Plagues, but call them the *ſeven* foregoing Plagues of the Trumpets, the Conſequence of the reaſoning here uſed, would ſufficiently evince it impoſſible, that the ſeven laſt Plagues are ſo called, becauſe they follow the ſeven Plagues of the Trumpets. As for Example; It being ſaid of every one of the ſeven laſt Plagues, that it is the laſt, it muſt be ſo in reſpect of all the ſeven foregoing Plagues of the Trumpets, elſe it will be falſly called the *laſt*. For no more of the ſeven can be ſaid in reſpect of the ſeven preceding Plagues of the Trumpets to be the laſt, than ſuch as follow all the ſeven precedent Plagues of the Trumpets after they have expired; that is to ſay, unleſs the firſt of the Vial-plagues expire after the laſt of the ſeven Trumpet-plagues, the Enunciation is falſe, *viz.* in ſaying, it is one of the laſt Plagues. This way of reaſoning we ſee, if it proves any thing, proves, that none of the Plagues of the Vials are to take place till after the laſt of the ſeven Trumpet-plagues are expired. Which is a thing I know the Author himſelf does not believe, who holds that the times of the ſeventh Trumpet will laſt not only to the final Overthrow of all Antichriſtian Powers, and to the bringing in the Bleſſed *Millenium*, but alſo to the end of the World. The Abſurdity then of the Opinion, that the ſeven Vials are called the ſeven laſt Plagues for that reaſon, becauſe they follow after all the Plagues of the ſeven Trumpets, is Argument ſufficient, if there were no other, to ſhow that they are not ſaid to be the laſt Plagues upon that account. And if not upon that account, I know not for what other reaſon they can be called the ſeven laſt Plagues, but only that which the Angel has given, and I have already named, to wit, becauſe in them is filled up the Wrath of God. For the Particle [for] in that place carries the force of a Reaſon—the ſeven laſt Plagues, [for] in them is filled up the Wrath of God.

Now that the entire Set or Number of the Trumpet-plagues were ſeven, is ſo plain, that nothing can be plainer, if we ſuppoſe the firſt ſix to be Plague-Trumpets; for the fifth, ſixth and ſeventh, are in ſpecial called Wo-Trumpets. And therefore by what Warrant the Author (whoever he is) hath limited them to ſix, he doth not acquaint us, nor can I imagine. Only he ſtrongly conceives, but does not prove, that the Effuſion of all the Vials follows after the ſixth Trumpet. And the reaſon he alledges for it is, becauſe the Vials follow after the Victory got over the Beaſt, they being ſet down in the 16th *Chapter*, but the Victory over the Beaſt in the 15th. But this is far from proving, that the Effuſion of all the Vials muſt needs follow the ending of the ſixth Trumpet, becauſe the Victory over the Beaſt was obtained by the Reformation, between which and the ending of the ſixth Trumpet, we have notice of ſeveral of the Vials by their proper Characters, as I have ſhowed before: So that the Vials might well enough follow that Victory over the Beaſt, and yet take place under the ſixth Trumpet.

Two things may be ſaid in favour of Mr. *Mede*'s Judgment in holding ſix of the Vials have and will be poured out under the ſixth Trumpet. Firſt, that the Wo of the ſixth Trumpet, which at firſt fell on the Eaſtern Empire by the prevailing Power of the Turks, continues ſtill and lies heavy upon it unto this day, after three or four of the Vials have been poured out. In reſpect of that as well as in other reſpects, it cannot yet be ſaid the ſecond Wo is paſt. Nor will it be paſt until the Effuſion of the ſixth Vial, if by pouring out that Vial upon the great River *Euphrates*, and the drying up the Water thereof, be meant the Diſſolution of the Turkiſh Monarchy, as it is thought to be, when compared with the latter end of the xith of *Daniel.* Secondly, When we conſider, that the proper Event of the ſeventh Trumpet will be the finiſhing the Myſtery of God declared to the Prophets, we have reaſon to think we are not yet in the Times of the ſeventh Trumpet, becauſe we have reaſon to think nothing of that which will be properly the finiſhing of that Myſtery of God, is yet brought to paſs, ſuch as will be the laſt and irrecoverable Overthrow of the Power and Rule of the Church's Enemies, and the great Enlargement and overſpreading Power of the Church. But of this more will be ſaid when we come to the Viſion of the ſeventh Trumpet.

Thus far we have ſeen what the Witneſſes were to do againſt the Beaſt: But that which next follows, ſhews what the Beaſt will do againſt them.

Ver. 7. *And when they have finiſhed their Teſtimony, the Beaſt that aſcendeth out of the Bottomleſs-pit, ſhall make War againſt them, and ſhall overcome them, and kill them.*

Altho' the Witneſſes ſhall have much weakned the Kingdom of the Beaſt by the Reformation, the propheſying and pouring out moſt of the Vials; and ſhall thereupon be almoſt ready to throw off their Sackcloth, the Days of their mournful Prophecy being near expiring: Yet it ſeems Almighty God, either to awaken his People to Repentance for ſome general declining, or to make himſelf the more known in the World by their ſpeedy Deliverance, when brought very low by their Enemies, or for ſome other reaſon will ſuffer their Enemies to prevail againſt them, and to triumph over them for a ſhort time.

The Time when this War ſhall be made againſt the Witneſſes, is here ſaid to be when they ſhall have *finiſhed* their Teſtimony; or, according to Mr. *Mede*'s reading, when they ſhall be *about to finiſh it*; that is, when the one thouſand two hundred and ſixty Prophetical Days of their mournful Prophecy are expired, or near expiring, Then it is, that the Beaſt ſhall make this War; for ſo long they were to propheſie clothed in Sackcloth.

But there are ſome who would have the Text run thus; not when they have finiſhed, or be about to finiſh, *but when they ſhall be finiſhing, performing, or declaring their Teſtimony*, this War ſhall be made againſt them. And ſo they underſtand their finiſhing their Teſtimony to import no more than their performing or declaring their Teſtimony againſt the Beaſt and his Followers all along their one thouſand two hundred and ſixty Years Prophecy. And accordingly they underſtand by the War here ſaid to be made againſt them, to be none other than what the Beaſt has been making againſt them all along their one thouſand two hundred and ſixty Days Prophecy, nor their Slaughter any other than what they ſuffer'd in that length of time. But that this cannot be the ſenſe and meaning of the place, conſider,

1. That it is diſagreeable to the general and common Signification of the word *finiſh*, or to have finiſhed, as it is uſed in Scripture, and againſt the common uſe of it in Speech and other Writings. It would be tedious to ſhew by particular Inſtances in Scripture, how the word *finiſhing* almoſt every where ſignifies to bring the things to which it is applied, to an *iſſue*, to an *end*, to a *cloſe*, to a *point*, and to *conſummate*, *perfect*, and *compleat* them. And to force an unuſual Signification upon a Word, where the Scope of the Place, and the Nature of the Matter where it is uſed, does not neceſſarily require it, has little Authority in it to procure Aſſent.

2. This War and this Slaughter of the Witneſſes here ſpoken of, according to the Order and Succeſſion of Occurrences repreſented before in this Chapter, are ſuch Events as were to follow *after* the Reformation, at a great diſtance, yea which were to follow after ſuch other things as were to follow after the Reformation it ſelf; ſuch as was the Effuſion of ſeveral of the Vials: And if ſo, then not any War againſt the Witneſſes, nor any Slaughter of them preceding the Reformation, can be that War, or that Slaughter here ſpoken of.

But it is objected, That if the War here ſpoken of, by which the Witneſſes are ſaid to be ſlain, were not meant of that War by which the Witneſſes had ſuffered a Political Death, all along the time of their mournful Prophecy, and many times a violent Death in a proper ſenſe; but of a War at the end of it only, Then there is nothing in the Viſion here which repreſents any War at all of the Beaſt againſt the Witneſſes, nor any political Death they ſuffered by it all along their one thouſand two hundred and ſixty Years mournful Prophecy, though there is a clear account of both in Hiſtory.

Anſwer; And what if there be no ſuch former War repreſented in this Viſion? Is it not enough, that it is repreſented elſewhere in this Book? as it is *Chap.* xiii. 7. beſides other places: *He ſhall make War with the Saints, and overcome them.* And the Hiſtory of the Witneſſes ſuffering all along before the Reformation, will well enough anſwer to this Prophecy, though the War of the Beaſt againſt them in this place reſpects but a War which the Beaſt will raiſe againſt them long after the time in which the Reformation firſt began. And when the Beaſt ſhall have ſuffered ſo much from the Witneſſes, as is repreſented, he ſhall in the former part of this xith Chapter; it falls in naturally, that he in revenge ſhould make a new attempt againſt them, as here 'tis foretold he will.

But it is farther objected, What greater overcoming of Witneſſes by the Beaſt's War can we conceive ſhould befal them now, at the end of their one thouſand two hundred and ſixty Years Prophecy, than had befallen them all along before?

Anſwer, It is not pretended that any greater overcoming of the Witneſſes by the Beaſt ſhall befal them at the end of their mournful Prophecy, than had befallen them before the Reformation. But for our better underſtanding this matter in hand, it is to be conſidered, That the former prevailing of the Beaſt againſt the Witneſſes, and their great Sufferings thereby, were in a great meaſure, and to a good degree, taken off by the Reformation, by which Reformation the Witneſſes got a great Victory over the Beaſt and his Party. By which, and by what followed thereupon, by the Witneſſes propheſying, and by their pouring out a great part of the Vials, they had diſabled the Beaſt, for ſome Ages, from overcoming them in any ſuch hoſtile manner as he had done before the Reformation, and became able to ſecure themſelves in a great meaſure, and to make their part good againſt him.

By the Beaſt's former War, the Witneſſes had for a long time been depreſs'd and kept out of all publick Employment in Church and State. But the Witneſſes were in great part reſtored to theſe Privileges in the times of the Reformation, and in the Countries that have been reformed, and will have kept poſſeſſion of them for a long time before this laſt War of the Beaſt takes place.

But after all this, and about the time in which the Witneſſes mournful Prophecy ſhould come to an end, Almighty God (as this Prophecy does inform us) will permit unto the Beaſt an opportunity of renewing his old War againſt the Witneſſes, and with ſuch ſucceſs as that the Beaſt ſhall repoſſeſs himſelf of his former Power over them, and ſhall deprive them again of their publick Power and Privileges for ſome little time.

As it behoved our Lord Chriſt firſt to ſuffer, and then to enter into his Glory of high Exaltation, ſo it ſeems probable, that his Church in this will be made ſomething conformable to him; that is, in being humbled and brought very low for a little ſeaſon, but a little before her higheſt Exaltation in this World.

The next three Verſes 8, 9, 10. contain a Prophetical Repreſentation of the Diſgrace the Beaſt and his Party will put upon the Witneſſes after they have overcome them, and how they will rejoyce and triumph over them. But then in the 11th and 12th Verſe, we have the Reſurrection of theſe ſlain Witneſſes prophetically ſet forth.

And after three days and an half, the Spirit of Life from God entred into them, and they ſtood upon their feet. And they heard a great Voice from Heaven, ſaying unto them, Come up hither. And they aſcended up to Heaven in a Cloud, and their Enemies beheld them.

This Reſurrection is to be underſtood only of thoſe who eſcaped the loſs of their Natural Lives in the War, by which the Beaſt overcame the Witneſſes and kill'd them, and conſequently of a political Reſurrection. The political Death they ſuffered, tho' they eſcaped a natural Death, was their being caſt down and deprived of all publick Power and Employment, both in Church and State: And therefore by their Reſurrection, in a political ſenſe, we are to underſtand their being reſtored to the publick Power, Liberty and Privileges, which before they had loſt. As their Death ſignified a being reduced to a kind of ſervile State, a State of Slavery, ſo their Reſurrection implies their being reſtored to a State of Liberty and Power again. And to call this a *Reſurrection*, is but according to the Prophetical Stile of old. The great Change which God purpoſed to make in the Condition of the whole Houſe of *Iſrael*, by delivering them out of Captivity, Slavery, and a ſervile State, and by reſtoring them to their own Land, and to their ancient Liberties and Privileges, is deſcribed as if it were a Reſurrection from Death to Life. When he promiſed to do this for them, it is by promiſing to open their Graves for them, and to bring them out of their Graves, *Ezek.* xxxvii. 11, 12, 13, 14.

12, 13, 14. This, I doubt not, is the general meaning of this Parable touching the Reſurrection of the Witneſſes, in which Expoſitors do accord.

But the great Queſtion is, to what *Time* this Reſurrection of the Witneſſes does belong? And whether by it we are to underſtand the Witneſſes, being by the Reformation reſtored to thoſe Liberties of publick Worſhip, and thoſe publick Offices and Employments, both in Church and State, out of which they had been forceably kept above a thouſand Years? Or whether by this Reſurrection of theirs, is not meant their being reſtored to thoſe Liberties, Privileges, and publick Offices and Employments, which they had held and enjoyed a long time, *by vertue of the Reformation*, until they ſhall be forceably deprived of them by a new attempt, hoſtilely managed by the Beaſt, to recover what he had loſt by that Reformation? This is the true State of the Queſtion.

And that we are to underſtand this Reſurrection of the Witneſſes in this latter ſenſe, and not in the former, will appear by this. The Reformation fell out long before the time prefixed for the Witneſſes finiſhing their Teſtimony: But their Reſurrection here ſpoken of, is not to fall out till *after* they have finiſhed their Teſtimony, or are about to finiſh it. The War of the Beaſt againſt the Witneſſes, by which they will be overcome, is ſaid to be when they *ſhall have finiſhed* their Teſtimony; and yet this Reſurrection is not to be till three Prophetical Days and an half *after* they are overcome and kill'd by that War. And though we ſhould begin the account of the Witneſſes twelve hundred and ſixty Years mournful Prophecy ſo early as the Year 397. yet the Reformation would be found to fall out one hundred and forty Years before the Witneſſes were to finiſh that Prophecy of theirs. But if we begin not that account until the Year 457. or till ſome Years after (which upon ſeveral accounts I take to be the truer *Epocha*, the time of the Witneſſes Prophecy, and the times of the Beaſt, being ſome time ſince expired, according to the firſt account, which I think ſhews it not to be right) we ſhall find, that the Reformation has fallen out two hundred Years or more before the end of the time of their mournful Prophecy. Either of theſe Computations make too great a diſtance between the time in which the one did fall out, or the other is to fall out, for any Man, on any probable ground, to conclude the Reformation and this Reſurrection of the Witneſſes to be one and the ſame thing.

As for that Plea (which is made uſe of to avoid the force of this Argument) which would inſinuate as if the Witneſſes finiſhing their Teſtimony, ſignifies no more than their performing or declaring their Teſtimony, in which ſenſe they have been finiſhing their Teſtimony all along their one thouſand two hundred and ſixty Years Prophecy, I have anſwered it before. And indeed it looks but oddly to ſay they were finiſhing their Teſtimony as ſoon as they began it.

But another Argument which does notably evince, that neither the War of the Beaſt, nor the Death of the Witneſſes, nor their Reſurrection *here ſpoken of*, did precede or go before the Reformation, or accompany it, but that they all are to follow after it, is taken from the little or ſhort time here ſet down, between the Death of the Witneſſes by the War, and their Reſurrection after it. It is ſaid of the Witneſſes, *Ver.* 9. That their dead Bodies ſhould be ſeen three Days and an half, and not ſuffer'd to be put in Graves. And then in *Ver.* 11, 12. it's ſaid, that *after* three Days and an half, the Spirit of Life from God entred into them, and they ſtood upon their feet. Upon which a great Voice from Heaven ſaid unto them, *Come up hither*; and that they aſcended in a Cloud. So that between their Death and Reſurrection, we ſee there is to be but three Days and an half.

Now then, if we underſtand the Death of thoſe that ſhall riſe, and their Reſurrection it ſelf in a political ſenſe, as it's agreed we muſt, Then it follows neceſſarily, that theſe Witneſſes were by their political Death deprived of their Liberties, Privileges, and publick Offices, but three Days and an half before they were reſtored to them again by their Reſurrection. And if ſo, then the War and the political Death of the Witneſſes here ſpoken of, cannot be that War, or that political Death the Witneſſes ſuffered by it before the Reformation. For by that War and Death the Witneſſes were kept out of their Liberties, Privileges, and publick Offices for a thouſand Years before the Reformation: Whereas by this War and Death, the Witneſſes are to be deprived of thoſe Liberties and Offices but three Years and an half from the time they had enjoyed them under the Reformation. This is all plain, eaſie, and unforced.

But to evade the force of ſuch-like Reaſoning, ſome would perſuade us to underſtand by the three Days and an half, three Times and an half, or the Time, Times and half a Time in *Daniel*, though they grant the three Days and an half thus underſtood, would be equal in length of time to the one thouſand two hundred and ſixty Days Prophecy of the Witneſſes.

But to make three days and a half to ſignifie ſuch a length of Time, as we underſtand by a Time, Times, and half a Time, and by one thouſand two hundred and ſixty Days of the Witneſſes propheſying, is quite beſide the Prophetick Stile of this Book, which never uſes to ſignifie more than ſo many Years by ſo many Days And it is moreover a way of Interpretation which cannot be juſtified by any one like Inſtance or Example throughout the whole Bible: And therefore to be look'd upon as wholly precarious.

But to have ſaid either here or elſewhere, for a Time, and Times, and half a Time, Three Years and a half, had been quite out of the Road of the Prophetick Stile, which never names a Year for a Year of Years, ſaith Dr. *More*, Arith. Apoc. p. 367. And if the Prophetick Stile never names a Year for a Year of Years; much leſs, as every one's Reaſon will ſuggeſt, does it name a *Day* for a Year of Years: And if it never does ſo, then it does not ſo in this place.

It would have ſounded harſh to the common ſenſe of Men to have ſaid the Bodies of the ſlain Witneſſes lay three Years and an half unburied in the Street of the great City, which yet is the inward Senſe of this Parabolical Viſion. And therefore we ſee the ſame Prophetick Figure in ſpeaking is here made uſe of, as it is in other places in this Book, when ſo many Years are ſignified by ſo many Days. But who would ever imagine, that this Pith or Pulp contained ſhould as much exceed the Rind, containing it in meaſure, as one thouſand two hundred and ſixty Years exceeds three Days and a half? And therefore that ſo many Year of Years ſhould be ſignified by ſo many Days, exceeds all Example in Scripture, and conſequently all Rational Belief. Such a Senſe then put upon the Witneſſes lying unburied three Days and a half, which cannot be maintained but upon the Authority of ſuch an incredible Paradox, does ſufficiently evince that not to be the true Senſe and Meaning of the Words.

But beſides, if it could be granted (which it cannot) that the three Days and a half here ſignifies the ſame length of Time, which a Time, Times, and half a Time does, or which one thouſand two hundred and ſixty Days in the Witneſſes Prophecy does; yet this would not prove the Reformation to be at the ſame time in the which the Witneſſes are ſaid to riſe, or to be one and the ſame thing with their Reſurrection, but a long time after it, and at a great diſtance from it. For it is *after* the three Days and an half, in which the Witneſſes are ſaid to lie dead, that they are ſaid to riſe; and ſo it will be *after* the three times and a half, before they ſhall riſe, though the three Days and a half ſhould ſignifie ſuch a length of time. And if ſo, the Reformation would be ſo far from being *after* the Time, Times, and half a Time, as that it would be two hundred Years before the end of them, or according to their own account one hundred and forty Years before it, as I have ſhew'd before. And this diſtance between the one and the other, is too great ever to reconcile them, and to make them meet in one point of Time. And to think to ſolve this Difficulty by ſaying the half time became *current* before the Reformation, and that therefore the Reformation may be ſaid to be after it, is to prove one doubtful thing by another as doubtful as it ſelf. For I take what has been ſaid, and may farther be ſaid to prove, that the Reformation began a conſiderable time before the half time became current, is of much more weight than what is argued to the contrary. But if it were not, yet if the Reformation were but one hundred and forty Years before the end of the Time, Times, and half a Time, it would be too long in all reaſon to hold true, in ſaying it was *after it*. This ſmall Wire is too weak for the weight of the whole matter in queſtion to be hung upon it, which yet as we ſee in the iſſue it is.

For to aſſert the Prophecy of the riſing of the Witneſſes after three times and a half was fulfilled by the Reformation, though that took place one hundred and forty Years before the end of the three times and a half, and to do it upon this ground, becauſe the reſt of the time was then running on, is all one in reality as to ſay, the Prophecy of the holy City's being trodden under foot forty two Months was fulfilled, when it had been ſo but thirty ſeven Months and ten Days; or as it would be to ſay, the Viſion of the Witneſſes propheſying in Sackcloth one thouſand two hundred and ſixty Days was fulfilled, when they had done ſo but one thouſand one hundred and twenty Days; for the full time of theſe was at theſe Times running on, as well as the full Time of the other was at the Reformation. And if to aſſert the latter would be highly unreaſonable, then to aſſert the former cannot be leſs. We may notionally divide three Times and a half into ſeven Semi-Times; but when we have done ſo, we cannot, upon any good grounds, improve ſuch Diviſion to any other uſe than the Phraſe three times and a half ſerves to. For I could never underſtand, that the three times and an half in the Prophecies, were deſigned to ſet forth the ſeveral different Events which were to fall out in thoſe different parts of time; but only to ſhow for how long time in the whole the things to which thoſe times relate, ſhould continue. As for dividing the three times and half a time into ſeven half times, and then to make half a time an *Unite*, it is incongruous to the Text, in which if we will find an Unite, one of the three times muſt be it. For half of one of theſe times will no more make an Unite, than half of one will make one. I might obſerve, that to make the three times and an half in *Daniel* to be a more Authentick Rule of Computation than the Beaſt's forty two Months, or the Witneſſes mournful Prophecy one thouſand two hundred and ſixty days, which are all ſynchronal, is contrary to a received Rule for interpreting Scripture, which is to interpret Paſſages in the Old Teſtament by what is ſaid of the ſame things in the new. It is uſually God's Method in revealing his Mind to proceed from that which is leſs perfect to that which is more ſo. And how ſhould we have been ſure that *Daniel*'s time, times, and half a time, had not ſignified four or five Prophetical Years and an half; if that of the Beaſt's forty two Months, and the Witneſſes one thouſand two hundred and ſixty days, had not enlightened it, as ſynchronizing with it.

It is yet once more objected, That if the Church of God ſhall at any time be reduced to ſo very low a condition as is repreſented by the Witneſſes being ſlain, and lying three days and a half unburied, it is no ways likely it ſhould recover out of it again in ſo ſhort a time as three Years and an half; and for that reaſon, we may well think a longer time is intended by three days and an half in this place.

To which I anſwer, That if we were aſſured, that Almighty God in effecting this Alteration, were likely to proceed in ſuch a leiſurely Motion of Providence as he is wont to do in ordinary caſes, this Objection would be conſiderable. But ſince it is ſaid, that in the ſame Hour in which the Witneſſes are ſaid to ariſe and to aſcend, there was a great Earthquake, and a tenth part of the City fell, and ſeven thouſand Men, or Names of Men, were ſlain in the Earthquake; and that the remnant were affrighted and gave Glory to the God of Heaven, as it follows, *ver.* 13. it argues, that God will bring this ſudden and great Alteration to paſs in ſome *extraordinary* way. For an *Earthquake* is not *ordinary* and common, much leſs *a great Earthquake*, which yet is to fall out at the ſame time. By which probably leſs cannot be meant than great Shakings, if not Overturnings in the Nations and Places where the Witneſſes ſhall then be. And more particularly the Text tells us, that in this Earthquake a tenth part of the City fell, *viz.* of that City which in *ver.* 8. is ſpiritually called *Sodom* and *Egypt*. Which muſt denote, doubtleſs, the falling off of a conſiderable part of the Beaſt's Dominion from him; or the Fall of *Rome* it ſelf, as Mr. *Mede* thinks, as being now but a tenth part of what it was when St. *John* had this Viſion. And if ſo, this Fall of a tenth part of the City, may be the ſame with the pouring out the fifth Vial upon the Seat or Throne of the Beaſt. However let this Fall of a tenth part of the City ſignifie what it will, the Earthquake, with its Concomitants will produce theſe two effects.

Firſt, The ſlaying of ſeven thouſand Names of Men, or Men of Name, which can ſignifie no leſs than a political Death of great Numbers of ſuch Men, that is, the Loſs of their Offices and Dignities; for in ſuch a Senſe the Witneſſes had been ſlain.

Secondly, This Earthquake and the Concomitants and Effects of it, will ſo affect the remnant of the People which were not ſo politically ſlain, as to cauſe them to give Glory to the God of Heaven; that is, by their Repentance and Converſion, as may probably be preſumed, and by acknowledging God's ſpecial hand, ſhowing it ſelf in ſuch great and ſudden turns in publick Affairs, in favour of his Church.

Theſe extraordinary Actings of the Divine Providence conſidered, it is not ſo difficult a thing to conceive how ſo great a Deliverance may be wrought for the Church in ſo ſhort a time, as the Objection repreſents it. Sure I am it's a very eaſie thing with God to accompliſh ſo great a Work in ſo little time, if he intends it. And what does he leſs than tell us he intends it by this Prophecy concerning it?

Beſides, when it's ſaid of the Witneſſes, that their dead Bodies ſhould lie in the *Street* of the great City, ſpiritually called *Sodom* and *Egypt*, and which after three days and an half, ſhould there riſe again, it begets a Queſtion, whether the Slaughter and Reſurrection of the Witneſſes here foretold, ſhould be general, and in all places of the Empire where any good Chriſtians are, or whether only in ſome eminent place or part of it; for we ſee it is to fall out but in the *Street* of the great City; and it may well be thought ſuch a great City as this, has more Streets than one in it. And if this

Slaughter and Reſurrection of the Witneſſes ſhould prove to fall out but in ſome one eminent part or part of the Empire, or Papal Juriſdiction, then it will be yet more eaſie to conceive how ſo great an Alteration in the outward condition of the Church, as the Reſurrection of the Witneſſes imports, may poſſibly be brought to paſs in ſo ſhort a time as is ſignified by three days and an half. It is foretold, that the ten Horns of the Beaſt, or the ten Kings ſignified thereby, ſhall hate the Whore, and make her deſolate and naked. And who knows but that this Prediction may in great part be fulfilled in this juncture of time, as well, if not rather, than at any other: Eſpecially conſidering, that a tenth part of that great City is to fall at the ſame time. And if theſe things ſhould chance to fall out but in ſome eminent place of the Empire, we cannot reaſonably conceive otherwiſe than that ſuch an Alteration in the Empire it ſelf, muſt needs make a ſudden Alteration in the Witneſſes Caſe and in the State of the Church. After the Proteſtant Party in *Germany* had been brought into a very low condition in the beginning of the Year 1547. there was ſuch a wonderful Alteration of it in three Years and an half, as tempted Mr. *Brightman* to take that for the fulfilling of this Prophecy of the Witneſſes Reſurrection, after they had been made a mocking-ſtock by their Enemies three Years and an half. This Inſtance however ſhows how poſſible it is for a wonderful Alteration to be made in the State of the Church in three Years and an half's time. When the great Harlot ſhall ſay in her Heart, I ſit as a Queen, and ſhall ſee no Sorrow, it's ſaid, therefore ſhall her Plagues come in *one day*, Rev. xviii. 7, 8. Nay at *v.* 10. in *one hour* is thy Judgment come, *v.* 17. for in *one hour* ſo great Riches is come to nought, and *v.* 19. for in *one hour* ſhe is made deſolate. Theſe Paſſages beſpeak great Alterations to be made in a little time in its Seaſon.

It follows *ver.* 14. *The ſecond Wo is paſt, and behold the third Wo cometh quickly.* The ſecond Wo is paſt, that is, the Wo of the ſixth Trumpet, for the ſixth Trumpet is the ſecond Wo-Trumpet. And in ſaying this Wo is paſt juſt upon the cloſe of the foreſaid Viſion of the Reſurrection of the Witneſſes and its Concomitants, it's plain this Trumpet, and the Wo of it, were not paſt till theſe were paſt. And if this laſt Viſion of the Reſurrection of the Witneſſes, and what fell out with it the ſame Hour, were part of this ſecond Wo, as undoubtedly they were, then ſo were all the foregoing Viſions which contain Matter of Wo to the Beſtians; they were ſo many bitter Ingredients, which with the firſt and theſe laſt, do conſtitute and make up this ſecond Wo, which began *Chap.* ix. 13. and ends at the 13th *Verſe* of this *Chapter*. The principal parts of which Wo, as relating to the Weſtern Empire, are the Reformation, the Plagues of many of the Vials, the Reſurrection of the Witneſſes, the Earthquake and Fall of a tenth part of the City. And to think what befel the Eaſtern Empire by the *Turkiſh* Conqueſt, did contain all the ſecond Wo, and that little or none of it was to fall upon the Weſtern Empire, *Rome*, and its Territories, which was as deeply Criminal as the Eaſtern, and probably much more, is to fancy a very unlikely thing.

And yet in defence of it, it is ſaid that the five former Trumpets had but one Viſion a piece belonging to them; and why then ſhould we think any more belongs to this?

To which it's anſwer'd; the reaſon why we ſhould think more than one Viſion, and ſo more than one Viſion belongs to the ſixth Trumpet, is becauſe it is near, if not altogether as viſible in Scripture, that more than one belongs to it, as it is that one does. The Viſion of meaſuring the Temple, of the Witneſſes propheſying, of their ſmiting the Earth with Plagues, of their Reſurrection after their Slaughter, of the Earthquake and Fall of a tenth part of the City: If all theſe ſhould make but one Viſion, as doubtleſs they do more, yet this would prove more than the Viſion of the *Euphratean* Horſe to belong to the ſixth Trumpet. For all theſe things were ſhow'd St. *John* after his Viſion of the *Euphratean* Horſemen, and before the ending of the ſixth Trumpet, which is not till *ver.* 14. of this *Chapter*.

Again, it is inſinuated, as if the Particulars forenamed ſhould appertain to ſomewhat elſe than the ſixth Trumpet, becauſe thoſe make many Woes; whereas the Wo of the ſixth Trumpet is but one, it is the ſecond Wo in three. The Anſwer to this is, That though the Wo of this Trumpet be but one general Wo, yet it is ſuch as contains ſeveral particular ones in it. The Men that were killed by this *Turkiſh* Hoſtility, were killed *by theſe Plagues*, in the plural Number, *v.* 20. For firſt, if the *Turkiſh* Conqueſt by the *Euphratean* Horſemen, had been the whole of the Wo of the ſixth Trumpet, yet that conſiſted of ſeveral diſtinct Woes; as the Loſs of Eſtate, the Loſs of Liberty, the Loſs of Power and Government, the Loſs of Religion in great part, and the Loſs of Life it ſelf, as to very many. Secondly, The ſeven Plagues of the Vials fall under the ſixth or ſeventh Trumpet, or both: And though they are *more than one*, yet they do but contribute to the making that *one general Wo* of the Trumpet under which they fall, they being both Wo-Trumpets.

Again, they diſtinguiſh between the *Time* of the ſixth Trumpet, and the *Wo* of it, and inſinuate, as if when it's ſaid *the ſecond Wo is paſt* in this 14th Verſe, the meaning were only to ſhew, that the *Time* of the ſixth Trumpet is but then paſt, when-as the Wo of that Trumpet was paſt long before, when the *Euphratean* Horſemen were brought on the Eaſtern Empire.

But in expreſs Contradiction to this Inſinuation, it is ſaid, not the *Time* of the ſixth Trumpet is paſt, but *the ſecond Wo is paſt:* Though it's true it implies, that the Time of that Trumpet was then paſt alſo. But however, we ſee all of the ſecond Wo was not paſt till the Time of the ſixth Trumpet was paſt with it. And for what end can we imagine the *Time* of the ſixth Trumpet ſhould be continued to its due length, but to attend the finiſhing and compleating the woful Event of that Wo-Trumpet?

Proceed we now to the ſeventh Trumpet, *ver.* 15. But before we come to the Words in which the Viſion of this ſeventh Trumpet are expreſs'd, it will be of great uſe to prepare our way thereto; and for the better underſtanding the parts and the whole of the Viſion it ſelf, to conſider what the mighty Angel, in *Chap.* 10. *Ver.* 7. hath foretold concerning the proper Event of the Viſion of the ſeventh Trumpet. The words are theſe: *But in the days of the Voice of the ſeventh Angel, when he ſhall begin to ſound, the Myſtery of God ſhall be finiſhed, as he hath declared to his Servants the Prophets.* In which words, I conceive, that Angel hath foretold, That the proper Event of the ſeventh Trumpet will be the *finiſhing of the Myſtery of God*, according to what he had before declared to his Servants the Prophets. If then we can underſtand what this *Myſtery of God* is, here ſpoken of, and what the *finiſhing* of it is, we may then know what the Event of the ſeventh Trumpet will be.

The Myſtery of God here mentioned, and which has been declared to his Servants the Prophets, in all probability, will conſiſt mainly in theſe two things. Firſt, In bringing down the Enemies of Chriſt, and of his Church; or the taking the Power of ruling and bearing ſway in the World, wholly and irrecoverably out of their hands, and the putting it into the hands of thoſe who ſhall then be of the Church. Secondly, In the great Enlargement of the Kingdom of Chriſt in the World, by the Converſion of the Nation of the Jews, and by bringing in the fulneſs of the Gentiles. For theſe two things have been abundantly declared by God to the Prophets, and to us by them, and that in ſomwhat a myſterious Stile too: For which reaſon the more obſcure Revelation of theſe things may well be called the *Myſtery of God.* Theſe two things were revealed unto the Prophet *Daniel*, by revealing to him *Nebuchadnezzar*'s Dream, concerning the Image, *Chap.* ii. 34, 35. *Thou ſaweſt till a Stone was cut out without hands, which ſmote the Image on his Feet, that were of Iron and Clay, and brake them to pieces. Then was the Iron, the Clay, the Braſs, the Silver, and the Gold, broken to pieces together, and became like the Chaff of the Summer-threſhing-floors, and the Wind carried them away, that no place was found for them: And the Stone that ſmote the Image became a great Mountain, and filled the whole Earth.* This is afterwards interpreted, *ver.* 44, 45. *In the days of thoſe Kings ſhall the God of Heaven ſet up a Kingdom which ſhall never be deſtroyed; and the Kingdom ſhall not be left to other People, but it ſhall break in pieces and conſume all theſe Kingdoms, and it ſhall ſtand for ever. Foraſmuch as thou ſaweſt that the Stone was cut out of the Mountains without hands, and that it brake in pieces the Iron, the Braſs, the Clay, the Silver, and the Gold; the great God hath made known to the King what ſhall come to paſs hereafter,* &c. The like we have in another of *Daniel*'s Viſions, *Chap.* vii. 26, 27. and in many other places in other of the Prophets.

And the *finiſhing* this Myſtery of God is that which is like to be the Event of the ſeventh Trumpet; which finiſhing will probably conſiſt in the total Accompliſhment of the Prophecies touching this Myſtery of God. Not the fulfilling them in part, as before they had been fulfilled; but it is the *finiſhing* the Conſummation of this Myſtery that will be the Event of the ſeventh Trumpet.

For otherwiſe this Myſtery hath already been accompliſhed to a degree in the Converſion of many of the Gentiles, and joyning them to, and making them one Body with the believing Jews which firſt received the Goſpel. For the doing of this was a Myſtery foretold by the Prophets, as St. *Paul* calls it, *Epheſ.* iii. 4, 9. that is, it was a thing underſtood but by few till it was accompliſhed. But this was not the *finiſhing* this

Myſtery of God, that being reſerved to the Times of the ſeventh Trumpet, as it's probable, when the Nation of the Jews which has long been rejected, ſhall be converted to the Chriſtian Faith, and be brought into the Church. And then the Nations of the Gentiles in their *fulneſs* will alſo be brought into the Church. This is yet a *Myſtery*, as St. *Paul* calls it, *Rom.* xi. 25, 26. But the bringing theſe things to paſs will be the *finiſhing* of this Myſtery.

And the Prophecies likewiſe of taking the Power of Rule and Government out of the hands of the Church's Enemies, and putting it into the hands of the Church, has in ſeveral Nations been fulfilled already in part; as in the Days of *Conſtantine*, the firſt Chriſtian Emperor, and of his Succeſſors; and likewiſe by the happy Reformation begun by *Luther*. But all this has not yet been the *finiſhing* this part of the Myſtery of God declared to the Prophets; but the finiſhing of this is reſerved to the Times of the ſeventh Trumpet, when the *Times of the Gentiles will be fulfilled*, as our Saviour's Phraſe is, *Luke* xxi. 24. that is, when their time of Ruling ſhall have an end. The ſame thing which St. *Paul* calls the putting down all Rule, all Authority and Power; meaning of the Enemies of Chriſt and his Church; for of thoſe he there ſpeaks, 1 *Cor.* xv. 24.

Having premiſed theſe things from the Angel's words in *Chap.* x. 7. we are, I hope, the better prepared to conſider and underſtand the Viſion of the ſeventh Trumpet it ſelf, as agreeing with what the Angel has foretold concerning it.

Ver. 15. *The ſeventh Angel ſounded, and there were great Voices in Heaven, ſaying, The Kingdoms of this World are become the Kingdoms of the Lord and of his Chriſt, and he ſhall reign for ever and ever.* Behold here an exact agreement between what is here declared in Viſion to have come to paſs upon the ſounding of the ſeventh Angel, and between what the mighty Angel foretold would be finiſhed in the Days of the ſeventh Angel, when he ſhould begin to ſound, to wit, that part of the Myſtery of God which conſiſts in the laſt and greateſt Enlargement of the Church and Kingdom of Chriſt upon Earth. For the firſt thing we meet with after the ſeventh Angel has ſounded, is we ſee a Declaration by great Voices from Heaven, ſaying, *The Kingdoms of this World are become the Kingdoms of the Lord, and of his Chriſt.* And I have formerly ſhew'd, that the Eventual Accompliſhment of the Viſions of the Trumpets belong to the Times of thoſe Trumpets under which the Viſions are ſhew'd or ſeen. And I the rather take notice of it again here, to ſhew, that the Converſion of the Kingdoms of the World here ſpoken of, cannot be meant of any former Converſion of them, before the times of the ſeventh Trumpet, as the Converſion of Nations by the Reformation was.

Ver. 16, 17. *And four and twenty Elders which ſat before God on their Seats, fell upon their Faces, and worſhipped God, ſaying, We give thee thanks, O Lord, God Almighty, which art, and waſt, and art to come; becauſe thou haſt taken to thee thy great Power and haſt reigned:* That is, his Ruling or Governing Power, his Power of Reigning. And his taking this unto himſelf at this time, implies, that until then he had in great part ſuffer'd others, ſuch as were his Enemies, to exerciſe that Power, and to make uſe of it againſt him, and againſt his faithful Subjects. But upon this ſeventh Angel's ſounding, the time will be come when he will *wholly* take it out of their hands into his own, and will thenceforth Reign himſelf; by betruſting the Exerciſe of that Power only in ſuch hands as will uſe it for him, and for the good of all his good and loyal Subjects. This other part of the Myſtery of God will at this time be *finiſhed*, which had been begun long before.

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Myſtery of God, that being reſerved to the Times of the ſeventh Trumpet, as it's probable, when the Nation of the Jews which has long been rejected, ſhall be converted to the Chriſtian Faith, and be brought into the Church. And then the Nations of the Gentiles in their *fulneſs* will alſo be brought into the Church. This is yet a *Myſtery*, as St. *Paul* calls it, *Rom.* xi. 25, 26. But the bringing theſe things to paſs will be the *finiſhing* of this Myſtery.

And the Prophecies likewiſe of taking the Power of Rule and Government out of the hands of the Church's Enemies, and putting it into the hands of the Church, has in ſeveral Nations been fulfilled already in part; as in the Days of *Conſtantine*, the firſt Chriſtian Emperor, and of his Succeſſors; and likewiſe by the happy Reformation begun by *Luther*. But all this has not yet been the *finiſhing* this part of the Myſtery of God declared to the Prophets; but the finiſhing of this is reſerved to the Times of the ſeventh Trumpet, when the *Times of the Gentiles will be fulfilled*, as our Saviour's Phraſe is, *Luke* xxi. 24. that is, when their time of Ruling ſhall have an end. The ſame thing which St. *Paul* calls the putting down all Rule, all Authority and Power; meaning of the Enemies of Chriſt and his Church; for of thoſe he there ſpeaks, 1 *Cor.* xv. 24.

Having premiſed theſe things from the Angel's words in *Chap.* x. 7. we are, I hope, the better prepared to conſider and underſtand the Viſion of the ſeventh Trumpet it ſelf, as agreeing with what the Angel has foretold concerning it.

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A

SERMON

Preach'd at the

FUNERAL

OF

Mr. William Allen,

Auguſt 17. 1686.

By *RICHARD KIDDER*, Rector
of St. *Martin Outwich*, *London*.

To his Honoured Friend

Mrs. *ALICE ALLEN*, Widow.

THE Sermon which follows, when I firſt compoſed it, was never intended for the Preſs: I am very ſenſible of its Defects, and that it is very ſhort of that Argument of which it treats: The Character which I have given of your late Husband deceaſed, falls ſhort alſo of that excellent Man. It was a trouble to me that it fell to my ſhare to perform this laſt Office. For though no Man loved or eſteemed the good Man more than I did, yet there were many that could have done him greater right. However, ſince it was your pleaſure to deſire it, I thought it became me not to diſpute the matter: And ſince what I did was accepted, and I was deſired to make it publick, I was willing to comply, in hopes that it might do ſome good: I know very well that a great Example of Piety hath a conſiderable Influence: And though I do not pretend to give the juſt and full Character of our deceaſed Friend; yet, I hope, what is ſaid, may be of ſome uſe to recommend ſubſtantial and unaffected Piety to Mankind. If it gain this effect, I ſhall think my ſelf abundantly rewarded, and ſhall have great cauſe to bleſs God for it.

I am very ſenſible how great a Loſs the Death of ſuch a Man is to the Publick, how great to my ſelf, and how grievous to you his departure hence was. But we are to ſubmit to the Will and Wiſdom of God. He lived to good purpoſe and to a good old Age; He is placed above Contingencies, and is out of the reach of Evil. He glorified God on the Earth, and is now paſſed into the Glory above. We may mourn for our ſelves, and at the ſame time ought not to forget to give God hearty Thanks for his great Goodneſs to him; we are to improve our Loſs as well as to bear it with patience. And the hope we have of Heaven will be able to ſuſtain us; and if we cheriſh and increaſe this hope in our ſelves, we are certain that whatever befals us will advance us toward that bleſſed State. If we be good our ſelves 'twill not be in the power of any evil to render us miſerable; if we be not, nothing will make us happy.

But I need not tell you this, who have of a long time been a Diſciple and Follower of Jeſus, and have made a wiſe Choice of that better part which ſhall never be taken from you.

This following Diſcourſe belongs to you. I deſire your acceptance of it as a Teſtimony of the honour I preſerve for the Memory of your deceaſed Husband. I am

Your moſt aſſured Friend

and Servant,

BRITISH MUSEUM

RICHARD KIDDER.

A Funeral

A
Funeral Sermon.

HEB. xiii. 14.

For here we have no continuing City, but we ſeek one to come.

FOR the better diſcerning the Occaſion of theſe words, we ſhall do well to look back to the ninth Verſe of this Chapter. There the Divine Author of this Epiſtle warns the *Hebrews* not to be *carried about with diverſe and ſtrange Doctrines:* They would be ſollicited by their Countrymen, the *Jews*, to fall back to Judaiſm, and to entertain the Doctrines and Obſervances of the Moſaical Law, and of thoſe who adhered to it. He tells them that it *is a good thing that the Heart be eſtabliſhed with Grace:* That is, that the Mind or Soul ſhould be refreſhed and nouriſhed with thoſe Spiritual and Evangelical Doctrines, concerning the Pardon of Sin, and Eternal Life, *&c.* which were made known to them by Jeſus Chriſt: As for Meats, about which the Law of *Moſes* gave particular Directions, and eſpecially the Portions of the Victims which were aſſigned by that Law to the Prieſt or People, however they had been trained up in thoſe Obſervances, yet it is manifeſt *they have not profited them that have been occupied therein.* That is, they have not been rendred better by theſe Meats who have been according to the Law, uſed to them.

It follows, *ver.* 10. *We have an Altar whereof they have no right to eat, which ſerve the Tabernacle.* By *Altar* here is meant the *Victim*, or *Sacrifice:* And this is evident from the words. For we cannot be ſaid to eat of the Altar any otherwiſe than as we eat a Portion of the Sacrifice which was offered upon the Altar. Thus St. *Paul* tells us, 1 *Cor.* ix. 13. that *they which miniſter about holy things live of the Temple*; *and they which wait at the Altar, are Partakers with the Altar.* Again, *Chap.* x. *ver.* 18. *Are not they which eat of the Sacrifices Partakers of the Altar?* The meaning of the words then is this, That we, that are Chriſtians, are not indeed without a Sacrifice, the great propitiatory Sacrifice of Chriſt offered upon the Croſs, the Antitype of the greater expiatory Sacrifices among the *Jews*, under the Law of *Moſes:* But then the *Jews*, that *ſerve the Tabernacle*, i. e. who adhere to the Judaical Rites and Obſervances, eſpecially the Service of Sacrifices, which was annexed to the Tabernacle, and was typical of what was to be fulfilled by the *Meſſias*. The *Jews*, I ſay, who continue ſo to do, have no right to the Benefits of this Sacrifice, they embrace the Shadow when the Subſtance is exhibited, and by doing ſo, exclude themſelves from any Advantage from this more excellent Sacrifice.

For the more fully comprehending this whole Matter, and the deſign of the Divine Author of this Epiſtle, in this Diſcourſe of his, it is to be remembred that under the Law of *Moſes* there were ſeveral ſorts of Victims or Sacrifices preſcribed. There were *Holocauſts*, or *whole Burnt-offerings*, which were intirely conſumed upon the Altar, of which no Portion was allowed either to the Prieſt or Offerer. This was intirely God's, and conſequently the whole was conſumed. There were others which were *Treſpaſs* or *Sin-Offerings*, where a Portion was allowed to be eaten by the Prieſt that ſerved the Tabernacle, but no part to the Offerer. There were a third ſort of Offerings, commonly called *Peace-Offerings*, where part was burnt on the Altar, part allowed to the Prieſt, and another Portion to the Offerer. Here God had his *part*, which was offered on the Altar; the Prieſt had his, and the People theirs. And though generally ſpeaking, the Prieſt was allowed to eat a part of the Sin-Offerings, yet ſo it was, that there were ſome of them, out of which the Prieſt who miniſtred and ſerved the Tabernacle, was not allowed to eat any part, and they were the Sin-Offerings which were offered on the great Day of Expiation, and all thoſe Sacrifices, the Blood whereof was brought into the Sanctuary, and the Fleſh of them burnt without the Camp. Theſe laſt were the moſt eminent Types of the Death of Chriſt, who was ſacrificed for us, and the Correſpondence between theſe and Chriſt's Death is very remarkable. Theſe things being premiſed, I proceed to ſhew how the Divine Author of this Epiſtle, does from the Oeconomy of the Moſaical Law concerning theſe Sacrifices, prove that thoſe who fell back to Judaiſm in this matter, rendred themſelves uncapable of the benefits of the Sacrifice of the Death of Chriſt. And thus he proceeds.

Ver. 11. *For the Bodies of thoſe Beaſts, whoſe Blood is brought into the Sanctuary by the High Prieſt for Sin, are burnt without the Camp.* Theſe words give us an account of the Practice of the Jews, under the Law of *Moſes*, viz. That for thoſe Sin-Offerings, the Blood whereof was brought into the Sanctuary, no Portion of the Fleſh was allowed to be eaten by the Prieſt or People, but it was to be entirely conſumed without the Camp: Of theſe Offerings they had no right to eat, who ſerved the Sanctuary. Thus it was in the Type. Let us ſee how it was with the Antitype.

Ver. 12. *Wherefore Jeſus alſo, that he might ſanctifie the People with his own Blood, ſuffered without the Gate.* By ſanctifying the People is meant the making Expiation or Atonement for them; the cleanſing them from their Sin. *By one Offering he hath perfected for ever them that are ſanctified*, Heb. x. 14, 29. This he did with his *own Blood:* The Aaronical Prieſt did it with the Blood of the *Victim.* And that Jeſus might anſwer to the Type (that ſo there might be a better Agreement between the Type and the Antitype) he ſuffered without the Gate. In this he anſwered exactly to the Sacrifice for Sin, which was burnt without the Camp. For certain it is that the City of *Jeruſalem* anſwered to the Camp of *Iſrael* during the ſojourning of that People. That which was to be done without the Camp, they were afterwards obliged to do without the Gate of the City. The carrying of the Fleſh of the Sin-Offering out of the Camp, was an intimation that it was impure, and look'd on as an accurſed and unclean thing: In conformity to which, our Jeſus, who was made a Curſe for us, ſuffered without the Gate of the City.

Ver. 13. *Let us go forth therefore unto him without the Camp, bearing his reproach*; *q. d.* Let us now, after ſuch an Example, imitate our Lord Jeſus. Let us not only forſake the Judaical Obſervances, which were Types now fulfilled in Him: But be it ſo, that we are excluded from Communion with our fellow-Citizens, and deprived of our Eaſe and Worldly Advantages: Yet let us conſider what Indignities Jeſus endured, and not refuſe thoſe Sufferings which he underwent. And though it may ſeem hard to be deprived of our Country and Eaſe, yet we that are Chriſtians muſt conſider that it is our Lot in this World to meet with theſe Evils, and that our happineſs lies in reverſion in the next.

Ver. 14. *For here we have no continuing City, but we ſeeek one to come.* In which words I do obſerve,

Firſt, The Condition of Chriſtians in this World. *Here we have no continuing City.*

Secondly, Their endeavour after a better Condition, *But we ſeek one to come.*

Firſt, We have laid before us the Condition of Chriſtians in this World. *For here we have no continuing City*; This is a Truth which is evident at firſt ſight, it needs no proof: I ſhall not therefore inſiſt upon it. This we may learn without a Text or Preacher. We die daily, and we are hurried from place to place whiles we live here. The firſt Inhabitants of the World indeed made a long ſtay in it. It was fit that that new Plantation ſhould have Inhabitants that might ſtay a longer time to cultivate and repleniſh it. It was then perhaps hardly known that the Son died a Natural Death before his Father. Their time was generally drawn out to a great extent. And they of all Men ſeem'd to have a continuing City upon Earth. But yet they died at laſt, and made it evident that this lower World was never intended for their conſtant place of abode.

In after-times the Ages of Men were contracted, and we read of *Abraham* that *he ſojourned in the Land of Promiſe, as in a ſtrange Country, dwelling in Tabernacles with Iſaac and Jacob, &c.* Heb. xi. 9. and that he *looked for a City which hath Foundations, whoſe Builder and Maker is God*, ver. 10. Thoſe holy Men of old *confeſſed that they were Strangers and Pilgrims on the Earth*, ver. 13. And by doing ſo they acknowledged that they had here no continuing City: *For they that ſay ſuch things, declare plainly* *that they ſeek a Country*, ver. 14. So that this Truth was underſtood before the Holy Scriptures were written. Thoſe holy Men liv'd much longer than we do; but they ſtill eſteem'd themſelves but as Sojourners in the World, and not only becauſe they had left their Native Countries, thither they might have returned, but would have been but Sojourners ſtill: But *they deſired a better Country, that is an heavenly*, ver. 15, 16.

The truth is, we are in this World as in an Inn, and a Paſſage to our future and endleſs State: Our Life is but a travel, and a very ſore one many times it is: We deceive our ſelves if we think to dwell and abide here, our Journey's end lies farther, and I may well beſpeak you in the Prophet's words, *Mic.* ii. 10. *Ariſe ye and depart, for this is not your reſt.*

Indeed the firſt Chriſtians found this true in an high degree, when the Apoſtle could ſay, *Even unto this preſent hour we both hunger and thirſt, and are naked, and are buffeted*, ϗ ἀϛατοῦμεν, *and have no certain dwelling-place*, 1 *Cor.* iv. 11.

Incerti quo fata ferant, ubi ſiſtere detur.

And thoſe holy Men did accordingly live in the World. They conſidered that it was not their place of reſt, and therefore they uſed it as if they uſed it not, and had their Converſations in Heaven.

We are indeed declined much, and have but little more left among us than the Name of *Chriſtians:* We live as if we had here a continuing City; we trade and traffick, we purchaſe and we build, we deſign and contrive, and beſtir our ſelves, as if we were to ſtay here alway, and did not ſo much as deſign any thing beyond this Life. We are very diligent in our purſuit of our Worldly Deſigns; upon that ſcore we ſweat and toil, project and deſign, and weary out our ſelves, when in the mean time we live in neglect of that City which is to come.

How happy were it for us that we lived as thoſe that believe they have here no continual City. How much would this diſintangle us from our Worldly Cares, and our great Anxieties? We ſhould neither mourn, as Men without hope, for our loſſes, nor yet be vainly tranſported with our proſperous Succeſſes: We ſhould in great meaſure be rid of the Evils of this Life, and in a greater Preparation for a better. But this is not that which I mainly deſigned to diſcourſe of when I made choice of theſe words: I proceed to conſider,

Secondly, The Chriſtians endeavour after a better Condition. *But we ſeek one to come.*

For my better proceeding I ſhall conſider,

I. The Deſcription of that better Condition: It is a *City*, and a *continuing* City, though it be to *come.*

II. The Condition on our part toward the obtaining it, we *muſt ſeek.*

III. The Application of the whole.

I. The Deſcription of that better Condition which we hope for; It is a *City*, a *continuing* City, though indeed it be to *come.*

A City it is, and not a barren and waſte Wilderneſs, like this World that is full of hurtful and wild Beaſts. It is the Receptacle of thoſe bleſſed Souls that are at perfect Freedom and Liberty from their Follies, and from their Pains; and not a Cage or Priſon of unclean and miſerable Creatures. It is not a waſte piece of Ground without Inhabitants, but it is repleniſhed with an *innumerable Company of Angels, and the general Aſſembly of the Church of the firſt-born*, Rev. xxi. 10. We have a large Deſcription of the Heavenly *Jeruſalem*, that great and holy City which deſcends from Heaven: This is the place in which God dwells; the *Glory of God* is here, and *the Lord God Almighty and the Lamb are the Temple of it*, ver. 22. This City has no *need of Sun or Moon, for the Glory of God lightens it, and the Lamb is the Light thereof*, ver. 23. And here are all thoſe bleſſed Souls that have followed the Lamb, and continued conſtant to him to the Death. Here are all the Holy Patriarchs and Prophets, Martyrs and Confeſſors, the glorious Company of the Apoſtles. And not only theſe, but (thanks be to God for it) *a great Multitude which no Man can number, of all Nations, and Kindreds, and People, and Tongues— with white Robes and Palms in their hands*, Rev. vii. 9. Bleſſed be God, Heaven will receive all good Souls, though they were not dignified and advanced to be Prophets or Apoſtles. And theſe holy Souls are *before the Throne of God, and ſerve him Day and Night in his Temple; and he that ſitteth on the Throne ſhall dwell among them. They ſhall hunger no more, neither thirſt any more, neither ſhall the Sun light on them, nor any heat. For the Lamb which is in the midſt of the Throne ſhall feed* *them, and ſhall lead them unto living Fountains of Waters, and God ſhall wipe away all Tears from their Eyes*, ver. 15, 16, 17. Such a City is the City of God, and the *Jeruſalem* that is above. That is the place of *Righteouſneſs* and Peace, of great and inflamed Charity and good Will. There Juſtice and Truth, Righteouſneſs and Peace mutually embrace one another. There is no breaking in or going out, no complaining in thoſe Streets. None of the Hurries nor the Cries, the Labour and the Toil which our Earthly Cities are troubled withal.

But it is a *continuing* City alſo, and this ought to recommend it to us: Such a City as *Abraham* by Faith had the Expectation of. *For he looked for a City which hath Foundations, whoſe Builder and Maker is God*, Heb. xi. 10. We have indeed an account of the Foundations of the Heavenly *Jeruſalem* in the Apocalypſe, *Rev.* xxi. 19. We ſhall no longer be perſecuted from City to City, no longer be diſturb'd in our Poſſeſſions, and forced to quit our Habitations, no longer be diſturb'd and affrighted by our Enemies, as we are in our Cities here below: Where many times the Watchman waketh but in vain, and he always does ſo unleſs the Lord keep the City. Here we are forced to be upon our guard, and we have our Enemies within and without. 'Tis otherwiſe in the Heavenly *Jeruſalem*. *The Gates of it ſhall not be ſhut at all by day*, ver. 25. And that is enough as to this City; *for there ſhall be no Night there*. There will be a perpetual Peace and Aſſurance for ever. There will be a conſtant ſhine without ſo much as the Appearance of a Cloud, no evil Zealots within, nor Armies without, to give us any Care or Trouble. We ſhall be for ever ſecure, not from Evil only, but from evil Tidings too; our Hope will be ſwallowed up in Fruition, and all our uneaſie Fears will be baniſhed for ever. In a word, we ſhall dwell with God, and ſhall for ever be with the Lord.

It is true indeed, that this glorious State is to come: It is at ſome diſtance, and lies beyond this World, and this frail and mortal Life. We muſt paſs through a howling Deſart before we come at that good Land. But then ſtill we have ſome Fore-taſtes of the pleaſant Fruits of that Country here, and may take a Proſpect of it, and a *Piſgah* ſight, and are well aſſured that in God's good time we ſhall be received into a full Fruition of it, if we continue in well-doing and faint not. I therefore proceed to conſider,

II. The Condition on our part towards the obtaining it, We muſt *ſeek*—*We ſeek one to come.*

We render it *ſeek*, but it is a compound Verb, and is obſerved to ſignifie *to ſeek earneſtly*, and vehemently to purſue what we profeſs to ſeek for. 'Tis ἐπιζητοῦμεν, which the Latin renders by *inquirimus*: And 'twill be worth our while to conſider the uſe of the word elſewhere, that we may the better learn our Duty in this matter. Our Saviour tells us, *Luke* xiii. 24. that many ſhall ſeek to enter in at the ſtrait Gate, and ſhall not be able, and therefore puts us upon ſtriving to enter in. St. *Luke* uſes the ſimple Verb there, and it is hence evident, that the word in my Text implies more than that word does, though we render them both alike. This Word [Ἐπιζητεῖ] in my Text is uſed in the Goſpels, and from the uſe of it there we may well interpret it in this place. Our Saviour commands his Diſciples to take no thought for Meat, or Drink, or Clothing, (*For after all theſe things do the Gentiles ſeek*) ſays our Saviour, *Matth.* vi. 32. *Luke* xii. 30.

This kind of ſeeking is required of us; if ever we would enjoy this City which is to come, we muſt ſeek as Men have done for Food and Raiment, for the Neceſſaries of Life. We muſt not think to get thither with a few cold and formal Prayers, and that a Profeſſion of the true Faith alone will ſecure us of it. We muſt ſweat and labour, and ſeek after it, as we do for our daily Bread. We muſt ſeek as for Silver, and ſearch as for hid Treaſures. We muſt uſe Violence and Force upon the Kingdom of Heaven, and 'twill well become us to uſe the ſame diligence which other Men uſe for Dignities and Wealth. Our endeavours after Heaven muſt be very diligent, and the Holy Scriptures intimate no leſs when they expreſs it by words which import the greateſt Labour and Caution: Thus we know it is expreſs'd by *fighting*, and *running*, and *ſtriving*, and *giving* all *diligence*, by words that do import great Earneſtneſs and Contention of Mind.

And as the word imports thus much, ſo does the Reward which we labour for, exact it at our hands. 'Tis for a City, and a continuing one; 'tis that when we are ſtripped of all our Properties, turn'd out of this Earthly Tabernacle, that we may have an everlaſting Habitation, that we may live happily and live for ever. If Life and Peace, if unſpeakable Joys at God's right Hand, if an Eternity of all theſe ſignifies any thing, we have cauſe to labour and give all Diligence, eſpecially when it is conſidered what pains we take, and what Difficulties we ſubmit to in the purſuit of Honour and Wealth, of ſenſual Pleaſures, and ſuch things as neither quiet our Minds when we have obtained them, nor will abide with us for any conſiderable time. Here's ſomething worth our contending for; ſomething greater than our Eye hath ever ſeen, our Ear hath heard, or our Heart can comprehend. Here's that which is worth our ſtriving and contending for: Something that will make amends, and more than that, for all our Pain and Labour. For if there be any thing in the World that may attract, or command our Application and Endeavours, the ſame and a greater Reaſon will move us here. We have here every thing that is great and good, that is beautiful and laſting in this continuing City to engage our endeavours: And the very Hope we have of Heaven is the greateſt Treaſure that we have in the World.

III. But I proceed to the Application of what hath been already ſaid.

1. If we have no continuing City here, then ought we not to be much affected with any thing that is here below: Why ſhould we let our Hearts go aſtray after thoſe things which we ſhall not long enjoy? We may trade indeed and traffick, we may buy and ſell, we may marry and give in Marriage, build and merchandize, and continue in the ſeveral Offices and Employments in which God hath ſet us: But we ought to remember that we ſhall not continue here for ever, and that the Faſhion of this World paſſeth away. Let us then uſe the World as if we uſed it not. This is the uſe which the Apoſtle makes of this Conſideration, *But this, I ſay, Brethren, the time is ſhort, it remaineth that both they that have Wives be as though they had none, and they that weep as though they wept not, and they that rejoyce as though they rejoyced not, and they that buy as though they poſſeſſed not, and they that uſe this World as not abuſing it; for the Faſhion of this World paſſeth away*, 1 Cor. vii. 29, 30, 31. We ought not to be much concerned for thoſe things that cannot concern or affect us long.

2. What our hand finds to do, let us do it ſpeedily and with all our might, *Eccleſ.* ix. 10. Our opportunities will not continue for ever. This I would exhort you to, eſpecially with reference to your Repentance toward God, and your Charity toward your Brother. 'Tis great Folly to delay that which muſt be done, and 'tis little elſe than Madneſs to live in that State in which we ſhould be loth to die.

3. Let us not be overmuch afflicted for the Death of our Chriſtian Friends and Relatives. Their way lies farther as well as ours: We ſhall not be long before we follow them; we may as well mourn becauſe they were mortal, as mourn for their Death; there is nothing ſtrange in it, that he that is mortal ſhould die, any more than that that which is brittle ſhould break. We are deſigned for another and better World; we are here upon tryal, and at the Will of our Lord, we there ſhall be with him for ever. *Jeſus* could ſay to his Diſciples, *If ye loved me, ye would rejoyce becauſe I ſaid, I go unto the Father*, John xiv. 28. And he comforts his Followers with this, that in his Father's Houſe were many Manſions, and that he was going to prepare a place for them.

4. Let us then be exhorted to apply all our Care and Thoughts to ſecure to our ſelves the City that is to come. Let us aſpire after thoſe things that are eternal, thoſe Joys that are at God's right Hand for evermore. Let us turn all our Sorrows that way, and endeavour that all our Afflictions may diſpoſe and prepare us for our everlaſting Reſt.

And methinks I ſhould need no other Motive than what my words lay before us, *viz.* That we have here no continuing City; this is a very powerful Argument to perſuade us to ſeek one to come. We have no Aſſurance of our ſtay in this lower World, and it is therefore highly reaſonable that we ſhould make proviſion for our ſelves when this lower World ſhall know us no more. It is high time to conſider whither we ſhall go when we depart this mortal Life, which for what we can tell may be the next Moment.

Let us then, from the Conſideration of the Miſery and Uncertainty of this World, be awakened to a timely care of our eternal Intereſt. Let the Death of our Friends awaken us to provide againſt our own: The Pain of our Bodies and the Loſs of our Goods excite us to a greater Care to make ſure of that bleſſed ſtate where all Tears ſhall be wiped from our Eyes, and Labour and Toil ſhall ceaſe for ever.

It will not be long before we ſhall be ſtripped of theſe Bodies, and divorced from theſe Comforts of Life which now we pleaſe our ſeves withal: It is as much our Intereſt as it is our Duty to provide our ſelves a Share and Portion in theſe Heavenly Manſions.

There is no Example of Mortality before our Eyes, but preaches this Doctrine to us. The World daily proclaims to us its own Uncertainty, and we are aloud called upon to provide that we may be receiv'd into everlaſting Habitations, *Luke* xvi. 9.

Now is the time of doing this; and if we delay it any longer, 'tis a Peradventure whether we ſhall ever do it or no. We are neither ſure of our Life, nor can we be certain that the Grace of God (if we now repulſe it) will follow us irreſiſtibly to our laſt Breath.

Life and Death are before us, unſpeakable Joys and everlaſting Burnings. Let us ſhew our ſelves wiſe, and do good to our ſelves; let us no longer trifle, but with all care and diligence purſue Heavenly things: I ſhall end all with the words of the Author of this Epiſtle, *Heb.* iv. 1. *Let us therefore fear, leſt a promiſe being left us of entring into his reſt, any of you ſhould ſeem to come ſhort of it.*

It may be very juſtly expected that I ſhould ſay ſomething now of our deceaſed Brother, and worthy Friend, Mr. *William Allen*, upon whoſe account we are met together.

We have great cauſe to bleſs God for his Mercies to him; he is departed this Life in his Faith and Fear; he is diſcharged from the Toil and Contingencies of this mortal Life: And as he was a moſt conſpicuous Example of Chriſtian Vertues, ſo (I make no doubt) he hath received a moſt glorious Reward, and is paſſed into the City that continues for ever.

I do not intend to borrow any Topicks for his Praiſe from his Country, or Deſcent, from his Quality or Rank, as he was a Citizen of this great City: I need not go ſo far out of the way: He was valuable upon greater accounts than theſe: He was a Citizen of a better City, that of God: He was an old and faithful Diſciple of Jeſus, a great Lover of God and of Righteouſneſs. This is more than all his other Properties.

'Tis Religion that exalts our Natures: This is the great Ornament of Human kind: 'Tis this makes us like that God whom we adore and whom we praiſe. 'Tis the beſt of all our Titles, the higheſt of our Prerogatives, and top of our Attainments. There is nothing that is fit to vye with this: Ancient Deſcent, depth of Learning, ſwelling Titles, large Poſſeſſions, Strength and Beauty, Craft and Subtilty; all theſe, and more than theſe, are, in compare with Piety and Goodneſs, lighter than Vanity.

Our dear Friend was a great Lover and moſt devout Worſhipper of God. He did it in Publick, he did it in his Family, he did it in his Cloſet. He did with great Reverence attend upon the publick Prayers, hearing of the Word, and frequently received the Holy Sacrament. He taught his Children and Servants to ſerve God: A true Child of *Abraham* the Friend of God. He kept up a ſenſe of God in his Family, and had his Retirements and holy Privacies.

He ſpent great portions of his time in Retirement: He was a moſt diligent Enquirer after Truth: He ſought Wiſdom as Silver, and ſearched for her as for hid Treaſures: Nor did his labour prove in vain, for he did underſtand the Fear of the Lord, and find the Knowledge of God: God had given him a great and clear Underſtanding, a ſolid Judgment and Ability; and he improved his Talent to a very great purpoſe.

He read the Holy Scriptures with wonderful Care and Diligence, attained to great Underſtanding of the more abſtruſe parts of them; and tho' he had not the advantage of the Learned Languages to direct him, yet by acquainting himſelf with thoſe who had, and by indefatigable diligence he did arrive to ſo great a meaſure of Knowledge of thoſe things which they do contain, as would be very commendable in a well-ſtudied Divine.

He wrote ſeveral excellent Books, that need no Recommendation to the World: They are well known and well eſteemed, and the greateſt Clerk will have no cauſe to be aſhamed to have them placed among the other Authors with which he is furniſhed.

The Arguments he choſe were weighty, and of great uſe to the World: He deſigned to detect Iniquity, Enthuſiaſm, and Superſtition, which had corrupted the Religion of Jeſus: He perſuaded Men to Unity and Peace, and to ſhun all Schiſm and Faction: He endeavoured to reduce thoſe who were gone aſtray, to mind them of the Divine Aſſiſtance, and to perſuade them to the profoundeſt Humility; and to comfort good Men with a juſt Expectation of the Church's emerging from its State of Sin and Miſery into a better Condition. Such were the Arguments which this wiſe and good Man choſe.

I may truly ſay of him what one of the Ancients ſays of *Socrates*, that he did not apply himſelf to trifling and leſs uſeful things; νομίζων μάταιον ϖᾶσι μάθησιν, ἀφ' ἧς οὐδὲν ἐνεργὸν τοῖς ἐπισταμένοις γένοιτο. *He promoted that Knowledge which was like to have the greateſt Efficacy upon Men.*

Liban. Sophiſta Socrat. Apol.

He managed his Arguments with great Judgment and Charity: He ſpake the Truth in Love. He did not contend for Victory, but Truth. His Writings ſpeak a right Chriſtian Temper all along. He was no *Gladiator* in Theology, no lover of Theological Contentions: He had beaten his Sword into a Plough-ſhare, and his Spear into a Pruning-hook. The Inſtruments he uſed ſerved to cultivate and improve, and to pare away what was ſuperfluous, and what was hurtful: He had no skill to hurt and deſtroy in the Mountain of the Lord

His great Knowledge did not puff him up: His Charity and Humility and Modeſty held proportion to it. He was far removed from an high Conceit of himſelf, or Contempt of others: He was far from being pert and talkative, far from Oſtentation and Shew, from inſulting over his Adverſaries, or vaunting of his Victories.

With reſpect to his Neighbour, he may be truly ſaid to have been a Righteous Man in the moſt comprehenſive ſenſe of that word.

He was exactly juſt to all Men in his Dealings and Trade; of this there is no queſtion: And thoſe that knew him well can tell, that in making up his Accounts he was ſcrupulouſly ſo, and took great care that an Error or Miſtake in his Correſpondent ſhould not be to his Prejudice. He was greatly careful to do no wrong, and had learnt to forgive. I doubt not but the Character given to *Pomponius Atticus* belongs to him: *Nullas inimicitias geſſit; quod neque lædebat quenquam; neque ſiquam in-* C. Nepos. *juriam acceperat, non malebat ulciſci, quam oblivisci. He had no Quarrels,* P. Attic. *for he did no Injury; and if any were done to him, he rather choſe to forget than to revenge.* There are few Men, perhaps, have paſſed through the World with leſs Offence to it than this good Man hath done. His ways pleaſed God, and he ſo provided, that his Enemies (if he had any ſuch) ſhould be at peace with him.

But he did not only do no harm, but did much good in the World: He was not only *juſt* to all, but *merciful* to the Afflicted, to the Poor and Needy. He had a great ſenſe of the Miſeries of others: He was a moſt compaſſionate Chriſtian. He did not love in Word nor in Tongue, but in Deed and in Truth. The Love of God dwelt in him, and by this he was conſtrained, and could not ſhut up his Bowels of Compaſſion from his Brother. He needed no Motives, or Arguments, 'twas enough to name the Objects. He ſtood ready always and prepared, and neither wanted Ability or Inclination to help the afflicted.

Indeed this humble Soul avoided the Notice and the Praiſe of Men: He that in other things was open and free, ſtudied Concealment here. He gave generally with his own hands, and wiſely diſpoſed of his Charity to thoſe whom he thought the fitteſt Objects. But yet for all his Care and his Art, he could not altogether be concealed. I have great reaſon to believe, from what I have the certain Knowledge of, that he gave great Sums and large Proportions, and that both the Priſoners and other diſtreſſed Perſons have loſt one of their greateſt Friends, and for his proportion one of their moſt generous Benefactors. But ſince it was the pleaſure of our dear Brother to beſtow in ſecret, out of reſpect and deference to his Memory and his Inclination, I will not ſearch after the particular Inſtances of his Bounty.

Certain it is, that ſhewing Mercy is a great Imitation of God. Speaking the Truth, and doing good Offices, are the two things which render us like him. The Heathen juſtly ſhews his Indignation againſt the Impudence of thoſe who mention the Quarrels, and Feuds, and Thefts, and Villanies of their Gods, and adds, *Deus eſt mortali juvare mortalem, & hæc ad æternam gloriam via.* To help another is Plin. Nat. to be like God, and is the way to Immortality. 'Tis the beſt of our Pro- Hiſt. lib. 2. perties——*Titulis & faſcibus olim major habebatur donandi gloria.*—— cap. 7.

In a word, our dear Brother was a great Example to us of Modeſty and Humility, of Obedience to Superiours, of Diligence in improving all the Portions of his Time, of Fidelity and Integrity, of Kindneſs and great Calmneſs and Prudence, if we conſider him as an Husband, a Father, a Neighbour, or a Friend.

His latter end was like his former Life; 'twas even and undiſturbed: He then ſhewed his Faith in God, and Reſignation to his Will, his concern for the Church, and his well-grounded hope of Eternal Life.

A little before his Death he called for his Family, and as became a dying Chriſtian, and one that was ſenſible of his departure hence, he exhorted them eſpecially to two things:

Firſt, That they ſhould preſerve in their Minds a lively Senſe, and make a thankful Acknowledgment of the Love of Chriſt, who for our ſake was content to become a Man, and to ſubmit to Death, even the Death of the Croſs. He required them to conſider that this was for our ſakes purely, and that Jeſus could be induced by no Intereſt to do this, but that which was peculiarly and ſolely ours.

Secondly, That they would be ſteady and conſtant in a courſe of Piety and true Religion, well knowing the Hazards and Temptations of this mortal Life, and that we loſe our labour if we do not perſevere unto the end.

Having ſaid theſe things, he prayed that God would ſend them an happy meeting in another and better World.

Having ſet his Houſe in Order, and diſpoſed himſelf for another World, he gave up his Spirit into the hands of his God, his merciful Creator, which (I make no doubt) is added to the Spirits of juſt Men made perfect.

Thus did our dear Friend live in the World, and thus did he leave it. He lived above it, and was prepared to leave it. He was one of the greateſt Patterns of the Chriſtian Life that this Age hath produced, and did by his Life prove the *Truth* and *Practicableneſs* of the Chriſtian Doctrine, and expreſs the Luſtre and Goodlineſs of Chriſtianity at the ſame time. In him we might ſee the Lovelineſs of Religion, and how well fitted it is to mend our own Tempers, and to render us uſeful to the World.

In him we might behold great Knowledge and the profoundeſt Humility. An Ability to teach others, and the greateſt Docibility or Readineſs to learn: The Courage and Reſolution of a Confeſſor, and at the ſame time the Humility of a little Child. A great Charity without vaunting, a great Zeal without Faction, and a diligent purſuit of Truth without dogmatizing or ſtudy of Parties.

In his Converſe with others he was *grave* but not *moroſe*, very gentle and friendly, highly civil and obliging. His Diſcourſe was ſerious and heavenly, not frothy and trifling. He ſpake well of Mankind, and was very prone to hope the beſt of all. He was not full of Diſcourſe, but it was always like the good Man, modeſt and inoffenſive, and ſuch as miniſtred to edifie or inſtruct.

He had a great ſenſe of any Evil that the Church of God felt, and perhaps few Men that lived were more concerned than he for the Sufferings of his Fellow Chriſtians: But ſtill he was far from Murmuring or Diffidence, but had a ſtedfaſt Faith in God's Providence, and did greatly encourage others to hope in God: He well conſidered the Uſefulneſs of Afflictions, and endeavoured to good purpoſe to awaken Men to pray fervently for the Church of Chriſt, and to depend upon God for the fulfilling all thoſe excellent Promiſes which have not as yet received their Accompliſhment.

He was for a very conſiderable part of his Life a Man of Trade and Worldly Buſineſs; God bleſſed his Endeavours, and the good Man plied his Calling; but his great Care was to labour for the Bread that endureth. He was more careful to keep the World out of his Heart, than to get it into his Poſſeſſion: He was not only juſt and charitable, when he traffick'd and dealt in Worldly things, but Heavenly alſo. He did not relinquiſh the World, and then pretend to deſpiſe it. He overcame the World more generouſly; he kept in it and was abſtracted from it; he uſed it, but was as if he uſed it not. He was Religious in his Shop, Heavenly minded upon the Exchange, innocent and undefiled in the preſs and crowd of crafty, and deſigning, and depraved Men.

For ſome time before his Death he left off trading, and gave himſelf to Reading and Devotion, to fervent Prayers and Meditations of Heaven and Heavenly things, to Works of Piety and Charity, and the cloſe Conſideration of his State toward God. He wiſely conſidered that it was fit there ſhould be a conſiderable ſpace of time allowed between the Hurries of Life and the great Work of dying well. He knew when he had enough of the World, and had learnt the true uſe of Riches. And now he diſpenſed to others what he had gained in his younger time: And he took care to ſeaſon what he left behind him by Alms and Acts of Mercy and Relief.

In a word, he was a very eminent Example of Chriſtian Vertues, greatly eſteem'd by all good and wiſe Men who knew him, and mean only in his own Eyes.

And what cauſe have we who ſurvive to bleſs God for ſuch an eminent Example of Piety and Charity, of Meekneſs and Humbleneſs of Mind, and thoſe other Virtues which rendered him conſpicuous.

I think upon the whole Matter I may apply to him what *Cicero* ſaid upon the Death of *Craſſus*, *Non tam ereptam ei vitam à Diis immortalibus*, *ſed donatam mortem.* That God *cannot ſo properly be ſaid to have taken away his Life as to have beſtowed Death upon him as a Boon and great Bleſſing.* God of his infinite Mercy grant that we may follow the Example of our Dear Brother, and that we may *not be ſlothful*, *but Followers of them who through Faith and Patience inherit the Promiſe*, Heb. vi. 12.

De Orat. l. 3.

A LARGE

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